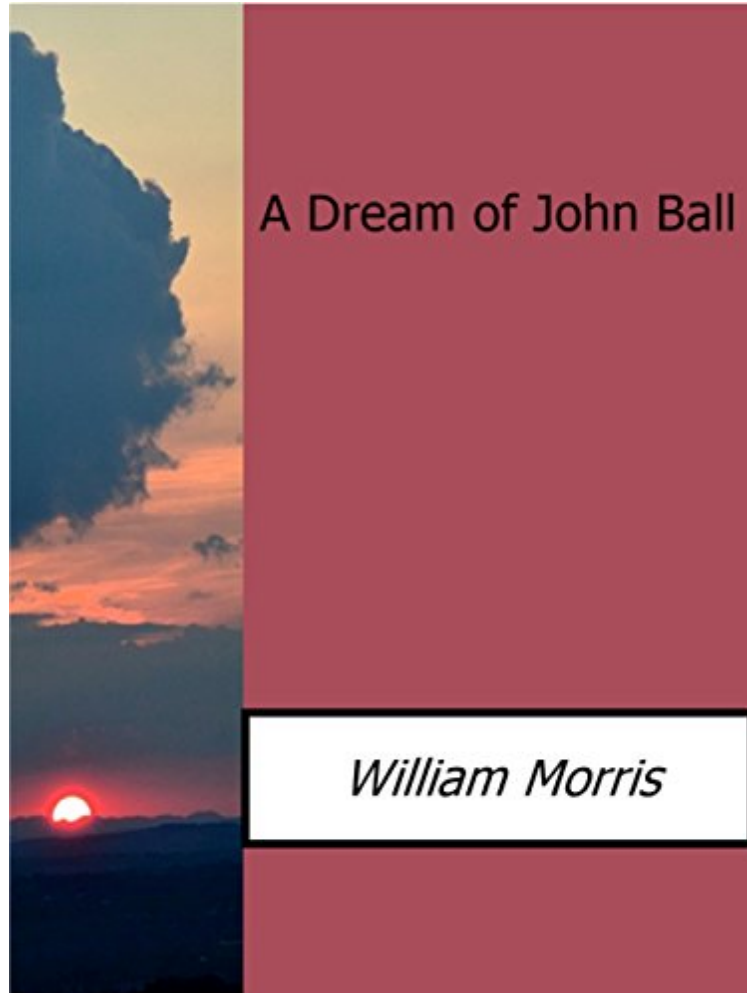


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A Dream of John Ball

William Morris

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William Morris : A Dream of John Ball before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised A Dream of John Ball:

Dream of John Ball (1888) is a novel by English author William Morris about the Great Revolt of 1381, conventionally, but incorrectly (few of the participants were actual peasants), called "the Peasants' Revolt". It features the rebel priest John Ball, who was accused of being a Lollard but was really an early Leveller, the name given in the 17th century for what are today called socialists. John Ball is famed for his question "When Adam delved and Eve span, who was then the gentleman?" Morris draws on Froissart for information on the fourteenth century,[1] but has a different attitude towards the revolting peasants from the chronicler who, Sir Walter Scott once remarked, had "marvelous little sympathy" for the "villain churls." Morris was also aware of interpretations of the Peasants' Revolt as

representing a socialist tradition. In 1884 he had written an article in which he stated that "we need make no mistake about the cause for which Wat Tyler and his worthier associate John Ball fell; they were fighting against the fleecing then in fashion, viz.; serfdom or villeinage, which was already beginning to wane before the advance of the industrial guilds." The novel describes a dream and time travel encounter between the medieval and modern worlds, thus contrasting the ethics of medieval and contemporary culture. A time-traveller tells Ball of the decline of feudalism and the rise of the Industrial Revolution. Ball realizes that in the nineteenth century his hopes for an egalitarian society have yet to be fulfilled. A parallel can be drawn with the novel's close contemporarymdash;A Connecticut Yankee in King Arthur's Court (1889) by Mark Twain. Unlike Twain's novel, which depicted early-Medieval England as a violent and chaotic Dark Age, Morris depicts the Middle Ages in a positive light, seeing it as a golden, if brief, period when peasants were prosperous and happy and guilds protected workers from exploitation. This positive portrayal of the Medieval period is a recurring theme in Morris' literary and artistic oeuvre, from the largely pastoral and craftsman based economies of the prose romances, to his similar dream vision of Britain's utopian future, *News from Nowhere* (1889).

Optimized for the MobiPocket Reader, this is a very special edition of William Morris' "A Dream of John Ball, etc." The text of the book is completely in English. If you click on one of the words in the text, a convenient pop-up window appears with a customized Bulgarian thesaurus for that word, which includes a variety of Bulgarian translations that come from Webster's Online Dictionary (www.websters-online-dictionary.org). Running throughout the text, uncommon English words are highlighted in blue that are likely to be found in examinations in English Language Programs (ELP), English as a Foreign Language (EFL) programs, or in English as a Second Language Programs (ESL). The highlighted vocabulary words are also likely to be found in foreign service, translation certification, Advanced Placement- (AP-), TOEFL-, TOEIC-, SAT-, PSAT- , GMAT-, LSAT-, GRE-, or similar examinations. TOEFL-, TOEIC-, GRE-, AP- and Advanced Placement- are trademarks of the Educational Testing Service; PSAT- is a registered trademark of the College Entrance Examination Board and the National Merit Scholarship Corporation; SAT- is a registered trademark of the College Board; GMAT- is a registered trademark of the Graduate Management Admissions Council; LSAT- is a registered trademark of the Law School Admissions Council. All rights reserved. These organizations neither sponsored nor are affiliated with this product.

About the Author William Morris (24 March 1834ndash;3 October 1896) was an English artist, writer, and socialist. He was a member of the Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood and one of the principal founders of the British Arts and Crafts movement, a pioneer of the socialist movement in Britain, and a writer of poetry and fiction. He is perhaps best known as a designer of wallpaper and patterned fabrics.