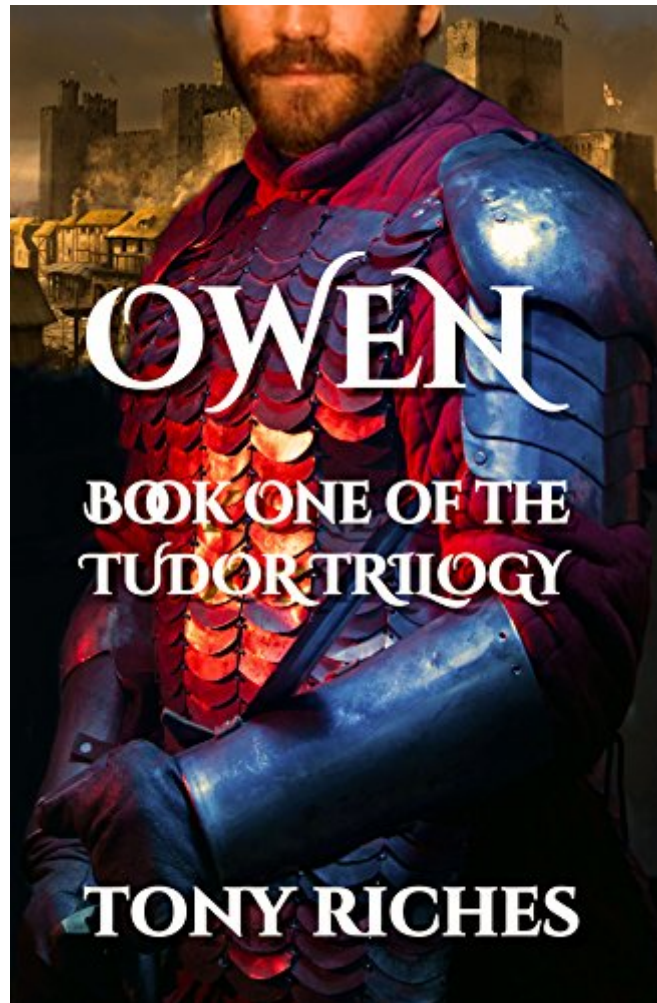


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Owen - Book One Of The Tudor Trilogy



Synopsis

Best Seller - Historical Fiction > Biographical England 1422: Owen Tudor, a Welsh servant, waits in Windsor Castle to meet his new mistress, the beautiful and lonely Queen Catherine of Valois, widow of the warrior king, Henry V. Her infant son is crowned King of England and France, and while the country simmers on the brink of civil war, Owen becomes her protector. They fall in love, risking Owen's life and Queen Catherine's reputation "but how do they found the dynasty which changes British history - the Tudors? This is the first historical novel to fully explore the amazing life of Owen Tudor, grandfather of King Henry VII and the great-grandfather of King Henry VIII. Set against a background of the conflict between the Houses of Lancaster and York, which develops into what have become known as the Wars of the Roses, Owen's story deserves to be told. Owen - Book One of the Tudor Trilogy from Tony Riches is a new addition to story of the Tudors and the great historical fiction tradition of C J Sansom, Conn Iggulden, Philippa Gregory and Hilary Mantel.

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Customer Reviews

I love a good, intelligent historical novel. There are so many out there, and I have to be honest and

say that, on many occasions, I have bought a promising looking book, only to abandon it within the first few chapters. Very often, the detail won't be right, or the characters will behave in a way that just isn't realistic for the time. One of the main issues though is that the dialogue can be so hard to get right. I've read so many historical novels where the characters use words that just wouldn't have been around in the period in which they are set, or, alternatively, where the writer is so keen to make the dialogue authentic that they overdo it and render the book unreadable. I'm pleased to say that neither of those things were issues in this book. The historical detail was rich and informative. I felt as though I learned a great deal about this particular period of history while immersed completely in Owen's story. And the language was spot on too. Nothing felt out of place. The story is fascinating. Owen Tudor, a Welsh servant, falls in love with Queen Catherine of Valois, the widow of King Henry V. I had never heard of Owen, and knew nothing of his remarkable story. Their romance, and the dangers it brings, is played out against the background of the conflicts, intrigues and betrayals of the time that led to the War of the Roses. Riches certainly knows his subject. There was so much detail here. The reader is carried from Windsor, to Wales, to France, into battles and life at court, with rich detail at every turn. I felt though, that there was so much detail here, so much going on, that Owen's own story was a little lost at times - in terms of his emotions and feelings. I didn't always feel connected to him, even though the novel is written in first person.

Move over, Philippa Gregory! I love to read books about the Tudors, so when Rosie Amber offered a historical novel about the founding of the Tudor dynasty, about which I knew nothing, I couldn't resist. The story begins in England in 1422. Owen Tudor, who comes from a line of Welsh nobleman but of humble beginnings, has risen by virtue of hard work and not a little luck, from being a soldier in the King's army to keeper of the Queen's household. His mistress, Catherine of Valois, is both beautiful and lonely - her husband Henry V, is a warrior and often away, leaving her with their infant son. Hers is a dangerous life, with civil war simmering at home as various noble families jockey to influence and rule Prince Henry, crowned King of England and France when his father dies. Owen begins an affair with Juliette, one of Catherine's Ladies-in-Waiting, but it becomes clear that his real love is for the Queen. He becomes her protector, and against all odds, she falls in love with him. Eventually they risk all to marry and then have a large family together, in the process founding the dynasty that becomes an epicenter of British history. The book is impeccably researched and written, quite an accomplishment given that there is not a lot of extant information on Owen Tudor's life. I sensed a difference between the story up to the time of Catherine and Owen's marriage and what happened afterward - a little stiff, as Owen's relationships in the

household were until his marriage, then more flowing and easy, as if marriage empowered and relaxed Owen. One thing that left me still wondering to the end is the unlikelihood of Owen and Catherineâ€™s love and marriage, but history canâ€™t be wrong!

4.5 stars
Reviewed by me as part of Rosie Amber's Review Team
I am deeply fascinated by all things Plantagenet and Tudor, so leapt on this book when it became available on Rosie Amber's review team list. I was particularly eager to read it as Owen Tudor is someone about whom I knew little, apart from his having been Henry VIII's great grandfather. My knowledge of the events leading up to the Wars of the Roses is sketchy, too, so this book was an education as well as a great story. The novel is perfectly edited and proofread, which was a real treat in these days of dubious standards; I could tell that Mr Riches had spent a great deal of time drafting and redrafting, and the structure of the novel itself is extremely well thought out. The story flows beautifully throughout and is simply written in the present tense, which is always an odd choice but worked well in this case. At first I was not very taken with Riches' Owen Tudor; he seemed like a bit of a stuffed shirt and I couldn't imagine why he aroused such passion in Juliette the servant girl and Queen Catherine de Valois. I found the prose a little stilted, though not terribly. I much preferred the latter half of the book, after Catherine's death, when it loosened up considerably, Owen's adventurous side came to the fore and I became engrossed. I looked forward to the introduction of characters about whom I know more: Margaret Beaufort (one of my favourite women in history), and Jasper Tudor, who I've always rather fancied; well done, Mr Riches, you portrayed him so well! That the book is well researched is clear; many domestic details are included, but these are artfully woven into the story, rather than lumped in to show how much the author has mugged up before beginning to write.

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