



# **The People's Historian: John Richard Green and the Writing of History in Victorian England (Discographies)**

*Anthony Brundage*

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In 1874, John Richard Green, a virtually unknown former clergyman, sold the rights for his school textbook, *A Short History of the English People*, to Macmillan for 350 pounds sterling, a generous sum for a work expected to sell a few thousand copies. To everyone's astonishment, the work sold 32,000 copies in its first year, and a half million copies thereafter. This publishing phenomenon was also a breakthrough in historiography, for unlike earlier histories, which focused on kings and statesmen, Green's work revolved around the common people, their creative energy, and their devotion to self-government. Thus, Green was a critical figure in the transition from the writing of history of elites to a broader history of social and cultural change. He was also one of the last great amateurs at a time when the field was coming to be dominated by academic specialists. By providing an examination of Green's career, this book illuminates a critical juncture in the history of the discipline.

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