



Reprobates: The Cavaliers of the English Civil War

John Stubbs

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“Stubbs [has] a storyteller’s gift for atmosphere and drama.”?Wall Street Journal

From disastrous foreign forays to syphilitic poets, from political intrigues to ambitious young playwrights keen to curry favor with the king, John Stubbs brings alive the vibrant cast of characters that was at the center of the English Civil War.

In *Reprobates*, the acclaimed biographer John Stubbs finds his new subject in England’s turbulent decades of the mid-seventeenth century. With conflict between the monarchy and Parliament threatening to explode, a group of courtiers and army officers known as the Cavaliers emerged to defend the king. They were jeeringly labeled “Cavaliers” then a term for a gallant or a rogue by their opponents on the streets of London. Their movement was soon memorialized by poets such as Robert Herrick, whose poem “To the Virgins, to Make Much of Time” which begins, “Gather ye rosebuds while ye may” later became a carpe diem anthem for their lost cause. Often imagined as elegant gentlemen, chivalrous and dandified, the Cavaliers were also originally to be found in the form of the gambler and poet Sir John Suckling or his syphilitic friend William Davenant.

Stubbs sheds new light on this groundbreaking group of men, on their world and their journeys through it, in peace and war, from the Blackfriars Playhouse to the battlefields of King Charles’s kingdoms.

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