

Hennessy

Land of Shame and Glory

Britain 2021-22

Peter Hennessy brings his deep political and historical understanding to this study of two of the most turbulent and disruptive years experienced by Britain in peacetime. As the protracted withdrawal from the EU and the disruption caused by the Covid-19 pandemic dragged on, a series of unprecedented challenges – some global, some domestic – laid bare the fragility of Britain the Union. Beginning with the chaotic Fall of Kabul, which exposed Britain's military dependence on the United States, through the protracted, unedifying removal of a prime minister – and the economically catastrophic, short-lived tenure of his successor – that further exposed the vulnerabilities of an unwritten constitution to the country sweltering in record breaking temperatures amid dire warnings of climate catastrophe; and finally to the death of a much-loved monarch, a point of constancy during decades of tremendous social and technological change. In his final chapter, Hennessy considers the continuities and upheavals of the last seventy years, asking whether there can be said to have been a second 'Elizabethan Age', and lamenting that the post-war period came close to its close amid such upheaval and loss.

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