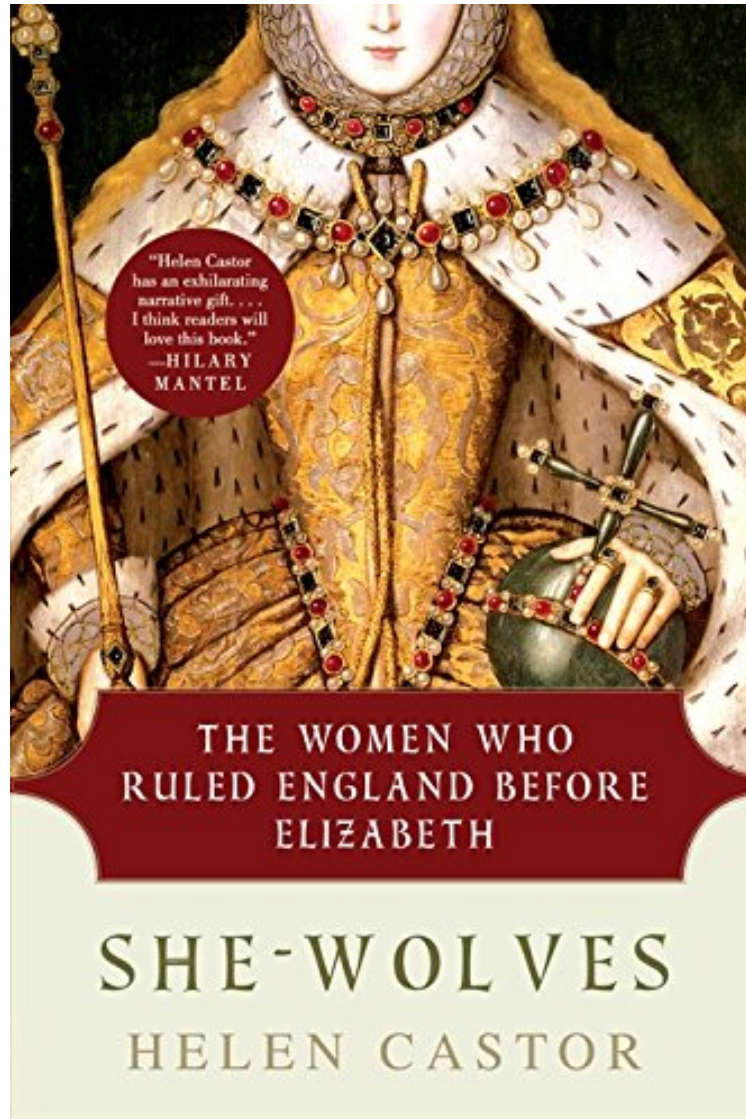


She-Wolves: The Women Who Ruled England Before Elizabeth

Helen Castor

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#355611 in Books Helen Castor 2012-01-31 2012-01-31 Original language: English PDF # 1 9.00 x 1.24 x 6.00l, 1.17 #File Name: 0061430773496 pages She Wolves The Women Who Ruled England Before Elizabeth | File size: 27.Mb

Helen Castor : She-Wolves: The Women Who Ruled England Before Elizabeth before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised She-Wolves: The Women Who Ruled England Before Elizabeth:

31 of 32 people found the following review helpful. Riveting! History That's Better Than Fiction! By MusingCrowI had eagerly awaited the release of this book and waited until I could take my time and read it slowly- taking notes if I wished. I wasn't disappointed! The book begins with a genealogy of the Tudor Succession and as Edward VI is dying.

The book is an utterly fascinating, eminently readable, treatise about the tradition of female rulers prior to the time of Elizabeth I. Included are: Matilda: Lady of England 1102-1167 Eleanor: An Incomparable Woman 1124-1204 (long lived indeed!) Isabella: Iron Lady 1295-1358 Margaret: A Great and Strong Labouring Woman 1430-1482 and, as the book returns to the time of the Tudors and the death of Edward VI, in "New Beginnings" Mary and her disastrous marriage with Philip of Spain. The book ends as Elizabeth I is handed the reins of government and becomes both the King and Queen of her kingdom. Each section is preceded by both a genealogy as well as a map of the Kingdom as it existed at that point in history. Very helpful while you are reading about the constantly changing boundaries of the various countries. The genealogies really made me realize how small the pool of available spouses for royal marriages really was at the time. Papal dispensations for consanguinity matters must have been a steady source of revenue for the Church! Ms. Castor has an uncanny ability to write non-fiction that reads as enjoyably as fiction. I was sorry when the book ended - wanting more of this truly riveting history. The struggle of female rulers really was the beginning of the fight for women's rights and the fact that these amazing, talented, strong women managed to rule as they did is a wonder. I wonder how many modern women would have the tenacity and determination to breach the boundaries of proper 'etiquette' as these female rulers did. It boggles my mind at how strong and focused they must have been. No doubt they would be the sort of successful women who would, to this day, be called She Wolves, baracuddas, or another word that begins with the letter b----. I wished that the book had more illustrations - but then I always wish that. I always want more images to pair with the words in a book. The included 8 pages of color images are well done - but more would have been better (of course!) This book will, I think, hold wide appeal to history buffs - especially those who are Anglophiles as I am, as well as for people who study women's rights and societal issues. I will be on the pre-order list as soon as I hear about Helen Castor's next book!

