

A Companion to Tudor Britain

This book is dedicated to

Anne K. Tittler *and* Lynn Langer Meeks

A Companion to Tudor Britain

Edited by

Robert Tittler and Norman Jones



THE
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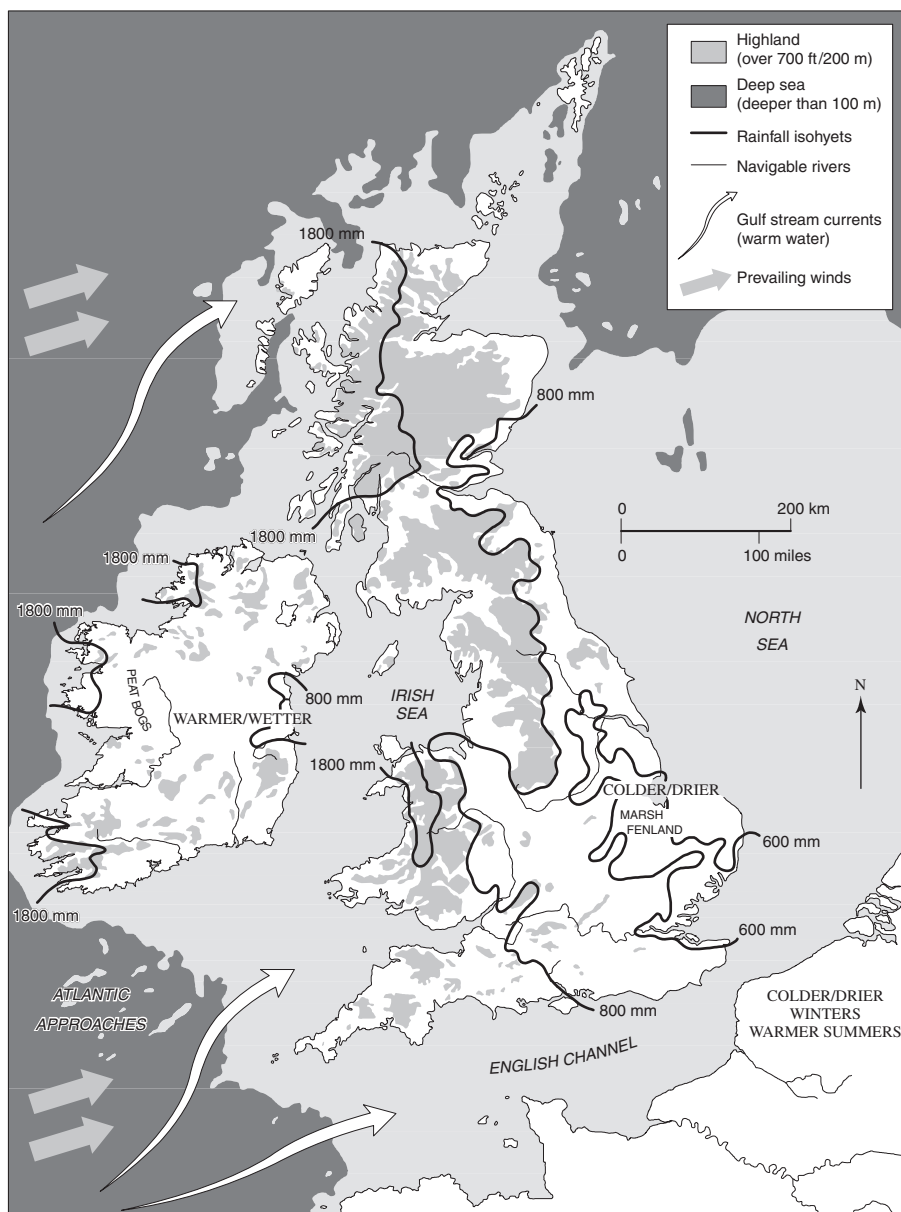
Preface and Acknowledgements

The opportunity to compile and edit a volume of this sort has been both a privilege and a challenge. The privilege has been the opportunity to put forth, in something of a cubist form, a series of perspectives about Britain in the Tudor era which have emerged over the course of our research careers. Though one of us has been somewhat more taken up with questions of politics and religion, and the other with questions regarding social groupings and cultural expressions, this volume has allowed us to establish a comfortable meeting place on the broad issues, and to define the contents of the volume accordingly.

