

[PDF] Queen Isabella: Treachery, Adultery, And Murder In Medieval England

Alison Weir - pdf download free book

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Description:

From Publishers Weekly Starred Review. Isabella of France (1295?-1358) married the bisexual Edward II of England as a 12-year-old, lived with him for 17 years, bore him four children, fled to France in fear of his powerful favorite, returned with her lover, Roger Mortimer, to lead a rebellion and place her son on the throne and eventually saw Mortimer executed as her son asserted his power. Veteran biographer Weir (*Eleanor of Aquitaine*, etc.) battles Isabella's near-contemporaries and later storytellers and historians for control of the narrative, successfully rescuing the queen from writers all too willing to imagine the worst of a medieval woman who dared pursue power. Weir makes great use of inventories to recreate Isabella's activities and surroundings and, strikingly, to establish the timing of the queen's turn against her husband and her probable ignorance of the plot to kill him. Weir convincingly argues that the infamous story of Edward II being murdered with a

red-hot iron emerged from propaganda against Isabella and Mortimer. (Her unlikely assertion that Edward escaped and lived out his life as a hermit is less believable.) Weir presents a fascinating rewriting of a controversial life that should supersede all previous accounts. Isabella is so intertwined with the greatest figures of her century and the next that any reader of English history will want this book. Maps not seen by *PW*.

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From Best-selling British novelist Weir puts her exemplary writing skills, as well as her talent for alternative and provocative insight into documents and historiography, to good use in a riveting biography of the wife of England's unfortunate Edward II (who reigned 1307-27). That the king was ineffectual is commonly accepted (he was deposed and later died; according to tradition, he was murdered in a most horrendous fashion), and Queen Isabella, born a princess of France, has borne all these many centuries the label "she-wolf." Weir, in this book all British-history fans will devour, chooses, after much research and deliberation, to see her subject in more rounded terms than as "one of the most notorious femme fatales in history." The author, in fact, takes giant steps to prove that Isabella, as instigator of her own husband's removal from the throne, contributed greatly to the decline in England of the power of the monarch and thus the rise of democracy. *Brad Hooper*
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