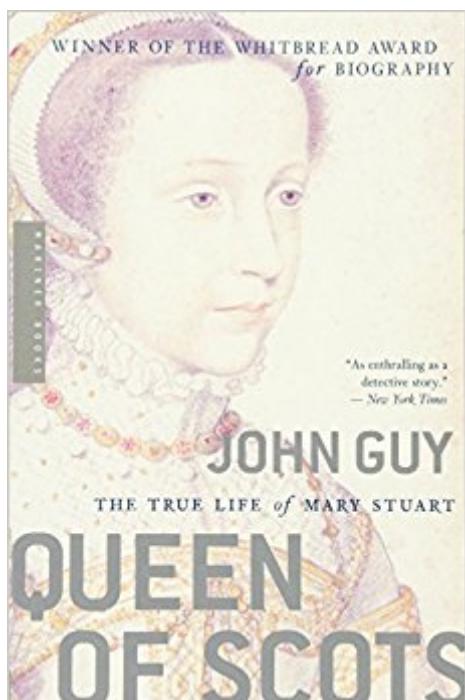


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Queen Of Scots: The True Life Of Mary Stuart



Synopsis

National Book Critics Circle Award finalist—“A triumph . . . a masterpiece full of fire and tragedy.” • Amanda Foreman, author of *Georgiana* In the first full-scale biography of Mary Stuart in more than thirty years, John Guy creates an intimate and absorbing portrait of one of history’s greatest women, depicting her world and her place in the sweep of history with stunning immediacy. Bringing together all surviving documents and uncovering a trove of new sources for the first time, Guy dispels the popular image of Mary Queen of Scots as a romantic leading lady — achieving her ends through feminine wiles — and establishes her as the intellectual and political equal of Elizabeth I. Through Guy’s pioneering research and superbly readable prose, we come to see Mary as a skillful diplomat, maneuvering ingeniously among a dizzying array of factions that sought to control or dethrone her. *Queen of Scots* is an enthralling, myth-shattering look at a complex woman and ruler and her time. “The definitive biography . . . gripping . . . a pure pleasure to read.” • *Washington Post Book World* “Reads like Shakespearean drama, with all the delicious plotting and fresh writing to go with it.” • *Atlanta Journal-Constitution* John Guy is a fellow in history at Clare College, University of Cambridge, and the author of several books, including the best-selling textbook *Tudor England*.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

The story of Mary Stuart has been told in many contexts (most recently in *Elizabeth and Mary*), but nowhere has she been defended more rigorously than in this new study. Guy, a fellow at Cambridge

University and BBC consultant, describes Mary's formative years in France, but the heart of the book is her short reign in Scotland. Negotiations with Elizabeth Tudor over the succession in England and the shadow of Mary's final fate dominate the narrative, but while Guy effectively establishes that Elizabeth's chief minister William Cecil was Mary's true English enemy, what is most shocking is how suppliant he shows Mary to have been to Elizabeth. The most dramatic moments, however, are supplied by the Scottish nobles, who shifted alliances around her and colluded in kidnappings and assassinations. Though not the first to challenge Mary's *femme fatale* image, Guy does not even deign to discuss the accusation that she was romantically involved with her Italian secretary Rizzio and convincingly absolves her of involvement in the death of her second husband. He re-examines her actions and choices and offers a lively textual analysis of letters usually used as evidence against her. Yet he does not conclusively argue that she ruled from the head, and, in the end, the question of whether Mary Stuart ruled from her head or her heart appears beside the point. Guy's detailed account of the familial, political and religious machinations of the forces swirling around the queen suggests that it was not flaws in Mary's character but the entire constellation of circumstances that doomed her rule in Scotland and led to her execution. 16 pages of b&w photos. Copyright © Reed Business Information, a division of Reed Elsevier Inc. All rights reserved. --This text refers to the Audio Cassette edition.