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Solid History Read By Danielle N. Hart I really enjoyed this. It seemed pretty well-grounded historically (I did not spot any glaring errors, and I've done a bit of reading on the subject) - as a previous reviewer notes, it would have been nice if the sources had been a little better presented. It's more of a "further reading" list rather than a guide to specific statements. The author's voice is a good one, and personalizes the characters. I also appreciated linking the earlier queens to Mary and Elizabeth (and poor Jane Grey) and the compare-and-contrast. It's a long read but worth it.

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Women and the English Monarchy in the Early Years By MaryAnn Reads If you're looking for pop-history, this probably won't suit you. This book is real history. It's a look at several women who either ruled or sought to rule England in the years before Queen Elizabeth I. It's mostly sympathetic to these royal women, though not uncritical. There's a lot of detail, a lot of names, a lot of history covered. If you have an interest in the English monarchy and the wars and internecine workings that formed it, this is an excellent book.

Helen Castor has an exhilarating narrative gift. . . . Readers will love this book, finding it wholly absorbing and rewarding. Hilary Mantel, Booker Prize-winning author of *Wolf Hall* In the tradition of Antonia Fraser, David Starkey, and Alison Weir, prize-winning historian Helen Castor delivers a compelling, eye-opening examination of women and power in England, witnessed through the lives of six women who exercised power against all odds and one who never got the chance. Exploring the narratives of the Empress Matilda, Eleanor of Aquitaine, Isabella of France, Margaret of Anjou, and other she-wolves, as well as that of the Nine Days' Queen, Lady Jane Grey, Castor invokes a magisterial discussion of how much and how little has changed through the centuries.

From *Booklist* From England's durably popular dynastic history emerges this quartet of finely characterized portraits of would-be or actual female monarchs prior to those of the House of Tudor. Displaying precise perceptions of political contexts, often expressing herself in archly sardonic turns of phrase, Castor presents Matilda, daughter of Henry I and mother of Henry II; the latter king's celebrated consort, Eleanor of Aquitaine; Isabella, who overthrew her hapless husband, Edward II; and Margaret of Anjou, a redoubtable contender in the War of the Roses who was vilified by a Tudor propagandist named Shakespeare. Interpreting hostility in historical sources about these women, Castor shows how they confronted their central problem in playing the power game, asserting a notional right of female succession to the crown against an array of prejudices against so preposterous an idea. Banned from leading armies into battle, each of them exhibited political acuity in inspiring support for her bid from magnates who could fight for her cause. The subsequent turns of fortune will fasten royalty readers to Castor's lively narrative.

--Gilbert Taylor Helen Castor's very readable *She-Wolves* is . . . full of beautiful, imperiled ladies; fearless knights; and remarkable, often unbelievable turns of fortune. . . . Castor is a fine scholar and an equally fine storyteller. (Cleveland Plain Dealer) [Helen Castor is] an accomplished and elegant historian. (Miranda Seymour, *New York Times Book*) A gripping book . . . *She-Wolves* is a superb history of the powerful women who have surrounded England's throne, combining blood-drenched drama, politics, sex and swordplay with scholarly analysis, sympathy for the plight of women and elegant writing. (Simon Sebag Montefiore, *Daily Telegraph* (London)) A fascinating biography of four powerful English queens An insightful look at issues still relevant today, related by an accomplished historian and storyteller. (Kirkus) Castor's deep research will please European, military, and women's historians, while [her] tight

storytelling makes this unusually fine royal history enjoyable reading for casual readers. (Publishers Weekly (starred review)) Beautifully narrated . . . learned and exciting. This is medieval history at its best. (Evening Standard) Castor skillfully combines this analysis with driving narratives, using vivid details from contemporary chronicles to bring those distant days alive. She-Wolves makes one gasp at the brutality of medieval power struggles and at the strength and vitality of the women who sought to wield royal power. (Jenny Uglow, Financial Times) Exceptional, even inspirational reading. (BookPage) Castor has done a masterful job of outlining the burdens these women faced. . . . Readers of popular history of British royals will enjoy their immensely human stories. (Library Journal) A fascinating biography An insightful look at issues still relevant today, related by an accomplished historian and storyteller. (Kirkus s) From the Back Cover With the death of Edward VI in 1553, England, for the first time, would have a reigning queen. The question was: Who? Four women stood upon the crest of history: Katherine of Aragon's daughter, Mary; Anne Boleyn's daughter, Elizabeth; Mary, Queen of Scots; and Lady Jane Grey. But over the centuries, other exceptional women had struggled to push the boundaries of their authority and influence and been vilified as she-wolves for their ambitions. Revealed in vivid detail, the stories of Eleanor of Aquitaine, Isabella of France, Margaret of Anjou, and the Empress Matilda expose the paradox that England's next female leaders would confront as the Tudor throne lay before them: a man ruled woman, but these women sought to rule a nation.