



Bloody Mary's Martyrs: The Story of England's Terror

Jasper Ridley

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In this chronicle of a Catholic monarch's heartless rage, a nation's fear, and the unimaginable courage of the Protestants who died for their faith, the award-winning historical biographer Jasper Ridley explores the dark years of Mary Tudor's reign and the most extreme persecution ever to occur in England -- more than three hundred victims in less than three years. Within months of her ascension to the English throne in 1553, Mary restored Roman Catholicism to the nation, reinstated papal supremacy, wedded the Spanish prince Philip, and sealed an alliance with Catholic Spain. Her marriage failed to produce an heir, however. That failure -- a sign, in Mary's view, of God's displeasure with the practice of "heretic" religion in England -- prompted the childless queen to initiate her purge. Thus began the fires at Smithfield, and hundreds of Protestants -- among them the Anglican bishop Hugh Latimer and Archbishop of Canterbury Thomas Cranmer, as well as many prominent members of the nobility -- met their death at the stake. In an absorbing narrative, this meticulously researched history relates their tragic, brutal, and often inspiring tale.

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