



Family Britain, 1951-1957 (Tales of a New Jerusalem)

David Kynaston

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
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As in *Austerity Britain*, an astonishing array of vivid, intimate and unselfconscious voices drive this narrative. The keen-eyed Nella Last shops assiduously at Barrow Market as austerity and rationing gradually give way to relative abundance; housewife Judy Haines, relishing the detail of suburban life, brings up her children in Chingford; and, the self-absorbed civil servant Henry St John perfects the art of grumbling. These and many other voices give a rich, unsentimental picture of everyday life in the 1950s. We also encounter well-known figures on the way, such as Doris Lessing (joining and later leaving the Communist Party), John Arlott (sticking up on *Any Questions?* for the rights of homosexuals) and Tiger's Roy of the Rovers (making his goal-scoring debut for Melchester). All this is part of a colourful, unfolding tapestry, in which the great national events - the Tories returning to power, the death of George VI, the Coronation of Queen Elizabeth, the Suez Crisis - jostle alongside everything that gave Britain in the 1950s its distinctive flavour: Butlin's holiday camps, Kenwood food mixers, "Hancock's Half-Hour", Ekco television sets, Davy Crockett, skiffle and teddy boys. Deeply researched, David Kynaston's "Family Britain" offers an unrivalled take on a largely cohesive, ordered, still very hierarchical society gratefully starting to move away from the painful hardships of the 1940s towards domestic ease and affluence.

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