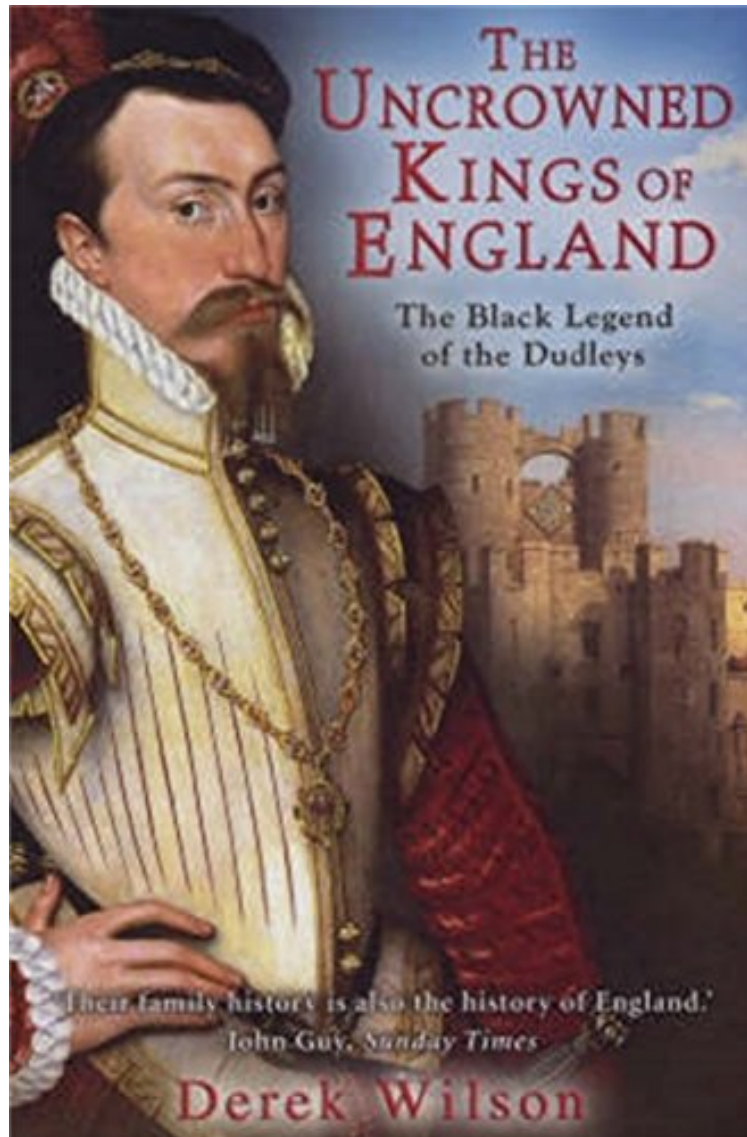


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Von Derek Wilson

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Von Derek Wilson : The Uncrowned Kings of England: The Black Legend of the Dudleys (English Edition) before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised The Uncrowned Kings of England: The Black Legend of the Dudleys (English Edition):

KundenrezensionenHilfreichste Kundenrezensionen0 von 0 Kunden fanden die folgende Rezension hilfreich. A history not so darkVon FrKurt MessickThe Dudley family was one of the most powerful families in the history of

