

★ **ESSENTIAL GUIDE TO THE  
CUBAN REVOLUTION**



**ANCIENT  
GHOSTS**



**ALL ABOUT**

# HISTORY

## RISE OF THE TUDORS

How an upstart noble family emerged from the Wars of the Roses to rule England



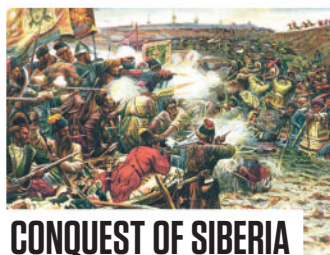
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SCAN TO GET  
OUR NEW-LOOK  
NEWSLETTERS



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The tomb effigies of Henry VII and Elizabeth of York at Westminster Abbey

# Welcome

It probably says a lot about how tumultuous the reigns of Henry VIII, Mary I and Elizabeth I were that their forebear and originator of the Tudor dynasty is often written about the least. It also speaks to the manner in which Henry VII managed his kingdom as it emerged out of the Wars of the Roses. He had a reputation for being shrewd and thoughtful, but also decisive and resolute. Growing up in exile and with the threat of assassination hanging over him likely added to his alertness to potential troubles too. He is, clearly, the least colourful of the Tudor dynasty that he established, but the way in which he emerged as the likely successor to Richard III and how he, and importantly his mother Margaret Beaufort, positioned him as such is fascinating and full of incident.

That's the story we drill into for this issue's cover feature and we welcome historian and author Susan Abernethy to walk us through this thrilling tale. Also in this issue we go looking for the lost jobs of history, find out what the Mesopotamians thought about ghosts, uncover the real Captain Morgan, explore the life of April Ashley and much more. I hope you enjoy the issue.

**Jonathan Gordon**  
Editor



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# *Defining Moments*







28 June 1919

## TREATY OF VERSAILLES SIGNED

The Armistice of November 1918 silenced the guns of WWI, and after months of discussions at the Paris Peace Conference the Treaty of Versailles was signed in June 1919 to formally end the conflict between Germany and the Allies. The treaty, named after the Palace of Versailles where it was signed, laid out a number of conditions that Germany had to agree to, including paying reparations and giving up territory.

© Getty Images



7 July 2005

## TERRORISTS BOMB LONDON'S TRANSPORT SYSTEM

During the morning rush hour on 7 July 2005, four Islamist terrorists attacked London's transport system when they set off four bombs: three on Underground trains and the fourth on a bus. Fifty-two people (not including the suicide bombers) died and over 780 were injured. The 7/7 attacks, as they came to be known, were the first Islamist suicide bombings in the UK.




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A black and white photograph of a woman with dark hair and glasses, looking surprised while reading an open book. She is surrounded by bookshelves filled with various books. The text 'THE ALL ABOUT HISTORY LIBRARY IS NOW OPEN!' is overlaid on the left side in large, bold, yellow and white letters.

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# ALL ABOUT THE CUBAN REVOLUTION



