

Booklist

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The **Pirate Queen**: Queen Elizabeth I, Her Pirate Adventures, and the Dawn of Empire;  
Brief article;  
Book review

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\* The **Pirate Queen**: Queen Elizabeth I, Her Pirate Adventures, and the Dawn of Empire. By **Susan Ronald**. July 2007. HarperCollins, \$26.95(9780060820664). 942.05.

**Biographies of the great Tudor queen abound, but this solid, even exciting one pursues a particular tack and thus takes itself outside the usual run of standard treatments.** Ronald is interested in pursuing the life and reign of Elizabeth I in terms of her specific effect on the founding of what was to become the vast British Empire, which reached its zenith in the nineteenth century. As seen here, it was paramount for the queen to make herself secure on the English throne in the face of Catholics at home and abroad, who preferred her cousin Mary, Queen of Scots; in addition, her personal security had to be founded on the security of her kingdom on the world stage--the two, as she saw it, went hand in hand. The queen was, as Ronald has it, an "astute businesswoman" who realized that for state-security purposes, she needed lots of money. Although Ronald insists Elizabeth Tudor was "no empire builder" **the fascinating picture drawn here is of her intense working relationship with the merchant and gentleman adventurers who, out on the high seas, would secure money for their beloved monarch, and, in the process, "inadvertently" as Ronald posits it, move England into a solid financial status that would, in turn, foster empire.**