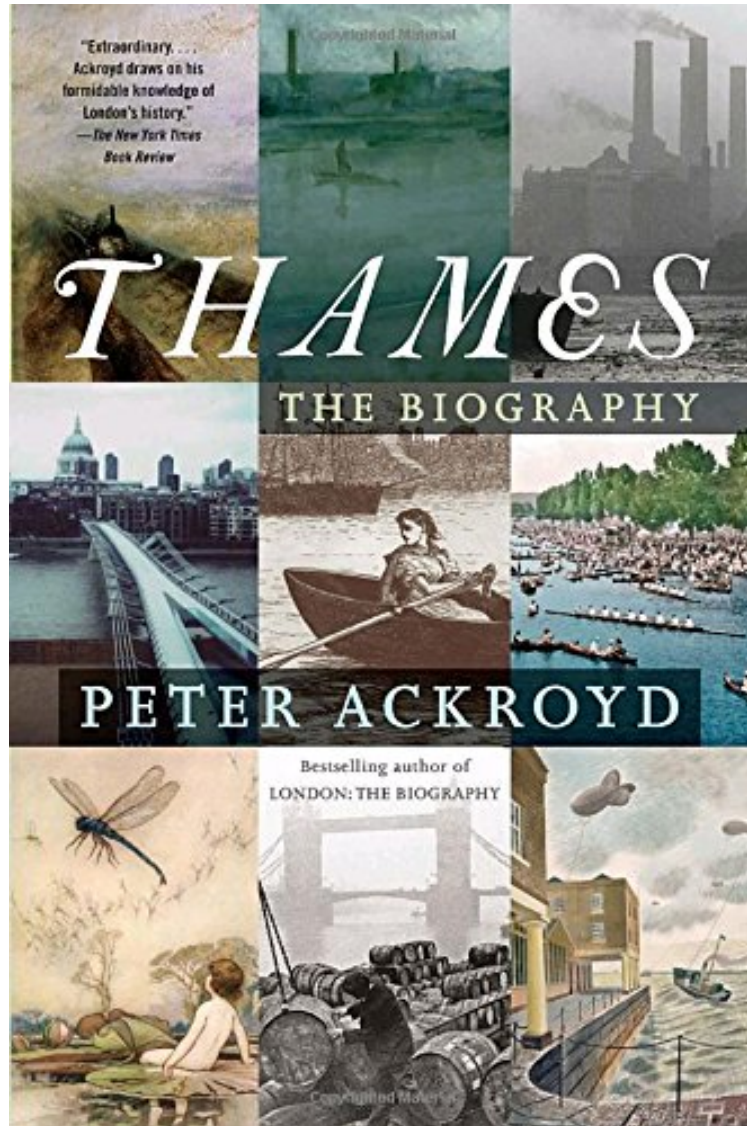


(Mobile pdf) Thames: The Biography

## Thames: The Biography

*Peter Ackroyd*

*ePub | \*DOC | audiobook | ebooks | Download PDF*



DOWNLOAD



+

READ ONLINE

#1333383 in Books Ackroyd, Peter 2009-11-03 2009-11-03 Original language: English PDF # 1 9.21 x 1.19 x 6.14l, 1.52 #File Name: 0307389847528 pages | File size: 63.Mb

**Peter Ackroyd : Thames: The Biography** before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Thames: The Biography:

1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. The Bookschlepper RecommendsBy Jean Sue LibkindThis is an encyclopedia on the English river, covering every element: the facts, the metaphors, the history, the battles, the religious edifices, trade and industry, the re-shaping, the biology, the games and recreation, and the art and music. Structured in two ways, chronological and geographical, the scope of information is lightened by anecdotes. There are

