

Peter Walton, A Celebration of Empire

1. For what purpose was this book written? How do you think that is likely to affect its perspective? (preface)
2. What is the point of sharing the "well known" story of how Victoria found out that she was queen? (7)
3. How does Walton describe reactions to the young queen? Do you really think this impression was "unanimous?" (7)
4. Why does Walton describe Victoria's relationship with the Navy and Army as one of "mutual love and respect" so early in the text? (8)
5. Why does Walton emphasize that the queen "very much enjoyed the whole day?" Do you think her diaries are good evidence for this? (8)
6. What is the point of mentioning who decided that Victoria and Albert's honeymoon was over? (9)
7. Why does Walton pay so much attention to the question of military honors? (9-10)
8. Why does Walton start praising Albert? What aspect of Albert's contributions does he emphasize? (12)
9. Why is it a "sad fact" that the Queen spent only five weeks in Ireland? In what way did the Irish "not forget?" (13)
10. In what way does Walton demonstrate the loyalty of the Colonies? (14)
11. How does Walton view the Empire? (14)
12. Why do the queen's clothes matter so much to Walton? (23)
13. Why does Walton note that the crowd of people "was not a mob?" What does this say about the people's feelings for celebration? For the Queen? (19)
14. What do the pictures that Walton has chosen emphasize? Who are the subjects of the pictures? (26)
15. What does Walton see as the point of the celebrations? (25)
16. Is the Daily Mail description of the Queen the same as Walton's? (28)
17. What is meant by the comment, "it is men like Lord Roberts that make queens like Queen Victoria?" (27)
18. What aspects of Victoria's reign are emphasized in the Daily Mail article? What was the order of procession? What does this represent? How does the article portray the celebration? Is it a positive review? (27)
19. What do you notice about the double page picture of the Colonial forces? What image of Empire is this meant to portray? (34-35) What does Walton mean when he says the picture is "correct of 22nd June 1897 in London?" (46)
20. Does this piece strike you as historical writing? How does it differ from other styles that we have read?
21. Why is so much attention paid to the various military uniforms in the appendices? Do you think there is some similarity between the elaborate costumes of the monarchy and those of the military?
22. What aspect of the empire is emphasized in the processions? Do you think that the militaries represent the empire?
23. Pay attention to the orders of procession of the various militaries. What does this say about the tension between war and peace and the state of international politics?
24. Go back to the book and look at the pictures again. What impression do they leave you with in terms of scale? Elaborateness? Organization? What do these pictures portray about the celebration?