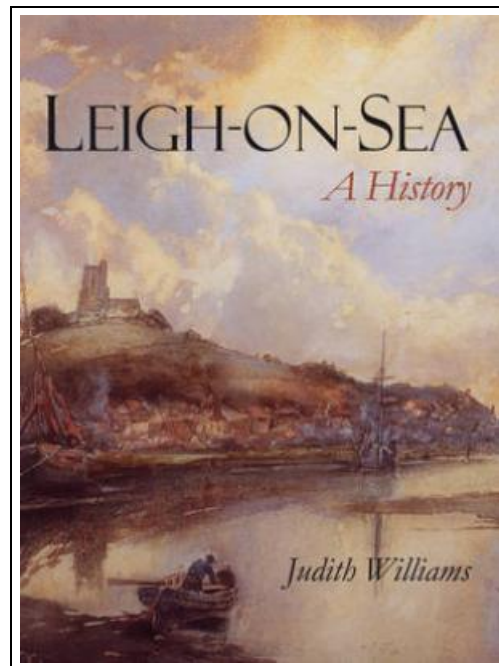


Leigh on Sea



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LEIGH ON SEA



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Paperback. Book Condition: New. Not Signed; Leigh-on-Sea was described in 1565 as 'a very proper town, well-furnished with good mariners, where commonly tall ships do ride'; during its heyday it had close associations with the Royal Navy. Following the decline of shipbuilding the town became known for oysters and smuggling, and was dismissed by an 1804 traveller as 'small and very dirty, principally inhabited by fishermen'. Its entry into the modern age was assisted by Lady Olivia Sparrow and the Rev Robert Eden, who implemented improvements that made possible the rapid development that followed the arrival of the railway, initially so destructive of the town's physical fabric, in 1854. The old inns and cockle sheds which survived nowadays provide a tourist attraction in the 'Old Town', but fishing and sea-faring do not tell the whole story of the town's past. This welcome new account is the first book to give equal consideration to the north of Leigh, where the farmsteads, woodlands and urban development are no less a part of its history than the fishermen's cottages. In a very readable narrative the author traces the changing fortunes of the town from the earliest times to the present day. With sea battles, tax disputes, royal visits and cholera the townsfolk had diversions enough, as well as their regular pastimes, to add spice to the daily grind of farming or fishing. The town had its share of interesting personalities; some wicked, like smuggler John Dowsett and highwayman Cutter Lynch, and some good, such as Samuel Moyer, the Rev. Robert Stuart King and William Brand, whose tablet in Leigh church marks his heroism on the Revenge at Trafalgar. They all form part of the tapestry of Leigh's past, so carefully woven and splendidly illustrated by the author. As well as providing the facts,...



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