**Explore the tumultuous era of dictatorship, rebellion and conflict that put Cuba in the Cold War crosshairs**



**INSIDE THE NATIONAL SCHOOL  
OF PLASTIC ARTS**



**ANATOMY OF A  
CUBAN GUERRILLA**



**CUBAN  
REVOLUTIONARIES**



**LIFE IN CUBA'S AGE  
OF REVOLUTION**

Main image: © Getty Images

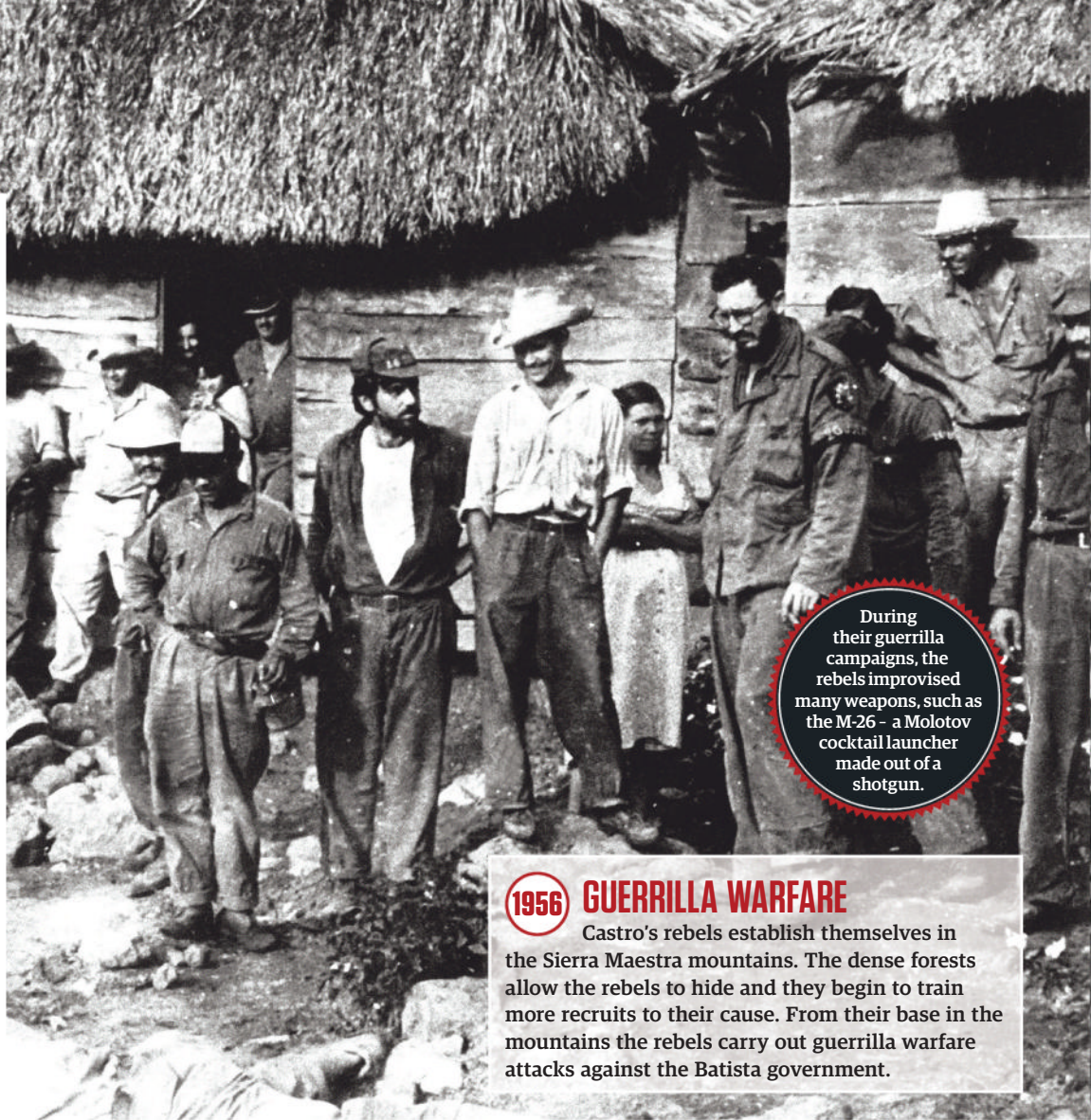


# Key Events



## 1952 BATISTA'S COUP D'ÉTAT

Shortly before elections are due to be held, General Fulgencio Batista launches a coup d'état against the regime of Prío Socarras. The country becomes a military dictatorship, fraught with corruption and increasingly authoritarian. Crucially, the United States recognises Batista's government and supports it.



During their guerrilla campaigns, the rebels improvised many weapons, such as the M-26 - a Molotov cocktail launcher made out of a shotgun.

## 1956 GUERRILLA WARFARE

Castro's rebels establish themselves in the Sierra Maestra mountains. The dense forests allow the rebels to hide and they begin to train more recruits to their cause. From their base in the mountains the rebels carry out guerrilla warfare attacks against the Batista government.

## SERGEANTS' REVOLT 1933

Fulgencio Batista launches a revolt and subsequently rules Cuba through intermediaries until 1940 when he becomes president. He voluntarily steps down in 1944.



## FIDEL CASTRO IN MEXICO JULY 1955

Following the attack on Moncada Barracks, Castro is sentenced to 15 years but serves two. Upon his release he leaves for Mexico, where he plans an uprising.



## 26TH JULY MOVEMENT FORMED 1956

While in Mexico, Castro forms the 26th of July Movement with the intention of toppling Batista's government. Here he recruits guerrilla fighters and trains them for the coming fight.



1952



## ATTACK ON MONCADA BARRACKS 26 JULY 1953

Fidel Castro along with over 100 rebels launches an attack on the Moncada Barracks in Santiago. It fails and Castro is arrested.



## CHE GUEVARA JOINS THE REVOLUTION 1955

Che Guevara meets Fidel and Raúl Castro in Mexico City. He agrees to join their revolution.



## CASTRO ARRIVES IN CUBA 2 DECEMBER 1956

Castro and his brother, along with 82 others (among them Che Guevara) arrives in Cuba aboard the yacht the Granma. The group is ambushed but Castro escapes.

1956

1 JAN 1959

## BATISTA FLEES

With no sign of the revolution ceasing, Batista flees Cuba in the early hours of the morning, with ministers and other officials following him a few hours later. Batista spends the rest of his days in exile in Portugal until his death in 1973.



20 OCT 1959

## HUBER MATOS AFFAIR

A key ally in the revolution, Huber Matos becomes increasingly disillusioned with growing communist influence. Matos sends Castro a letter announcing his resignation and is promptly arrested. Matos and his followers are sentenced to 20 years imprisonment.





17 APR  
1961**BAY OF PIGS  
INVASION**

Exiles from the Cuban revolution launch an attempted invasion with the backing of the CIA. However the assault is poorly planned and the resultant attack is a disaster, with Castro's forces able to capture over half the invasion force, humiliating the Kennedy administration.

Castro returned the prisoners after Kennedy promised \$53m in baby food and medical supplies.