Few royal figures from the pages of European history continue to fascinate historian and lay reader alike as much as Mary Stuart, the ill-fated queen of Scots, who has come down to us dressed in the raiment of legend. British historian Guy delves deeply into previously little-mined archival evidence, and, aided by a felicitous style (no drifting into dry lecturing), he arrives not at a whitewash but at a restoration of Queen Mary with respect to the truth about the quality of her character and her performance as monarch. The easiest and quickest way to judge Mary Stuart has always been to compare her to her cousin and fellow queen-sovereign Elizabeth Tudor. Guy, on the other hand, takes Mary on her own terms, seeing as "stereotype" the long-perpetuated concept that Mary "ruled from her heart" while Elizabeth "ruled from the head." Mary's is a complicated story, as were Scottish politics at the time, but Guy explicates the complications--including Mary's marriages, her struggle with the Scottish lords, the murder of her second husband, and her long incarceration and eventual execution in England--with both authority and clear illumination. A major biography. Brad HooperCopyright © American Library Association. All rights reserved --This text refers to the Audio Cassette edition.

I became obsessed with Mary from watching Reign on Netflix.. had to have more and wanted the truth. This book is so well written and is just what I wanted.

Reread this in preparation for a trip to Scotland where we'll visit many places connected with Mary. She's one of the most tragic monarchs whose bios I've read. Although she didn't become the Queen of England, her son succeeded Elizabeth I and all subsequent British monarchs descended from her. The book is very well researched and detailed. Having the ability to visualize the events that occurred in various castles and palaces will make my travels more meaningful. RIP Marie

Author John Guy has fallen under Mary's spell but even if you don't agree that this huge book is a vindication of Mary, don't miss this splendid biography. Mary, warts and all, is one of the most fascinating women in history. She made many serious errors in judgment, going from the frying pan into fire when Darnley was assassinated and she married the totally unsuitable Bothwell. She was a woman of passions, but author Guy feels she was politically astute within a whirlwind of factions-the Scottish lords, France, Elizabeth and Spain were all trying to manipulate her. Guy gives a great deal of evidence concerning the famous Casket letters. The letters are from a woman to her lover and if the letters were written by Mary to Bothwell, both are clearly implicated in the murder of Mary's second husband, Darnley. However, as Guy points out, the originals, written in French, are missing. And what remains today are copies which had been spliced together haphazardly and many parts could have been forged. The letters contained several sonnets, very poor poetry indeed, and the poems are highly suspect, according to Guy, because Mary was known for being an accomplished, talented poet. Guy believes the letters are not proof of Mary's complicity in the death of Darnley. What really did Mary in was the Babington plot. Anthony Babington, who apparently felt he was a knight in shining armor dreaming he would rescue Mary from her castle imprisonment. He gathered a group of conspirators together to plan the assassination of Queen Elizabeth. He wrote several letters to Mary and she answered them, but they did not know Elizabeth's spy network had intercepted the letters, copied them and put them back on the hiding place in beer barrels where Mary found them. There is absolutely no doubt that Mary was guilty of treason, a fact author Guy does not try and excuse. In fact he says "Mary was sadly deluded." The book is very rich in detail down to what Mary wore (she was six feet tall), her food preferences, the many facets of her complicated personality. But perhaps the very first chapter, which describes her going to her death, says it all. With a firm step, she approached the block as though she were going to her coronation. She wore black with a brilliant red kirtle underneath, red being the color of a martyr. She joked. She

undoubtedly felt a sense of triumph, both as a martyr for the Catholic cause and the mother of a son who could someday be the king of England. She had said "In my end is my beginning." No matter what your opinion of Mary is, you can enjoy this truly comprehensive study. It is a fascinating hunk of history, very vividly written. Highly recommended!

Excellent book that is well told. The author humanizes Mary and helps us fully understand her motives. I could barely put it down from start to finish. Ideal for the casual reader or those with a specific interest in the subject.

This book was a present for my wife who through her genealogy research came across that she is a direct descendant of The Queen of Scots. This book was a welcomed gift and though she has not completed reading it, she has said it is a very interesting read.

This book was very informative about Mary's life. I enjoyed reading it and learned a lot about her life.

This was an amazing biography! Mary, Queen of Scots had a wild life, and John Guy gives us all the details! This biography wasn't boring, if anything, you want to read more and more! I've already pre-ordered his new book, Elizabeth: The Forgotten Years.

I ordered this book which was described as being in good condition. This was a modest description because it arrived looking brand new. It was also an excellent price for a hardcover book. Very pleased!

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