chapters that will be of interest to any reader and some that will seem extraneous but the flow will carry you from tide to tide, from fresh to salt water, from the Cotswolds to beyond London. This is an unusual concept for a book, well executed. 5 of 5 people found the following review helpful. If all of it were as good as the first 100 pages ... 5 stars! By Michael Douglas Ackroyd's book is like an Easter egg hunt. Within its forty-five chapters lies some delightfully written historical narrative that has one turning pages eagerly looking for more. By the second half of the book, though, one must look harder, reaching a point where entire chapters leave one wondering if there are eggs left to be found. To be sure, if you are a fan of British history and literature - and enjoy good writing - this book will not disappoint. Stylistically, *Thames: The Biography*, is not presented as a conventional chronological biography. Rather, as Ackroyd lays out in Section I, he employs the device of using the River Thames as the ever-present bystander to the historical and cultural events that have taken place upon, around, and - sometimes - beneath it. He covers a lot of ground (and water) writing about those things you would expect in a book like this, and has clearly done his homework -- glaciation, the Celts and Romans, human sacrifice, the Venerable Bede, Milne, the Great Fire, the Docklands, Henry I - VIII, the Henley Regatta and, hey, even Jack the Ripper -- it's all there. Like other reviewers have commented, though, some chapters seemed a real stretch ... as if his editor was pushing to get it to 400 pages (e.g. Chapters 27 and 28 -- "The Ancient Trees" and "And After Many a Summer Dies the Swan" left me debating whether I wanted to finish the book). And, yes, I agreed with the reviewer who observed that Ackroyd's oft-repeated baleful characterization of the River Thames begins to take its toll. All said, I'm glad I finished it. While all of the book may not be an engaging read, if you can get past some questionable chapters and stylistic quirks it will provide you with a genuinely interesting and thorough education of the River Thames. 0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. This is a must read before you visit London. By Sandra D. Lipsey Ackroyd has written a thorough look at the river that we think as quintessentially as London itself. The reality is that Londoners have used the river without taking care of its contribution to their lives. So it is one of the great rivers of the world where you cannot walk, or motor along it for views to the changes the river makes its way to the ocean. The writing is concrete, even though the book seems long. You will understand the underground tunnels and life in them, the history of garbage and waste in a very urban, constantly changing waterway. And I haven't even mentioned how the tides effect the river, life along it and the history of England's industrial evolution. Good reading!

In this perfect companion to *London: The Biography*, Peter Ackroyd once again delves into the hidden byways of history, describing the river's endless allure in a journey overflowing with characters, incidents, and wry observations. *Thames: The Biography* meanders gloriously, rather like the river itself. In short, lively chapters Ackroyd writes about connections between the Thames and such historical figures as Julius Caesar and Henry VIII, and offers memorable portraits of the ordinary men and women who depend upon the river for their livelihoods. The Thames as a source of artistic inspiration comes brilliantly to life as Ackroyd invokes Chaucer, Shakespeare, Turner, Shelley, and other writers, poets, and painters who have been enchanted by its many moods and colors.

From Publishers Weekly Starred . For a river with such a famous history, England's Thames measures only 215 miles. Acclaimed novelist and biographer Ackroyd (Hawksmoor; Shakespeare) invites readers on an eclectic, sprawling and delightful cruise of this important waterway. The Thames has been a highway, a frontier and an attack route; it has been a playground and a sewer, a source of water and a source of power, writes Ackroyd. Historians believe the river may have been important for transport and commerce as early as the Neolithic Age. The ancient Egyptian goddess Isis has a long association with the Thames, which was used for baptisms, both pagan and Christian, during the Roman Empire. The British tribes tried to use the Thames as a defense against Julius Caesar's invasion, and the Normans built the Tower of London and Windsor Castle on the Thames as symbols of military preeminence. The royal waterway carried Anne Boleyn to both her coronation and her beheading, and famously served as inspiration for paintings by Turner and Monet and for Handel's *Water Music*, commissioned to associate the German-born George I with a potent source of English power. Elegant and erudite, Ackroyd's gathering of rich treats does the famed tributary proud. Illus., maps. (Nov. 4) Copyright © Reed Business Information, a division of Reed Elsevier Inc. All rights reserved. From *The New Yorker* This lavishly produced volume is Ackroyd's omnivorous paean to "the shortest river in the world to acquire such a famous history." Eschewing standard organization, Ackroyd jumps from today's posh London banks to Roger Bacon's observatory at Grandpont to Dickens's "deathlike and mysterious" waterway. We learn about the riverbank's many species of willow (white, weeping, crack, cane osier), and about the Retribution and the Belliqueux, eighteenth-century prison boats that each held hundreds of men. A chapter on types of sludge through history makes one grateful for today's raw sewage, as opposed to the "Intrails of bestes" that washed up in the fifteenth century. A survey of the many ways in which the river can kill notes that most Thames suicides remain "anonymous and unlamented." Not every tidbit will appeal to every reader, but the book demands to be read as it was written, according to one's fancy. Copyright ©2008 Click here to subscribe to *The New Yorker* From *Bookmarks Magazine* Peter Ackroyd can easily be forgiven his exaggeration in claiming that the Thames is more famous than the or the Mississippi. His gift for storytelling and lovely prose make *Thames* a rewarding read. Several critics thought the

narrative structure should have flowed steadily from Point A to Point B instead of meandering, like the river itself, across space and time. They also bemoaned the long lists, generalizations, and repeated attempts to endow the river with spiritual significance. Despite these complaints, critics genuinely enjoyed Thames. "His Thames is not just the river that runs all the way from the Wiltshire borders through London to the sea (enough, you might think, for one book)," notes the reviewer from the Telegraph; "it is also the quintessential global River." Copyright 2008 Bookmarks Publishing LLC