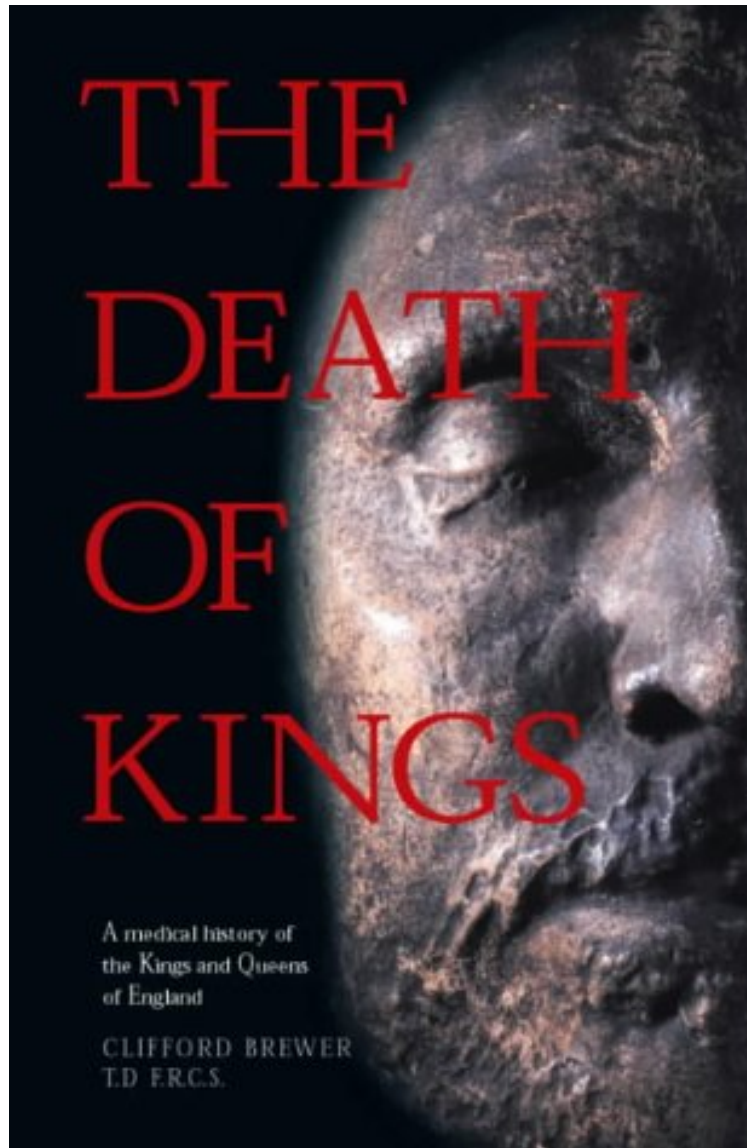


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The Death of Kings: A Medical History of the Kings and Queens of England

Clifford Brewer

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Clifford Brewer : The Death of Kings: A Medical History of the Kings and Queens of England before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised The Death of Kings: A Medical History of the Kings and Queens of England:

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. The mysteries are solved! (Almost)By J. L. RainoneI have been

looking for book like this for years. It is excellent! Each chronological chapter gives a short history of each English monarch and analyzes what physicians and witnesses recorded about each king's illnesses/ailments prior to death. It sounds ghoulish, but it's very interesting what modern medicine makes of the symptoms. Of course, it would be really helpful if DNA analysis was permitted, but the current monarchy has declined such requests. Therefore, in the absence of irrefutable proof, this book is the next best thing. The author has an easy writing style which makes the chapters fly by. He is a physician by trade so he draws on the research of modern medicine. I wish he would consider future endeavors on the deaths of other historical figures. 18 of 18 people found the following review helpful. This Book Helps to Answer Many Questions By Sharon A. Hutchinson Most reviewers here have already written of the many merits of this book. I would just like to add that the author presents each case with a measure of sympathy for the sufferer of ailments which puzzled the best medical minds of their respective time periods. As an example, the image of Henry VIII conjures up a bully—a domineering and heartless ruler. But considering that Henry was probably dealing with some very serious health issues that affected him not only physically but also psychologically, one begins to understand the relatively swift descent of this monarch from a budding Renaissance prince to a feared sovereign. The author also presents a more sympathetic view of medical men of ages past, before the benefit of modern scientific discoveries and identification of many illnesses. Though he admits there were many "quacks", Dr. Brewer also educates the reader regarding some astute individuals who were very sincere in their attempts to understand and help their patients. We would not have the medical knowledge of today if it hadn't been for the efforts of these pioneering medical men, who are all too often ridiculed for holding the often very erroneous views of illnesses so prevalent at the time that they lived. Anyone interested in British history and/or the history of medicine will enjoy this book. The author has reached out across the centuries and provided an honest and interesting look at not only the monarchs and their maladies, but the medical response to their often puzzling and deadly ailments, both physical and mental. Very highly recommended. 16 of 16 people found the following review helpful. British kings and queens meet the grim reaper By P. B. Sharp Although the surgeon-author is not a gifted writer there are some fascinating facts to be gleaned from this book. For instance, Charles I's corpse had completely disappeared and nobody knew where he was located until centuries after his death in 1649 when he was found to be resting between Henry VIII and Jane Seymour at Windsor. His severed head was still recognizable with the Van Dyke beard in place. Charles died from the axe, of course, and there were several murders (including Richard II and Edward II). The various diseases suffered by English monarchs are discussed in detail. Queen Anne, for instance, likely suffered from lupus, her obesity and her failure to produce a live child or one that lived longer than a few days, are the reason for that diagnosis. 17 of her dead babies were found in the tomb of Mary Queen of Scots for reasons unknown. Syphilis was rampant among kings, Charles II being perhaps the most notorious lecher. Henry VIII has often been suspected of having syphilis, but the author says unlikely. The ulcer in his leg was not a syphilitic gumma but a wound he had sustained in the jousts and which infected the bone underneath. And poor young Edward VI died horribly of tuberculosis, his hair fallen out, his fingernail gangrenous. Then there is Queen Victoria whose waist measured 46 inches—she was truly five by five. She succumbed to heart disease and the complications of obesity and is the last monarch discussed in the book. This history of British royals and how death claimed them is a fine read, not really depressing and certainly not voyeuristic, just interesting. Want to know what happened to Oliver Cromwell's head? Read the book!

A catalogue of the ailments of Britain's monarchs of from Edward the Confessor to Victoria, written by a surgeon. Using the most up-to-date research, Brewer interprets historic accounts of symptoms, odd behaviour and murder to identify the cause of death for each monarch, including new diagnoses for the conditions of Queen Anne and George III. The book concludes with a location list of royal tombs.