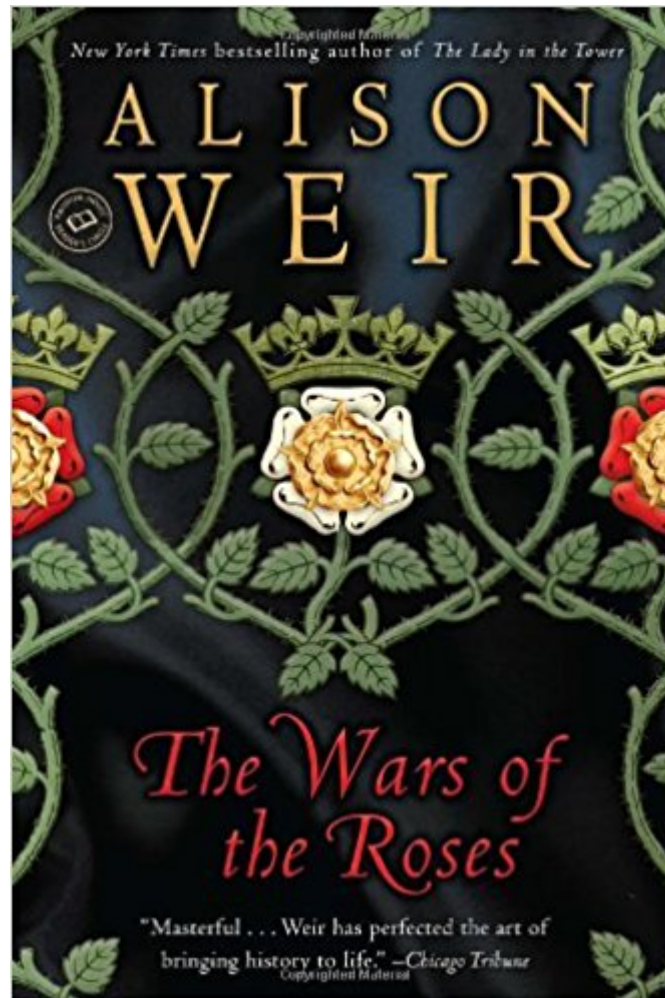




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# The Wars Of The Roses



## Synopsis

Lancaster and York. For much of the fifteenth century, these two families were locked in battle for control of the English throne. Kings were murdered and deposed. Armies marched on London. Old noble names were ruined while rising dynasties seized power and lands. The war between the royal houses of Lancaster and York, the most complex in English history, profoundly altered the course of the monarchy. Alison Weir, one of the foremost authorities on British history, brings brilliantly to life both the war itself and the larger-than-life figures who fought it on the great stage of England. *The Wars of the Roses* is history at its very best—swift and compelling, rich in character, pageantry, and drama, and vivid in its re-creation of an astonishing period of history. Look for special features inside. Join the Circle for author chats and more. [RandomHouseReadersCircle.com](http://RandomHouseReadersCircle.com)

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

YA?This book reaffirms Weir's mastery of English history. Like *The Six Wives of Henry VIII* and *The Princes in the Tower* (both Ballantine, 1993), this title is jam-packed with information. The narrative begins with a short history of the House of Plantaganet, more specifically the disastrous rule of Richard II, which is seen as sowing the seeds of the conflict, and ends with the Battle of Tewkesbury and the murder of King Henry VI. The author weaves the story of the magnate families involved in the politics and rivalries of the era, and makes it understandable, interesting, and readable. Included are the simplified genealogical tables of the families involved as well as extensive primary- and secondary-source bibliographies. Any student of English history will

