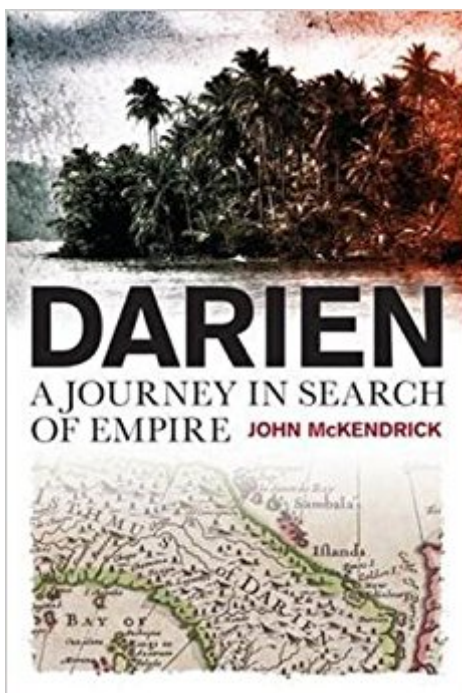


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Darien: A Journey In Search Of Empire



Synopsis

The Company of Scotland and its attempts to establish the colony of Caledonia on the inhospitable isthmus of Panama in the late seventeenth century is one of the most tragic moments of Scottish history. It could have been a triumph, but inadequate preparation and organization ensured it was a catastrophe. Of the 3000 settlers who set sail in 1688 and 1699, only a handful returned, the rest having succumbed to disease, and the enormous financial loss was a key factor in ensuring union with England in 1707. John McKendrick explores this fascinating and seminal moment in Scottish history and uncovers fascinating new information from New World archives about the role of the English and Spanish, and about the identities of the settlers themselves.

Book Information

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'a meticulously detailed account that spares no-one's blushes. ...He makes [his own travels] vividly relevant to the central theme' * Scots Magazine * '[A] machete wielding history that sees its author leaping from dugout canoes and hacking through tropical vegetation in the footsteps of the lost colonists' * Scottish Field *

John McKendrick was born and brought up in Glasgow. He studied at the LSE and Oxford and is currently a barrister in London and an advocate in Edinburgh. He also worked for two years in Panama and the Caribbean. He was Times Lawyer of the Week in 2013.

You don't have to be Scottish or love history to love this book. From the dreams and gambling of fortunes to pursue them, to the killing, stealing and defiance of nature that have so long gone with the ambitions of men great and small, McKendrick paints a timeless portrait of human frailties, greed and fears that breathes through his art. He strips away the usually final, fatal and futile grays encasing the past and awakens curiosity by reminding us that we are surrounded by the shadows of those who preceded us. Having risked his safety among passive-aggressive villagers and escaped an absolutely terrifying disorientation in a sweltering jungle, he enlivens our views of the Caribbean, the US eastern seaboard, and what became Great Britain. He ultimately overlays the past and present with a spectacular flourish connecting the fate and faith of one man in the late 1600s to global imperialism and commerce today. Look at life and history through his lens, and you'll learn, laugh and love McKendrick's book. Enjoy!

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