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‘Vivid, humane and  
 superbly researched’  
 David Starkey

## GEORGE GOODWIN

### Fatal Rivalry, Flodden 1513

**The relationship of England and Scotland became defined by the Battle of Flodden.**

500 years ago this September, at Flodden in Northumberland, 26,000 English and almost 40,000 Scots fought a battle that dwarfs any other British battle – in size, bloodshed and finality. The ‘fatal rivalry’ was between Henry VIII of England, then a glamorous 22-year-old king, and the charismatic James IV of Scotland, who had established a separate identity for his country.

There was also sibling rivalry – James IV was married to Henry’s sister, Margaret. The personalities of the key players – James, Henry and their respective queens, Margaret and Katherine of Aragon, and the grizzled veteran commander Thomas Howard, Earl of Surrey, are the cornerstones of this narrative.

England had emerged from a century of war – the 100 Years War and then the Wars of the Roses – culminating in Richard III’s defeat at Bosworth. Scotland had endured a savage four-generation power struggle. James IV had defeated the Lords of the Isles, making him the first ruler of a unified Scotland, but unity stopped there: the Anglo-Scottish ‘Treaty of Perpetual Peace’ was destroyed by the Henry VIII’s thirst for glory in France and forced England and Scotland into a pan-European war.

Flodden was also a battle between the medieval and modern worlds. A new form of infantry fighting meant the English prevailed, and James IV became the last British king to die in battle.

**George Goodwin** is author of bestselling *Fatal Colours*, the story of the Battle of Towton in the War of the Roses. He is a history graduate of Pembroke College, Cambridge, and a Fellow of the Royal Society of Arts.

#### author snapshot

Location: Kew, Surrey  
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[www.flodden1513.com](http://www.flodden1513.com)



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