

The Hundred Years War, Volume 2: Trial by Fire (The Middle Ages Series)

Jonathan Sumption



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A succession of catastrophes in the middle years of the fourteenth century brought France to the brink of destruction. The bankruptcy of the French state and a bitter civil war within the royal family were followed by the defeat and capture of the King of France by the Black Prince at Poitiers. A peasant revolt and a violent revolution in Paris completed the tragedy. In a humiliating treaty of partition France ceded more than a third of its territory to Edward III of England. Not for sixty years would the English again come so close to total victory.

Yet the theme of the volume is not destruction, but survival. France's great cities, provincial towns and rural communities resisted where its leaders failed. They withstood the sustained savagery of the soldiers and the free companies of brigands to undo most of Edward III's work in the following generation. England's triumphs proved to be brittle and short-lived.

Based on a wide range of contemporary sources, both printed and unprinted, *The Hundred Years War*, *Volume 2: Trial by Fire* is the absorbing continuation of Jonathan Sumption's monumental history of the Hundred Years War.

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