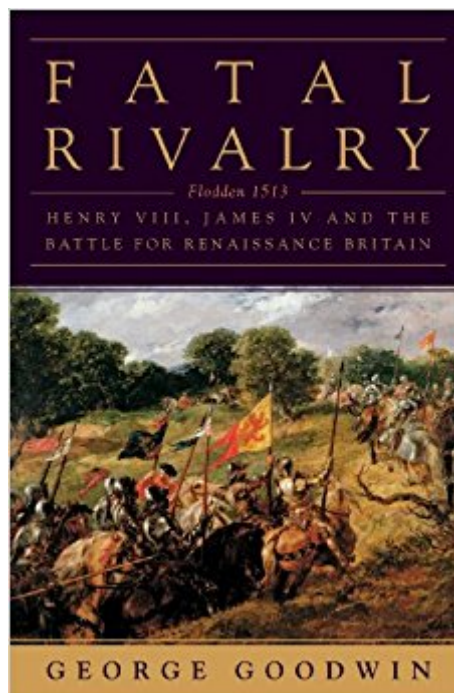




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# Fatal Rivalry: Flodden, 1513: Henry VIII And James IV And The Decisive Battle For Renaissance Britain



## Synopsis

Flodden 1513: the biggest and bloodiest Anglo-Scottish battle. Its causes spanned many centuries; its consequences were as extraordinary as the battle itself. On September 9, 1513, the vicious rivalry between the young Henry VIII of England and his charismatic brother-in-law, James IV of Scotland, ended in violence at Flodden Field in the north of England. It was the inevitable climax to years of mounting personal and political tension through which James bravely asserted Scotland's independence and Henry demanded its obedience. In *Fatal Rivalry*, George Goodwin, the best-selling author of *Fatal Colours*, captures the vibrant Renaissance splendor of the royal courts of England and Scotland, with their unprecedented wealth, innovation, and artistic expression. He shows how the wily Henry VII, far from the miser king of tradition, spent vast sums to secure his throne and elevate the monarchy to a new standard of magnificence among the courts of Europe. He demonstrates how James IV competed with the elder Henry, even claiming that Arthurian legend supported a separate Scottish identity. Such rivalry served as a substitute for war until Henry VIII's belligerence forced the real thing. As England and Scotland scheme toward their biggest-ever battle, Goodwin deploys a fascinating and treacherous cast of characters: maneuvering ministers, cynical foreign allies, conspiring cardinals, and contrasting queens in Katherine of Aragon and Margaret Tudor. Finally, at Flodden on September 9, 1513, King James seems poised for the crushing victory that will confirm him as Scotland's greatest king and if an old military foe proves unable to stop him put all of Britain in his grasp. Five hundred years after this decisive battle, *Fatal Rivalry* combines original sources and modern scholarship to re-create the royal drama, the military might, and the world in transition that created this bitter conflict.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

The title of George Goodwin's book, "Fatal Rivalry: Flodden, 1513: Henry VIII and James IV and the Decisive Battle for Renaissance Britain", really sums up the book's contents in that one sentence. But there's a lot of great details about the two kingdoms, uneasily sharing a single island, and their diplomatic and military history. By the way, Henry VIII was not at the battle but his foe, Scotland's James IV was killed by English troops. The most interesting person, hands down, was James IV, of the House of Stewart. He ruled Scotland after his father's - James III - death under somewhat murky circumstances. He came to the throne in 1488 and was killed in battle 25 years later. His reign straddled the reigns of the English kings, Henry VII and Henry VIII. In 1503, he wed Margaret, the daughter of Henry VII and sister of Henry VIII. The marriage was an attempt to solidify the often rocky relationship between the House of Tudor and the House of Stewart. Things were quiet for a few years but each country's relationships and pacts between the continental powers of Austria, France, Spain, and the Vatican added to the unrest between the two countries. James was a true Renaissance spirit in the artistic sense, but was also accomplished in battle. Goodwin gives both James and the two Henrys nuanced portrayals in his book. One interesting fact that I've never read anywhere else concerns Henry VII's obsession to insure the continuance of the House of Tudor. Evidently Henry had a great fear of eternal damnation and wanted to make sure chancery masses for his soul continued after his death. He felt that if his descendants retained power, Henry would be sure of having these masses said. Goodwin's book is quite detailed about the events leading up to the Battle of Flodden, as well as the aftermath, but he writes in a very readable way. I'm not sure this book will appeal to the casual reader of history, but to readers interested in the background of the English/Scottish relationship, and, in particular, how Elizabeth I's successor in 1603 was the Scottish king James VI, this book is great reading. There are plenty of maps and plenty of pictures of the leading characters of the time. Another book I can highly recommend is Thomas Penn's book, "The Winter King: Henry VII and the Dawn of Tudor England".

I found this book to be well written and kept my attention it was well researched and gave me considerable insight not only of England and Scotland but all of Europe at the time 1500-and would like to read more books by George Goodwin

I first heard about Flodden in the mid-fifties when, as a boy, I read a history of Scotland. There was not a lot written about the battle or its consequences--the writer of the history was a Scot. Now after reading 'Fatal Rivalry' I comprehend the importance of the battle and its devastating effects on Scotland and its nobility. George Goodwin, as he did with Fatal Colours about the battle of Towton, gives us the context of the battle and provides an amazing amount of insight into the battle itself. Sources are skimpy about actual medieval battles, and I believe the author gives us a much detail as he can without 'making it up.' I look forward to more of Mr. Goodwin easy prose style and exciting pace. In addition to Goodwin's 'Fatal Colours' about the battle of Towton, I also suggest a read of 'The Winter King: Henry VII and the Dawn of Tudor England' by Thomas Penn. The more you read about the Wars of the Roses the more you start to understand what came afterwards.

A very detailed account of the terrible slaughter of the Scotts army.

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