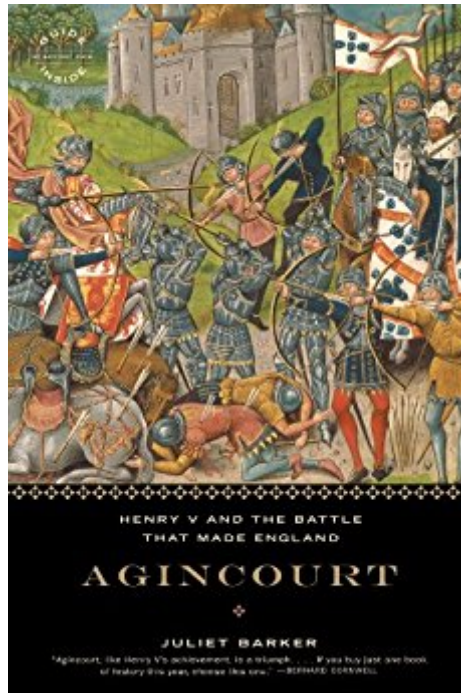


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Agincourt: Henry V And The Battle That Made England



Synopsis

Waged almost six centuries ago, the Battle of Agincourt still captivates. It is the classic underdog story, and generations have wondered how the English--outmanned by the French six to one--could have succeeded so bravely and brilliantly. Drawing on a wide range of sources, Juliet Barker paints a gripping narrative of the October 1415 clash between the outnumbered English archers and the heavily armored French knights. Populated with chivalrous heroes, dastardly spies, and a ferocious and bold king, AGINCOURT is as earthshaking as its subject--and confirms Juliet Barker's status as both a historian and a storyteller of the first rank.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Ms Barker does an excellent job of telling a detailed account of Agincourt. This battle ranks as one of the famous amongst many in military history. This narrative is different in that Ms Barker relates a decisive battle to a larger campaign. With the skill and detail of a staff officer, she takes the reader from concept of the operation to execution. Her research is thorough and she deftly captures the complexities of running military operations. She skillfully weaves the human cost. Not only to the dead on the field but also the women and children left behind. A wonderful read for military leaders, historians and humanists alike.

Agincourt is the latest book by noted Bronte biographer Juliet Barker. Barker received her Ph.D. from Oxford in Medieval History; needless to say she is an expert on Agincourt! Henry V (reigned 1413-1422) was the greatest warrior king in British history. His victory over his French enemies at Agincourt on Oct. 25, 1415 led to an overwhelming victory. High ransom paid for French hostages added to Henry's coffers; the fame of England's victory was celebrated in minstrelsy, poems, songs and most famously in Shakespeare's history play Henry V. (Later made into a famous film by Laurence Olivier in 1944 as the British along with their allies were planning for the D-Day landings in France. Barker is excellent in limning the characters of such renowned figures as Raoul de Gaucourt the gallant French soldier who defended the town of Harfleur until it was forced to surrender. He was later imprisoned in England. Henry V comes across as a pious, good king who could exert cruelty and diplomacy in equal measures in the governing of his kingdom (he considered himself to be king of both England and France). The book details how a medieval army was paid, fed, quartered; taught the arts of war and chivalry and what weapons were utilized (the English archers won the battle as they slaughtered the French attacking them in a rainy, misty dawn across muddy fields). The English had about 6,000 troops but triumphed over the vast French forces facing them. The French were divided by hatreds and factions being poorly led. The English troops were led by Henry a military genius and charismatic leader. Juliet Barker has done a fine job making this 600 year battle come alive for the reader.

This is a phenomenal book for war history people like myself. Looking from the Welsh revolt, finances and even the law requiring the people to use the longbow once a week to practice. Very little will be about the battle itself. Which isn't too bad. Because this book keeps you up to the start of the war process to the end of the war process. It is also an easy read. I would recommend it to any history lover.

Juliet Barker has clearly done her homework regarding the preparations and diplomatic prelude to Henry V's invasion of France in 1415. This book provides wonderful insights as to how Henry built, supplied and transported his army. It is inevitable that a modern reader would draw comparisons to the D-Day preparations of more recent times and I did. Barker spends much of the book explaining Henry's rationale for the war and the political background that gave him a firm belief that his was a just cause. It is remarkable how challenging it was to organize and execute the strategy. One of the benefits of reading this is that it gave me a whole new appreciation for the complexity of medieval

warfare. As other reviewers have pointed out the actual battle of Agincourt is recounted but the buildup and the campaign of Henry's army in France is really the primary focus of Barker's book. Since Shakespeare immortalized the events on the battlefield on St Crispin's Day this book provides a serious historical account of the political, social, economic and military background of the events leading to the field.

A really excellent history of an amazing battle. It included the run up to the fight as well as the aftermath. Interesting read.

If you're at all curious about this monumentally important battle or the politics surrounding it, I recommend this book highly.

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