The challenge has been to find the right people to share with us compatible perspectives on specific issues: those who were not only expert in what we considered the important subjects, but also willing and able to devote substantial efforts to the work and meet firm deadlines. Though we had also hoped to have an opening essay treating the British landscape, which seemed an obvious backdrop for the scenes to follow, the ultimate shape of the volume otherwise conforms pretty closely to our initial vision.

Our first debt must be to Tessa Harvey, who initially invited us to take on this task for Blackwell, and to Andrew MacLennan, Blackwell's Consultant Editor, who applied his usual but quite extraordinary skills to helping us define the shape of the whole at the outset. Blackwell's supporting editorial cast of Angela Cohen, Helen Lawton, and Tamsin Smith took us in hand from there and helped us see the whole to its completion. We are grateful to them as well as to Julia Pope, who pitched in with some of the indexing, and to Janey Fisher, our meticulous copy-editor. Our greatest debt must be to our contributors and colleagues in print. Virtually all of them put their shoulders to the wheel; many did so in the face of competing commitments, serious illness, changes in employment, or other personal distractions. It is one thing to envision how a thing should work, but quite another to build it and make it run: we are pleased to have done the former, but it is they who have done most of the rest. Our final debt must be to our wives. Even having had to share each of us with the other, they are still speaking to us.

Robert Tittler and Norman Jones



Map 1 Physical Geography of the British Isles

Source: Nicholls, *A History of the Modern British Isles, 1529–1603* (Oxford, 1999), p. xxi



Map 2 Political Divisions

Source: Nicholls, *A History of the Modern British Isles, 1529–1603* (Oxford, 1999), p. xxii



Map 3 Towns and Trades

Source: Nicholls, *A History of the Modern British Isles, 1529–1603* (Oxford, 1999), p. xxiii

Introduction

ROBERT TITTLER AND NORMAN JONES

In bringing forth this volume of essays we are well aware that the title ‘Tudor Britain’ will strike some readers as a misnomer. Both in its chronological and geographic implications, its choice requires an explanation. We take the dynastic designation ‘the Tudors’ as a precise form of shorthand to designate the period embraced by this volume. We intend it to announce that our coverage begins in the 1480s, and not to imply that it deals only with the kingdom of England and its Celtic satellites. To understand the sixteenth century we thought it essential to start with the reigns of Henry VII of England (1485–1509), and James IV (1488–1513) of Scotland. It was logical to conclude the book in 1603 when James VI of Scotland succeeded Elizabeth Tudor to become James I of England, thereby bringing the Tudor dynasty to a close.

In addition, we take ‘Britain’ to define our geographic limits. Of course we recognize that sixteenth-century Scotland and England were autonomous and independent nations, whose political histories had been and continued to be shaped by mutual antagonisms. The era under consideration begins in Scotland with the death of James III in 1488 during a rebellion repudiating his pro-English policies. His son, James IV, died at the Battle of Flodden in 1513, struck down by English billmen. His successor, James V, died in 1542, a week after being defeated by the English at Solway Moss. The 1540s saw the ‘Rough Wooing’ as English troops, attempting to convince the Scots to marry their infant Queen Mary Stewart to Edward Tudor, sacked Edinburgh, devastated Dundee, and ended with the massacre of Scots after the battle of Pinkie in 1547. This maladroit policy drove the Scots into close alliance with the French, and made them players against the English and Spanish in the Habsburg–Valois struggle that ended in 1559. In 1560 English forces, making common cause with rebellious Scots, besieged Leith and forced the French to withdraw from Scotland, securing the dominance of the Protestant Lords of the Congregation. By 1568 Mary Stewart had been driven out of Scotland to a refuge in England, where her awkward presence as a Catholic Queen of Scotland and next-in-line to the English crown served as a potential threat to the Elizabethan state. Elizabeth kept her under house arrest, and eventually made the difficult decision to have