

London *by* Edward Rutherfurd



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Reviews of the London *by* Edward Rutherfurd

Kitaxe

With over eleven hundred pages, I was anticipating London to be both entertaining and educational. I was hoping for that magical merging of history and fiction, which gives life to history and historical significance to life. Rutherfurd's book, however, misses this anticipation by a wide margin.

London covers almost two thousand years of history and focuses on a few familial hereditary lines throughout that span of time. Each period of history that is selected by Rutherfurd is complemented by stories that focus on these families. But the stories are mostly rooted in domestic issues. Domestic problems such as infidelity, disobedient spouses, and marriage arrangements dominate every time period covered by Rutherfurd. The history is often provided in narrative form along side the domestic tales and, as a result, life and history move forward on parallel paths. These two vital components seldom merged into that powerful combination known as great historical fiction.

I'll also add that Rutherford stories tend to be prosaic. While he touches on the harsh conditions that humans have endured throughout history, his characters rarely express their suffering that accompanied these hardships. While narratives and positive happenstances occupy spans of pages, descriptions of the tragic or horrific are limited to brief sentences. While this approach makes for a pleasant reading experience, it does not give justice to the realities of our existence.

caster

This is my third Rutherford novel this summer, and it is just as amazing as *The Forest and Sarum*. I once had a history prof who used to say that you can learn more about history from a well written novel than from reading a history book. For example, never yet read a better explanation of the persecution of the Huguenots than Mr Rutherford's. He is consistently amazing.

Vetibert

I recommend the book to all readers. My review is posted on Goodreads.

This book is over eleven hundred pages and covers over two thousand man years. There is no profanity and no overt sexual acts in the book. It is the story of London from its inception to the end of the twentieth century, and the story is told by working class people trying to elevate or maintain their stations in life. Some characters to follow throughout the book are those those with inordinately long noses, those with a shock of white in their black hair, those with round heads disproportionately large to their body size,, and those with webbed fingers. I cannot justly review the book, but other reviewers have done so. I will tell you that when King Charles was beheaded, I felt a shiver throughout my body. I wanted to scream to the people to not do this thing. I wanted to scream that to do so would put their city and country aloft on a raft in an angry sea.

The author's mechanics of good writing were excellent. There was much humor in his writing that usually came when I never saw it coming. One thing more -- if I believed in finding a pot of gold at the end of the rainbow, I just might have found my rainbow's end.

Thank you, Mr. Rutherford, for a good read. You earned the title.

Jube

One has to be interested in History to like this book and it is beautiful how the generations of three families changed and grew through the ages. It as taken me many weeks to read this book but I have never been bored. If someone is vacationing in London it explains the history behind many buildings, streets and the river Thames. When I go to London in June one of the first places I plan to visit is the London Museum for the dioramas of the development of London as compared to this book. A good read but takes time.

Ishllador

My dad suggested I read this book years ago when I was a teen. I did, and found it fascinating. Now I'm reading it again at midlife, and am happy to say it's still very interesting and well-written.

I agree with many of the "one-star" reviewers of this book that the characters are very flat. I believe, though, that this is intentional. Even if not intentional, it works, because this book is not about the people in it. This book is about the city itself. The characters are simply a catalyst to get us from one historical period to the next. We aren't meant to have an actual interest in their personal lives, but occasionally we do, and that's a credit to the writer that he can make us care about people with whom we are involved on only a passing level. However, we never really have to say goodbye to the supporting cast, because they are incarnated through the development of the story as descendants

of the same pivotal families.

Some folks also complains that this is "history lite." They are correct. But this book is covering thousands of years, so how can it be anything but that? It's a really interesting way to present an overview of history. A summary, in fact, that hopefully will compel the reader to learn more about bits of it they find particularly interesting.

Looking back on it from my reading of it now, to when Dad first proposed it, I find he was pretty smart. He got me interested in various topics--introduced to me via this book when I was young--that I have since explored in-depth over the years.

Soustil

This is one of my favorite books of all times. I have read "London" at least five times and I have loaned it out numerous times, to rave reviews. I'm a fan of all of Rutherford's books, but "London" is the best read, in my opinion. If you ever have the privilege of traveling to London, I highly recommend reading this before you go to gain an even deeper appreciation for the great city.

Shezokha

Whew! What a long book! It's one that I'm glade to have read, to have learned about some of England's history, but, for my tastes, there was way too much detail of the mundane lives of the multitudinous characters. Rutherford's good but he's no John Jakes, James Michener, or Bernard Cornwell. He does, however, use some of the same techniques as these greats (such as the inherited genealogical traits of the Ducket's), but with less skill and effect. I found myself speed reading through the last half of the book and breathed a sigh of relief when it was over.

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