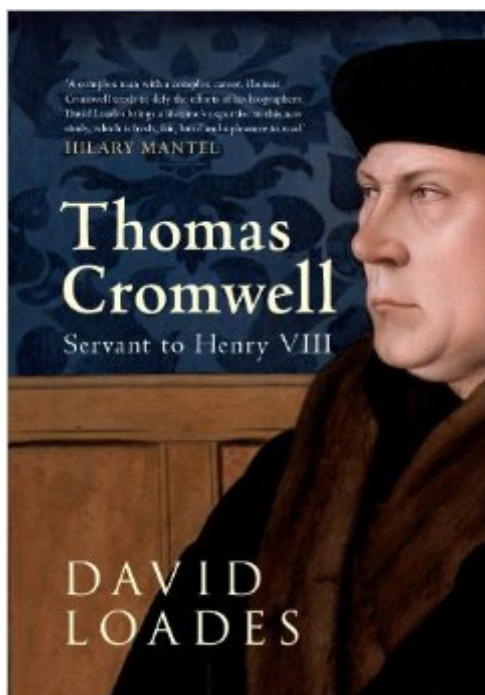


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# Thomas Cromwell: Servant To Henry VIII



## Synopsis

Thomas Cromwell was a self-made lawyer, who served first Cardinal Wolsey and then Henry VIII. His time with Wolsey was an apprenticeship that served him well in his work for the king, after the Cardinal's fall from power in 1529. Cromwell's time in office from 1530 until his execution in 1540 was one of the most crucial periods in English history. This biography shows how he managed his relationship with Henry VIII and why he failed. It also shows how he manipulated the politics of the Court that eventually destroyed him. The rise and fall of the Boleyns, the dominance of the Dukes of Norfolk and Suffolk, and the executions of Thomas More and John Fisher all play their part in Thomas Cromwell's life. Eventually he overreached himself in his patronage of evangelical preachers, and in arranging the Cleves marriage, which played a crucial part in his fall and death in July 1540.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

Loades presents us with an informative and detailed examination of Cromwell's life and achievements, basing his conclusions on careful analysis of source material and the reliability of those sources. His narrative style is surprisingly dry in this book compared with his far more readable *Mary Tudor* and *Six Wives of Henry VIII*. Offering examples to support opinions is normally a good thing, but some of his lists border on tedium when it amounts to names, the amount of money involved, or the type of gift given. Loades provides us with a favorable view of Cromwell. He was a congenial man known for his hospitality. He centralized government, cemented the

importance of Parliament, and his administrative reforms in Wales elevated them out of second-class status. He tried to save Thomas More from himself, helped Mary Tudor regain favor with her father, showed moderation in dealing with dissidents, and sought to minimize social disorder stemming from the dissolution of the monasteries (the dissolution not being his idea in the first place). He revered the law and was known for judicial fairness. Yet here, Loades seems to overlook or ignore a crucial point. He specifically states that it is a myth that Cromwell rode roughshod over the law in dealing with people, yet his own description of Anne Boleyn's fall suggests just that. The case against her was based on little more than rumor, Cromwell manipulated the jury, kept the sympathetic Cranmer away from Henry, and targeted the whole Boleyn faction so as to remove his enemies. Other points where Loades's treatment of the material may indicate a mild bias in Cromwell's favor include the disastrous handling of the Irish.

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