

How the Flemish left their stamp on Britain over the centuries

Flemings!

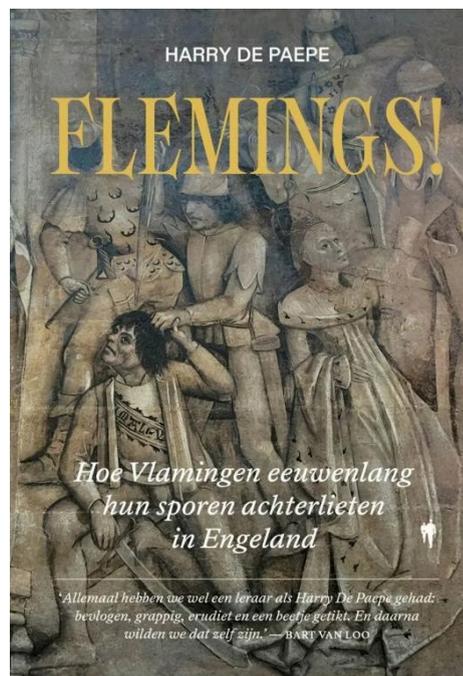
HARRY DE PAEPE

Everyone has heard of Ian Fleming, the author of the James Bond books. Far fewer people know that the surname of this bestselling British author points to his Flemish roots. The people who ventured across from Flanders to England in the early Middle Ages and settled there were known as Flemings – a designation that reflected both their origins and their reputation.

Harry De Paepe tells the fascinating story of the Flemings in a lively and accessible style. No dry enumeration of facts here but a captivating history full of battles, trade routes, court intrigues and cultural exchanges. He shows how mobility, migration and mutual influence have propelled European history for centuries. Along the way he purposefully steers the reader away from the idea of Britain as an isolated island.

Throughout the book it becomes clear just how significant the Flemish impact on Britain has been. The first Queen of England was of Flemish descent, and a knight from the Low Countries saved the life of William the Conqueror during the famous Battle of Hastings. Flemings helped English trade flourish; Anthony van Dyck became the favourite portraitist of the English court; and Flemings even introduced cricket to the British Isles and beyond.

The strength of this book lies in the way De Paepe weaves major historical developments together with vivid, concrete examples. In a sweeping narrative, he describes the lasting influence of the Flemings in Britain, from the early Middle Ages right up to the present day.



AUTHOR



Harry De Paepe (b. 1981) is a Belgian history teacher and a passionate expert on British politics and culture. His previous books include 'The Story of Flanders', 'Haunted', 'God Save King Charles', 'Sausage' and 'The Two Sides of the Channel'.

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