**BATTLE OF LA PLATA  
17 JANUARY 1957**

Castro's revolutionaries score their first major victory against Batista's forces. News of this spreads across Cuba and support for Castro's rebels begins to steadily grow.

**BATTLE OF LAS MERCEDES  
29 JULY 1958**

The final battle of Operation Verano, it ends with a ceasefire in which Castro's forces escape. Following Verano's failure, Castro launches an offensive of his own.

**CUBA IS SOCIALIST  
1 MAY 1961**

During May Day celebrations Castro announces that Cuba is now a socialist nation. As part of this move, he bans any future elections.

1 JAN  
195920 OCT  
195917 APR  
196116 OCT  
1962

1962

**OPERATION VERANO 1958**

Batista's forces launch Operation Verano, their summer offensive attempting to defeat Castro's rebels. Despite a force of 30,000-40,000 men, the offensive fails in its objectives.

**BATTLE OF SANTA  
CLARA 28 DECEMBER 1958**

The rebel forces, led by Guevara, defeat Batista's army at Santa Clara. The Battle of Santa Clara is considered one of the final decisive moments in the revolution.

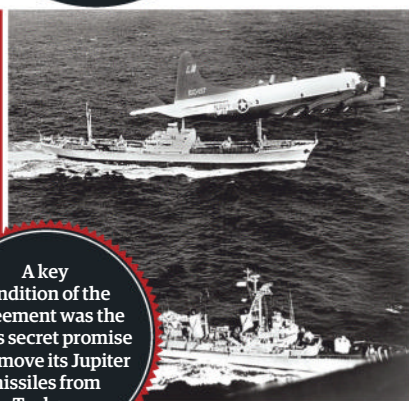
**COMMUNIST PARTY OF  
CUBA FOUNDED 3 OCTOBER 1965**

Castro founds the Communist Party of Cuba, replacing previous socialist organisations with one that more closely aligns to Soviet ideology. He serves as its first president.

16 OCT  
1962**CUBAN MISSILE  
CRISIS**

The Soviet Union places nuclear missiles in Cuba. What follows is a tense 13-day stand-off between the USSR and United States. Eventually, the two sides are able to broker an agreement, the missiles are removed from Cuba and the crisis ends.

A key condition of the agreement was the USA's secret promise to remove its Jupiter missiles from Turkey.

**1962 SOVIETISATION  
OF CUBA**

Cuba becomes increasingly influenced by Soviet ideology and throughout the 1970s becomes more and more reliant on Soviet aid. The authoritarian government's dependence on the USSR is compared to the previous Batista regime's relationship with the United States.



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## Inside History

# NATIONAL SCHOOL OF PLASTIC ARTS

Havana, Cuba  
1961 – Present

**H**aving come to power in 1959, Fidel Castro and Che Guevara were looking for ways to attract people to Cuba and make a statement about what the leaders saw as the forward-looking nature of their nation. To this end, they commissioned three architects to build the National Schools of Art (Escuelas Nacionales de Arte). Formerly exiled Cuban architect Ricardo Porro led the project with the support of two Italian architects, Roberto Gottardi and Vittorio Garatti.

The project aimed to create an art school that would be free to access for students from across the world, and this ambitious scheme demanded something bold. Porro's plan drew on traditional styles of Cuban and African architecture, making good use of local materials. The complex would be made up of five buildings, each dedicated to an artistic discipline: dance, dramatic arts, music, ballet and plastic arts. The last of these was concerned with plastic in the sense of being malleable rather than literally being made from plastic and was dedicated to three-dimensional works of art such as sculptures. Porro was personally in charge of this building.

Construction began in 1961 on the former grounds of the Havana Country Club, but work was halted in 1965 as the Cuban government found itself increasingly under the influence of the USSR. The Ministry of Construction was now working under functionalist principles imposed by the Soviet Union and considered the complex to be bourgeois, expensive and impractical, and its designers to be cultural elitists. Only two of the buildings had been completed (the School of Plastic Arts and the School of Modern Dance), with the other three in varying states of development. Since 2000 a number of attempts have been made to keep the site protected and potentially finish the original school complex design.