England. One step away from the crown through several generations, they also exercised enormous influence in matters of military and economic affairs. They also have a dark history about them, as author Derek Wilson acknowledges in the subtitle to this text: 'The Uncrowned Kings of England: The Black History of the Dudleys and the Tudor Throne'. To be sure, the Dudleys were of minor prominence but respectability before the Tudors arrived on the scene. The Dudleys were involved in various ways with the Wars of the Roses, but came to achieve their greatest fame and fortune under the Tudors, serving in increasingly powerful positions through all Tudor reigns save that of Mary (by this time, the Dudleys had become too identified with the Protestant cause to be trusted by the Roman Catholic Mary, but her reign was but a half-decade interlude in the more-than-a-century reign of the Tudors). Wilson's text is not the typical history, and he explains why in the introduction. 'The "black legend" of the Dudleys is a monstrous injustice. It is based on the testimony of preachers, pamphleteers and rabble-rousers who rejected the policies Edmund and his descendants stood for but who, for the most part, did not dare to direct their criticisms at the sovereign.' The most prominent members - Edmund Dudley (under Henry VII), John Dudley (under Henry VIII and Edward VI), and Robert Dudley (under Elizabeth) - all served their monarchs well, according to Wilson, including bearing the brunt of public criticism. 'With all this mud being thrown it was inevitable that much of it would stick.' However, Wilson hastens to add that he is not writing a piece of hagiography, nor is he trying to deny the truth where it bears witness. Wilson does highlight areas of concern when warranted - just how much money did Edmund Wilson legitimately gain through his positions? What was the influence of Robert Dudley over Elizabeth? However, popular impression in history has most likely been distorted through propaganda, and has caused this generally able and loyal family to be largely overlooked in history. This is an especially problematic oversight, given that 'on at least two occasions, the House of Tudor really did come very close to being the House of Dudley.' Wilson arranges his text into four main sections plus an epilogue. The first concentrates on the figure of Edmund Dudley, Esquire, who served as a legal official for Henry VII. He was recognised as an able and educated man by all around him; educated at Oxford and Gray's Inn, he had connections in town and country. He served for a time as Speaker of the House of Commons (then a position appointed by the monarch). However, he never advanced to the status of being a 'favourite'; Wilson gives various evidence for this, not the least of which is that Edmund Dudley never became Sir Edmund Dudley or Lord Edmund Dudley, nor were any other honourifics bestowed upon him, unlike the many courtiers around Henry VII. That he made money and acquired estates showed his competence, but his untitled state spoke of a distance. The second section looks largely at the figure of John Dudley during the reign of Henry VIII. The third section continues with the same figure in drastically different circumstances. During the reign of Henry VIII, John Dudley slowly moved up the ladder through both military and diplomatic work. He achieved various stations, including being Lord Admiral, and was rewarded with trust as a member of the king's inner circle much of the time. During the reign of Edward VI, he advanced in terms of titles and land, becoming both Earl of Warwick and Duke of Northumberland during his tenure as what some would term the 'uncrowned kingship' of being Lord Protector. Wilson argues that it was Edward's device more so than John Dudley's to cancel out the claims of Mary and Elizabeth and settle upon the heirs of Frances Brandon, married to Henry Grey. Whether this is entirely true will likely never be known; it is possible that the overall influences of the time influenced Dudley and Edward in the same way such that their intentions and ambitions coincided. Lady Jane Grey being married to Guildford Dudley, one of the Duke's sons, would have produced a Dudley dynasty for England. The final major figure is Lord Robert Dudley, who made a remarkable comeback from being part of the family who tried to supplant the Tudor dynasty with one of their own to being a favourite of the final Tudor monarch, Elizabeth. So much a favourite was he that, when marriage to him seemed impossible for Elizabeth, serious proposal was made for him to marry Mary, Queen of Scots, whose progeny became monarchs of whole of Great Britain. Again Britain might have had a Dudley dynasty, but it was not to be. Lord Robert remained a trusted and loyal friend for Elizabeth who was nonetheless mistrusted and resented by many others. His son, another Robert Dudley, also became a late favourite of Elizabeth, but his legitimacy was never established, and when his son died in infancy, the Dudley line died out, not long after the Tudor line had similarly expired. Wilson's text suffers a bit from lack of editing (lots of mis-placed commas, occasional typos in word choice and spelling), but on the whole is engaging and accessible, and certainly illuminating toward a family otherwise lesser known and little studied. There are genealogical charts showing descendants as well as alliances, photographic plates with images of the Dudleys and places of interest, a good collection of notes, bibliographic references, and a reasonable index. This book straddles the fence between being a popular history and an academic history, edging more toward the popular. I enjoyed reading this book thoroughly, and recommend it to any interested in British history, royal history, and Tudor and Shakespearean times.

Kurzbeschreibung In the political ferment of the Tudor century one family above all others was always at the troubled centre of court and council. During those years the Dudleys were never far from controversy. Three of them were executed for treason. They were universally condemned as scheming, ruthless, over-ambitious charmers, and one was

defamed as a wife murderer. Yet Edmund Dudley was instrumental in establishing the financial basis of the Tudor dynasty, and John Dudley, Duke of Northumberland, led victorious armies, laid the foundations of the Royal Navy, ruled as uncrowned king and almost succeeded in placing Lady Jane Grey on the throne. The most famous of them all, Robert Dudley, Earl of Leicester, came the closest to marrying Elizabeth I, was her foremost favourite for 30 years and governed the Netherlands in her name, while his successor, Sir Robert Dudley, was one of the Queen's most audacious seadogs in the closing years of her reign, but fell foul of James I. Thus the fortunes of this astonishing family rose and fell with those of the royal line they served faithfully through a tumultuous century.see

www.derekwilson.com *Pressestimmen*" This is the first full account of this reckless, glamorous, ambitious and politically significant family, told by leading Tudor historian Derek Wilson, whose recent study of Henry VIII's rule, *In the Lion's Court*, was widely acclaimed as 'one of the most useful and stimulating books about our most important dynasty.' *Sunday Times* " 'Derek Wilson tells the story ... with an effectiveness that few other biographies have matched.' *Daily Telegraph* " ' This should become the standard work on the subject ... the most accurate and vivid portrayal to date.' *Literary Kurzbeschreibung*In the political ferment of the Tudor century one family above all others was always at the troubled centre of court and council. During those years the Dudleys were never far from controversy. Three of them were executed for treason. They were universally condemned as scheming, ruthless, over-ambitious charmers, and one was defamed as a wife murderer. Yet Edmund Dudley was instrumental in establishing the financial basis of the Tudor dynasty, and John Dudley, Duke of Northumberland, led victorious armies, laid the foundations of the Royal Navy, ruled as uncrowned king and almost succeeded in placing Lady Jane Grey on the throne. The most famous of them all, Robert Dudley, Earl of Leicester, came the closest to marrying Elizabeth I, was her foremost favourite for 30 years and governed the Netherlands in her name, while his successor, Sir Robert Dudley, was one of the Queen's most audacious seadogs in the closing years of her reign, but fell foul of James I. Thus the fortunes of this astonishing family rose and fell with those of the royal line they served faithfully through a tumultuous century.see www.derekwilson.com