

The English Civil Wars 1640 1660

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a brilliant appraisal of the civil war and its long term consequences by an acclaimed historian the political upheaval of the mid seventeenth century has no parallel in english history other events have changed the occupancy and the powers of the throne but the conflict of 1640 60 was more dramatic the monarchy and the house of lords were abolished to be replaced by a republic and military rule in this wonderfully readable account blair worden explores the events of this period and their origins the war between king and parliament the execution of charles i cromwell s rule and the restoration while aiming to reveal something more elusive the motivations of contemporaries on both sides and the concerns of later generations

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between 1640 and 1660 the british isles witnessed a power struggle between king and parliament of a scale and intensity never witnessed either before or since although often characterised as a straight fight between royalists and parliamentarians recent scholarship has highlighted the complex and fluid nature of the conflict showing how it was waged on a variety of fronts military political cultural and religious at local national and international levels in a melting pot of competing loyalties shifting allegiances and varying military fortunes it is hardly surprising that agents conspirators and spies came to play key roles in shaping events and determining policies in this groundbreaking study the role of a fluctuating collection of loyal resourceful and courageous royalist agents is uncovered and examined by shifting the focus of attention from royal ministers councillors generals and senior courtiers to the agents who operated several rungs lower down in the hierarchy of the king s supporters a unique picture of the royalist cause is presented the book depicts a world of feuds jealousies and rivalries that divided and disorganised the leadership of the king s party creating fluid and unpredictable conditions in which loyalties were frequently to individuals or factions rather than to any theoretical principle of allegiance to the crown lacking the firm directing hand of a walsingham or thurloe the agents looked to patrons for protection employment and advancement grounded on a wealth of primary source material this book cuts through a fog of deceit and secrecy to expose the murky world of seventeenth century espionage written in a lively yet scholarly style it reveals much about the nature of the dynamics of the royalist cause about the role of the activists and why despite a long series of political and military defeats royalism survived simultaneously the book offers fascinating accounts of the remarkable activities of a number of very colourful individuals

a narrative of the civil war period in lancashire including the sieges of lathom house the massacre at bolton the battle of preston and many other nationally important military engagements within the county

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