### CATALAN VAULTS

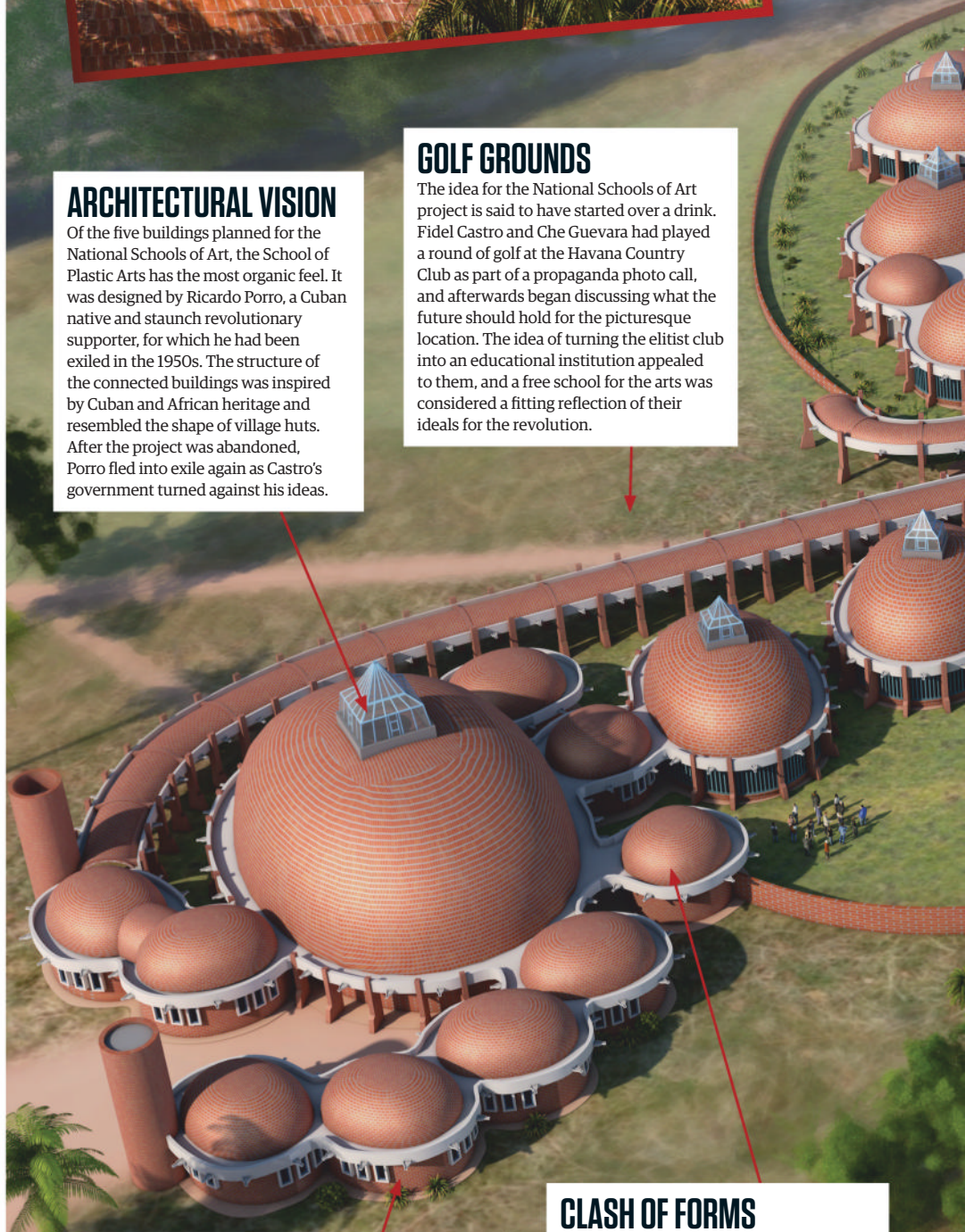
A common feature across the various buildings of the National Schools of Art is the use of domes on the primary buildings, and the National School of Plastic Arts may well have the most. They were constructed using Catalan vaults, a technique that involves the layering of thin tiles or bricks to create a vaulted building without concrete or support structures. This was more cost-effective than other methods and made use of locally sourced materials.

### ARCHITECTURAL VISION

Of the five buildings planned for the National Schools of Art, the School of Plastic Arts has the most organic feel. It was designed by Ricardo Porro, a Cuban native and staunch revolutionary supporter, for which he had been exiled in the 1950s. The structure of the connected buildings was inspired by Cuban and African heritage and resembled the shape of village huts. After the project was abandoned, Porro fled into exile again as Castro's government turned against his ideas.

### GOLF GROUNDS

The idea for the National Schools of Art project is said to have started over a drink. Fidel Castro and Che Guevara had played a round of golf at the Havana Country Club as part of a propaganda photo call, and afterwards began discussing what the future should hold for the picturesque location. The idea of turning the elitist club into an educational institution appealed to them, and a free school for the arts was considered a fitting reflection of their ideals for the revolution.



### IMPORT BAN

In 1960 the United States placed an embargo on Cuba and the project had to rely solely on locally sourced bricks, terracotta and other materials. But this had its advantages because these Cuban materials were cheaper and inspired the complex's innovative design (although it was never completed). The US embargo remains in place to this day.

### CLASH OF FORMS

The design of the National School of Plastic Arts, as well as the other four buildings of the National Schools of Art, was intended as a direct refutation of Western 'capitalist architecture'. Steel and glass structures, the mainstay of modern Western design, were functional and formal, but the National Schools of Art complex was designed to meld with the landscape and be more expressive.



**CONTROVERSIAL WATER FEATURE**

The courtyard of the School of Plastic Arts has a small pond and water feature, shaped like a papaya. The fruit is native to Central America and very popular in the Caribbean islands - and is also a slang term in Cuba for female genitalia. Given the other female symbolism in the school's design, this appears to be an intentional reference. The Communist Party definitely thought so: they deemed it obscene and ordered the fountain closed.

