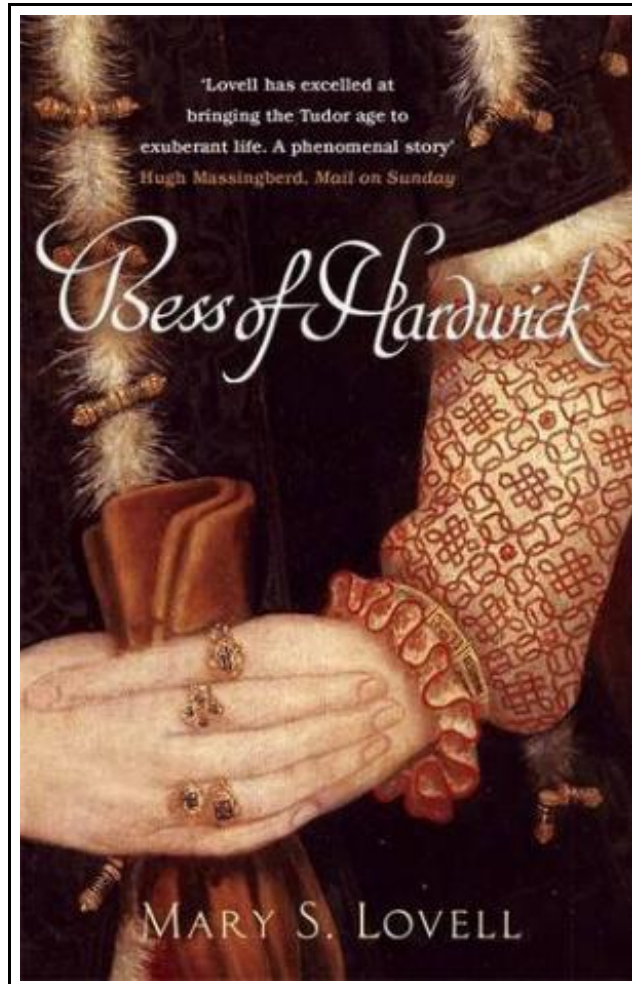


Bess of Hardwick: First Lady of Chatsworth



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Reviews

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(Robyn Nolan)

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Little, Brown Book Group. Paperback. Book Condition: new. BRAND NEW, Bess of Hardwick: First Lady of Chatsworth, Mary S. Lovell, Bess of Hardwick was one of the most remarkable women of the Tudor era. Gently-born in reduced circumstances, she was married at 15, wedded at 16 and still a virgin. At 19 she married a man more than twice her age, Sir William Cavendish, a senior auditor in King Henry VIII's Court of Augmentations. Responsible for seizing church properties for the crown during the Dissolution, Cavendish enriched himself in the process. During the reign of King Edward VI, Cavendish was the Treasurer to the boy king and sisters and he and Bess moved in the highest levels of society. They had a London home and built Chatsworth House in Derbyshire. After Cavendish's death her third husband was poisoned by his brother. Bess' 4th marriage to the patrician George, 6th Earl of Shrewsbury, Earl Marshall of England, made Bess one of the most important women at court. Her shrewd business acumen was a byword and she was said to have 'a masculine understanding', in that age when women had little education and few legal rights. The Earl's death made her arguably the wealthiest and therefore - next to the Queen - the most powerful woman in the country.

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