appreciate the ease with which the period is unveiled and the detailed information on the people and places of England from 1399 to 1500. ?Debbie Hyman, R. E. Lee High School, Springfield, VA  
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In this prequel to her *Princes in the Tower* (LJ 1/94), historian Weir presents a well-written, entertaining narrative of the first phase of the War of the Roses. Accepting the Tudor view that the conflict originated with Richard II's deposition, she devotes half of the book to relations between Lancaster and York from 1399 to 1455. The second half deals with the period from the first Battle of St. Albans (1455) to the Battle of Tewkesbury (1471). Weir centers her narrative upon leading figures?Henry VI, Margaret of Anjou, Richard of York, Edward IV, the earl of Warwick?and others. Though the text lacks footnotes and the bibliography omits some recent scholarship (e.g., by Rosemary Horrox and P.W. Hammond), Weir uses a variety of printed primary sources and secondary works. Much here will be familiar to scholars, but the work is a stimulating discussion as well as a fine introduction for the general reader. ?William B. Robison, Southeastern Louisiana Univ., Hammond  
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this was a magnificent book. the reason i gave it 4 stars instead of 5 is that it is NOT a history of the wars of the roses. it only covers the period of lancaster vs york. however, it covered this in a complete manner, going back to the roots of the war during the reign of richard ii (many books start much later. you lose some of the causes and influences that way. good for red roses, bad for white roses). who, how, why he was disposed of his rule and who took the kingship is crucial to understanding the later claims of york over lancaster.add-in note - i was just reading another book that started in 1420. when it got to a clash between gloucester and a beaufort, there was a quick note about who they were, but not nearly enough context to understand it, unless you know the subject well already.. with this book, you have the context the understand who the beauforts are and why they are realllly important, as well why there would be contention around them. --- end notethe author concentrates on the people and their motivations, rather than just the mind-numbing actions. the corruption of the councils during the two minority kingships, the struggles of the power groups, the influence of france and burgundy, the reform movements that failed due to queen margaret, etc. one ends up knowing the main flow of events and why things occurred as they did.ps - you need to print out the genealogy charts. you can't keep track of the players and their interrelationships without a score card. her chartshave been simplified over most charts one sees, so that you can

see what's going on easily.

So many place names and people names that the story line is very hard to follow. There is a list of the people, but it is at the end and it is not sensitized for the Kindle's ability to rotate the image, nor is it mentioned at the beginning of the book.. In portrait mode the image stands on its left margin oriented vertically. Turn your Kindle 90 degrees and the image is still incorrectly oriented which makes it unusable. There is no map that shows the geographical regions, yet the entire scenario is based on people and events in relation to those regions. (Where is Northumberland?) The number of characters is large and they seem to frequently change allegiance which makes it hard to follow. This is further complicated by sometimes referring to the person by title rather than their name. For someone deeply involved in understanding the chronology, e.g. writing a term paper or thesis, this is probably a great, well researched source document. For someone only desiring an overview this is a very tedious text, which is why I gave it only 3 stars. I found it tough to finish.

The Wars of the Roses had all the elements of a Hollywood epic; adventure, intrigue, knights in armor, battles and romance. Unfortunately, there are so many people involved, with titles and proper names used interchangeably, and so many places, requiring a thorough knowledge of English geography to comprehend, that reading becomes confusing and plodding. At the end, I had learned a considerable amount about this period in British history, but it was more work than pleasure.

The War of the Roses by Alison Weir 4 Stars A reader of this history of the War of the Roses (from the Plantagenets to the final victories of Edward IV) should be extremely interested in the details of British history or enamored of Shakespeare's Henry plays, from Richard II through Richard III. It is even better to have interest in both areas because it is intriguing to compare the actual history to Shakespeare's versions. Alison Weir, to her credit, relies heavily on contemporary sources of the 1400s, often quoting directly from them. This demonstrates the enormous scholarship upon which her history is told. And, it is a very complex history with men often changing from the Lancastrian side to the Yorkist and back again. The story covers all aspects of the Wars, from the background information to the motives of individuals to the battles fought. Though the era has many complexities, Weir relates the story in clear prose that allows the reader to see events as well as to know those individuals caught up in those events. Several family trees (eight in all) plus photographs enhance the text. Two areas of

Weir's scholarship were a bonus to me. First, she often, in telling of an event from the war, reveals where the present-day site is located. Some are obscured by modern buildings; others are marked in some way to commemorate the event. This modern information is another way the 15th Century is brought to life. The second bonus for me was in her naming the numerous geographical locations where events of the War of the Roses took place. As a New Englander, I knew of many places in my part of the country with English namesakes. However, Weir's detailed naming of places in the Wars made me realize how extensive early New Englanders honored place names in their mother country.

I enjoyed this. The narrative read a lot like a novel, so much so that I was sometimes surprised by comments about current times. I don't know the details of the history like some reviewers might, so I don't know where it might have led me astray. But it was engaging for me, enough to keep me reading. Early on, I encountered some confusion when she seemed to be switching between first names and dukedoms. I know, the birth names stick, but the titles change. Still, it can be hard to keep track. I would not let the kindle issues detract from the book itself, but I will complain about the kindle issues. Kindle needs to help the reader by improving access to reference figures such as maps. They're not the same as casual illustrations in a novel. There was a map provided, and I tried to bookmark it, but for some reason it didn't take. I couldn't find it again. I really wanted and needed to refer to it. : Help non-fiction readers with reference illustrations, such as maps, and endnotes. If we read the endnotes, it messes up the "furthest page read." Think about that, please, . All books aren't novels. A book with endnotes (and this one didn't have them) needs different treatment.

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