**PLACE OF LEARNING**

The Cuban government pulled funding for the National Schools of Art before they were all completed, but the complex was still used for education, even in some of the incomplete buildings. Weather damage and a lack of maintenance soon rendered the complex unusable, however.

**SENSE AND SENSUALITY?**

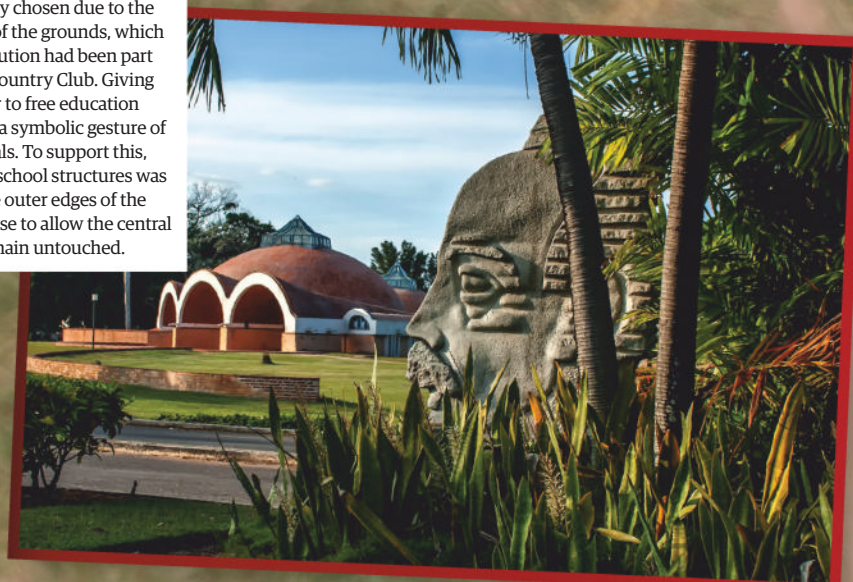
The domes of the School of Plastic Arts resemble breasts, and this was intentional. As well as drawing from African village structures for the building layout, Porro was inspired by the Yoruba goddess of fertility, Ōṣun, who originated in West Africa, and by Gaia, the Greek goddess of the Earth. The breast-like domes are a direct nod to this, as is the papaya sculpture in the courtyard.

**LOCATION, LOCATION**

The site of the National Schools of Art was primarily chosen due to the natural beauty of the grounds, which before the revolution had been part of the Havana Country Club. Giving these lands over to free education was considered a symbolic gesture of communist ideals. To support this, each of the five school structures was built around the outer edges of the former golf course to allow the central grass area to remain untouched.

**RECONSTRUCTION**

After the complex was abandoned in 1965 the incomplete buildings became overgrown and the site became a focal point for protesters, squatters and wild animals. In 1997 the Cuban government declared the grounds a 'protected zone' and efforts to restore the site began in 2000, with the original architects Porro, Gottardi and Garatti invited back to complete the project. In 2011 it was declared a National Monument by the Cuban government but the site is still considered at risk and has yet to be completed.







## Anatomy

# CUBAN GUERRILLA

Cuba  
1956-59

### FIREARMS

Many of the weapons used by the guerrillas would've been captured from Cuban government forces or smuggled over by friendly parties. At first the Cuban government was getting its weapons from the US, but an embargo from 1958 saw a switch to European arms. Rifles such as the Fusil Automatique Leger (FAL) became synonymous with the conflict.

### TRAVELLING LIGHT

The Cuban guerrilla fighters were usually lightly armed, without helmets or body armour. Their base of operations in their war on dictator Fulgencio Batista was in the Sierra Maestra mountains, so travelling light was essential in this difficult terrain. In the mountains they held back the Cuban Army and gradually gained more public support for their uprising.

### MEN AND WOMEN

While most of the famous images of Cuban fighters show men, there were lots of women involved in the revolution too. Due to the oppressive conditions women suffered in Cuba, many turned to Fidel Castro, who promised to open up work opportunities to women. Many women took up arms and joined their male counterparts in the mountains to fight the Batista regime.

### BERET

Headwear seems to have been pretty varied among the guerrilla fighters, ranging from army caps (something Castro was often seen wearing) to large sun hats. The most iconic item of clothing was the black beret, made famous by Che Guevara's iconic portrait. The beret became a common symbol of revolutionary movements as a result.

### ARMBAND

The rebel cause led by Fidel Castro was known as the 26th of July Movement, named after an attempted attack on an army barracks on this date in 1953 by Castro. From 1955 he formed his guerrilla force in Mexico and it became common for the revolutionary fighters to wear a black and red armband featuring 26 July in some form.

### GREEN FATIGUES

The simple olive-green fatigues of Castro's guerrilla movement were merely a matter of convenience and expense, but became something more symbolic following the toppling of Batista. Castro and Guevara continued to wear the fatigues to differentiate themselves from the tailored politicians of Cuba's past and signal their continued commitment to the revolution.

### ICONIC LOOK

The uniforms of the Cuban guerrillas took on an iconic status as their images began appearing in the US press. With their green fatigues, long hair and unkempt beards, the leadership of the revolution came to be known as Los Barbados, 'The Bearded Ones'. In *The New York Times* author and journalist Jon Lee Anderson described them as "the first hippies".





## Historical Treasures

# BATISTA'S GOLDEN PHONE

A gift from an American-owned cooperation, this gilded telephone came to symbolise the corruption of Batista's regime

Cuba, 1957

**V**isitors to Fulgencio Batista's former presidential palace in Havana will find a curious object among the plush surroundings: a golden telephone. Despite its now aged and battered appearance, this phone has a fascinating history and is an icon of the corruption at the heart of Batista's authoritarian regime.

Gifted to the dictator in 1957, the phone was a thank-you present after Batista granted a controversial rate increase of 20 percent to the Cuban Telephone Company. Despite its name, the company was actually a subsidiary of International Telephone & Telegraph (ITT), a US-owned corporation. The rate increase outraged the Cuban public but Batista, whose regime disregarded the

needs of its people in order to aid the USA and increase the dictator's personal fortune, gave its permission to ITT and the huge increase went ahead.

Shortly afterwards, ITT presented the phone to Batista in the presence of American Ambassador Arthur Gardner. The presentation occurred the day after a failed assassination attempt on Batista by a group of students who had managed to storm the presidential palace. According to the memoirs of Philip W Bonsal, the United States Ambassador to Cuba between February 1959 and October 1960, during the presentation "blood still stained the walls and floors of the palace."

Gardner was forced to resign from his position as ambassador shortly after the

presentation. He was seen to have too close a relationship with the Batista regime and was also found to be concealing information from Washington, DC. Gardner was also accused of ignoring the many human rights abuses committed by the Batista regime as it suppressed dissent.

The golden telephone came to symbolise not only the corruption at the heart of the Batista regime but also its close relationship with the United States. Although some sources state that it was auctioned off shortly after the Fidel Castro's revolution, it is now among the collections of the Havana Museum of the Revolution. This must-visit museum is housed in what was once Batista's presidential palace and preserves some of its opulence.

### GOLD OR GOLD PLATED?

Although some sources claimed that the telephone is made out of solid gold, it is in fact gold-plated. Some of the gold leaf has flaked off over the years.

Cuban dictator Fulgencio Batista was overthrown by Fidel Castro in 1959



### FILM PROP

The phone features in *The Godfather Part II*. As in reality, Batista receives it as a gift from a telephone company - the fictional United Telephone & Telegraph. The Mafia's presence at the meeting demonstrates the corruption of the regime.

### ROTARY PHONE

The phone is rotary-style - button phones would not become widespread until the early 1960s. It was just one example of Batista's wealth, estimated at around \$300 million.

### EXCLUSIVE CLUB

Batista was not alone in owning such a luxurious telephone. In 1930 Pope Pius XI received a golden phone, which like Batista's was gifted to him by International Telephone & Telegraph.








## Hall of Fame

# CUBAN REVOLUTIONARIES

Ten of the men and women who helped topple Batista's regime and pave the way for the communist regime



**Camilo Cienfuegos**  
Cuban  
6 February 1932  
– 28 October 1959

Camilo Cienfuegos became committed to the revolution after he joined a student protest that was attacked by Fulgencio Batista's men. A skilled and fierce fighter, he was one of the key members of Fidel Castro's forces and was incredibly popular among Cubans who wanted freedom. On 28 October 1959 Cienfuegos vanished while on board a plane travelling to Havana. It was suspected that he might have fallen foul of Fidel Castro but, prior to his execution, Che Guevara was interrogated and according to CIA documents it's likely Cienfuegos' death was an accident.

## HAYDÉE SANTAMARÍA

CUBAN, 30 DECEMBER 1932 – 28 JULY 1980

Haydée Santamaría and her brother Abel were key figures in the early days of the Cuban revolution and were involved in the rebels' failed attack on the Moncada barracks. Abel was tortured and killed by Batista's regime and Haydée was imprisoned. During this time her fiancé Boris, who had also been arrested, was killed. Upon her release she continued to work with the 26th of July Movement and she remained an important figure in post-revolutionary Cuba until her death in 1980.



## JUAN ALMEIDA BOSQUE

CUBAN, 17 FEBRUARY 1927 – 11 SEPTEMBER 2009

Juan Almeida Bosque was raised in poverty in Cuba. After Batista's coup in 1952 he was enraged and concerned about the effect on the working people. He was part of Castro's forces from the very beginning, joining the attack on the Moncada barracks. Bosque remained a loyal soldier of the revolution, continuing to serve in the central government until his death in 2009. He was also known as an author and composer.



## HUBER MATOS

CUBAN, 26 NOVEMBER 1918 – 27 FEBRUARY 2014

At one point Matos was a top military commander in the rebellion, but by October 1959 he had become concerned by the growing communist sentiment in the revolutionary government. When he attempted to resign, Castro had him arrested. Matos was sentenced to 20 years imprisonment, finally being released on 21 October 1979. In jail he was tortured, starved and kept in solitary confinement.



## VILMA ESPÍN

CUBAN, 7 APRIL 1930 – 18 JUNE 2007

Espín met the Castro brothers Fidel and Raúl in Mexico in 1956 and soon became a dedicated member of the revolution. With the victory of the pro-revolutionary forces in 1959, Espín founded the Federation of Cuban Women in 1960. After the new regime was founded she also became the wife of Raúl Castro, earning her the nickname the First Lady of Cuba, and she took on many of the duties that such a position required.



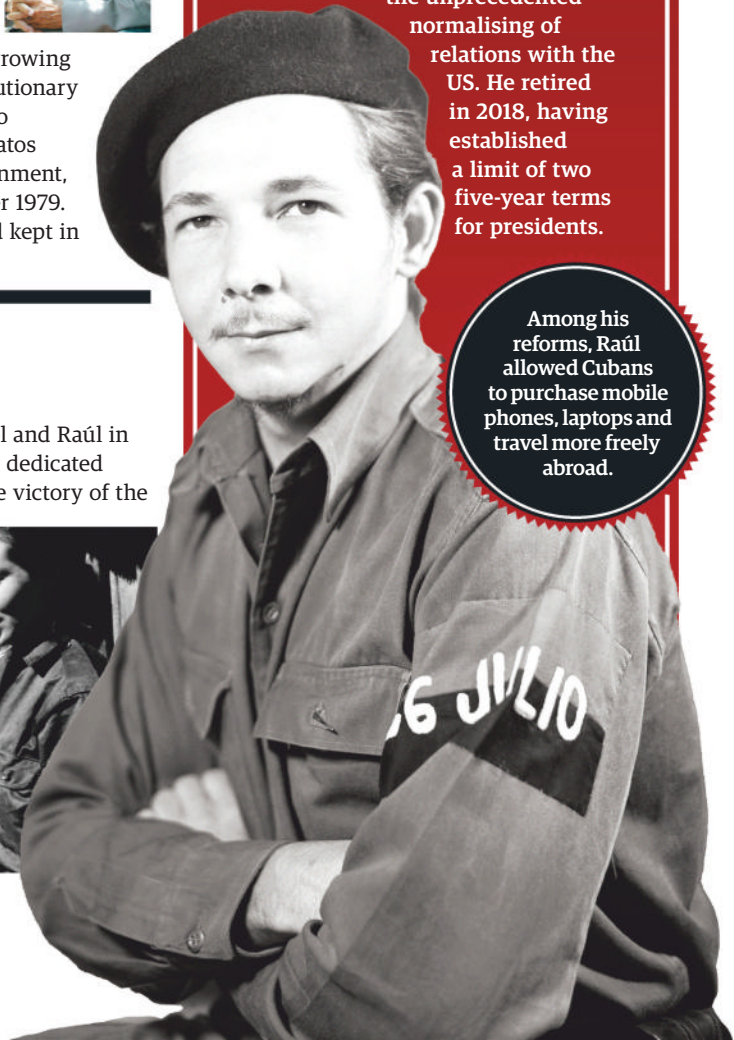
## Raúl Castro

Cuban

3 June 1931 – Present

Raúl Castro was the youngest of the three Castro brothers. During the revolution he supported Fidel, participating in the raid on the Moncada barracks and serving as a commander in the 26th of July Movement. Raúl accepted the position of president in 2008 when Fidel stepped down due to continuing health problems. During his rule, Raúl became known for introducing a number of liberal reforms, including encouraging private enterprise and foreign investment. He also oversaw the unprecedented normalising of relations with the US. He retired in 2018, having established a limit of two five-year terms for presidents.

Among his reforms, Raúl allowed Cubans to purchase mobile phones, laptops and travel more freely abroad.





## Fidel Castro

**Cuban**

**13 August 1926**

**– 25 November 2016**

Fidel Castro became interested in politics when he began to study law at the University of Havana in 1945. Following graduation, he intended to stand for the Cuban People's Party but Batista's coup put a stop to such plans. Castro now made it his mission to overthrow the dictator and began establishing a fighting force. Even after his first attempt failed and he left for Mexico, Castro refused to give in. Following victory in 1959, Castro became leader of the new socialist Cuba and soon began to oppress any dissent against his regime. Castro remained in power until 2008, when health problems caused him to hand over the reins to his brother Raúl.

Fidel Castro was known to have an obsessive interest in dairy products.



All images: © Alamy, © Getty Images

## FRANK PAIS

**CUBAN**

**7 DECEMBER 1934 – 30 JULY 1957**

While his fellow rebels continued their war in the mountains, Frank Pais was an essential figure in organising street-level resistance to the Batista regime. He was particularly influential in his hometown of Santiago de Cuba, where he helped coordinate workers. Arrested by police, Pais was shot dead without trial. When the workers of Santiago heard of his execution they staged a spontaneous general strike. A statue in his honour now stands in Santiago.



## Celia Sanchez

**Cuban, 9 May 1920**

**– 11 Jan 1980**

Celia Sanchez was a key figure in the Cuban revolution, helping to plan and organise many of its vital activities in its fight against the regime. Among her achievements were organising the Granma yacht's landing, arranging supplies to be smuggled into the rebel base in the Sierra Maestra mountains, and frequently recruiting new fighters to the cause. Following their victory in 1959, Sanchez continued to work closely with Castro. Often speculation was drawn as to the nature of their relationship but it is more than likely that their friendship was a platonic one, although some sources claim otherwise.



## Che Guevara

**Argentinian**

**14 June 1928 – 9 October 1967**

While studying at medical school, Ernesto 'Che' Guevara took an extended sabbatical to travel with a friend. As they journeyed throughout South America, Guevara witnessed much poverty and distress. Later, he watched as Jacobo Arbenz's regime in Guatemala was toppled at the behest of the United States. Soon Guevara began to formulate a concept for global socialist revolution. Meeting the Castro brothers in Mexico in 1956, he immediately made himself indispensable to the 26th July Movement. Following the success of the Cuban revolution he became disillusioned with Castro's regime and in 1966 travelled to Bolivia in an attempt to begin another uprising. He was captured and executed.

In 1967 Jim Fitzpatrick created a print from a photo of Che Guevara taken by Alberto Korda. In the decades since it has featured on posters, T-shirts and many other items.







## Q&A



# LIFE IN CUBA'S AGE OF REVOLUTION

**Antoni Kapcia discusses the experience of Cubans during this period of upheaval**

***What were conditions like in Cuba before Fulgencio Batista's coup?***

Socially, Cuba was a visibly unequal society, with Havana (especially) home to a moneyed white elite and an urban (mostly white) middle class, whose wealth and lifestyle were comparable to any US city, but also with extreme poverty across the country, especially stark in rural areas and the margins of the cities. So, statistically Cuba was 'developed' (number of TV sets, cars, doctors etc) but those stats hid a reality of deep divisions.

***How did things change in Cuba under Batista's dictatorship?***

A sense of resignation and demoralisation were seen when Batista's 1952 coup produced hardly any active response from most of the political parties, with Batista's widespread repression forcing the Cuban Communist Party underground and leading politicians to flee into exile. The only pockets of resistance came from Havana students, younger Cubans and the new anti-corruption and nationalist Ortodoxo Party (to which Fidel Castro belonged). In 1953, a small group of party members, led by Castro, plotted and enacted two spectacular attacks on military barracks in Santiago de Cuba (the Moncada garrison) and Bayamo on 26 July, designed to seize weapons for a guerrilla campaign in the nearby Sierra Maestra mountains as a catalyst for popular reaction. The attacks failed, with

many rebels killed or executed and few escaping. 50 survivors were arrested, tried and sentenced to long prison terms. Two years later, Batista felt sure enough of the lack of opposition and his own supposed popularity to declare an amnesty, which then saw the Moncada rebels freed, founding the 26 July Movement [M-26-7] and leaving for exile in Mexico to prepare for a rebel expedition by the end of 1956.

***How did Fidel Castro emerge from this movement as a leading figure standing against Batista?***

Before 1952, Fidel had already been a prominent student activist, before becoming a radical lawyer and Ortodoxo member. However, it was the Moncada attack that launched a much greater public profile, with widespread repulsion at Batista's brutal reaction and sympathy for the rebels, much as Castro had hoped on 26 July. Therefore, after his promised expedition back to Cuba in early December 1956 (82 rebels landing near the Sierra on the yacht Granma), which resulted in a bloody ambush by Batista's forces, only survived by 21 who escaped into the Sierra Maestra, his profile grew. This was bolstered when American journalists reported publicly on their interviews with Fidel in the Sierra and on the small but growing guerrilla group around him, and his brother Raúl and the newest recruit, Ernesto 'Che' Guevara. Batista had helped that profile by announcing Fidel's death

Antoni Kapcia is emeritus professor of Spanish, Portuguese and Latin American Studies at the University of Nottingham, specialising in modern Cuba. He was director of the Centre for Research on Cuba from 2004 to 2020 and his books include *Havana: The Making of Cuban Culture* (2005) and *Leadership in the Cuban Revolution: The Unseen Story* (2014).

**RIGHT**  
Batista's overthrow was met with joyous celebration by many in the country





before the news of his survival emerged. Thereafter, the emerging evidence of the small successes and prolonged survival of a growing rebel force (eventually around 400) enhanced his popularity, especially as the Movement's actions in Cuba's cities led to a more widespread and random repression by Batista.

## ***Was there much popular support for Castro and his 26th of July Movement in Cuba?***

By mid-1958, public opinion had shifted from inertia and resignation in 1952 to enthusiastic support for what the rebels represented, contrasting Batista's repression and Cuba's inequalities with the rebels' willingness to take a stand and resist and with their moralistic stance on corruption and a more equal Cuba. The urban Movement grew to some 3,000 by late 1958, as the sole respected opposition to the regime that seemed to more and more Cubans to represent the many ills that had plagued their country since independence [in 1902].

**RIGHT** Former prisoners celebrate their release and the victory of Castro's rebel movement

**BELOW** Literacy rates rocketed under Castro's regime



***“Castro’s 26 July Movement offered an attractive, determined alternative”***

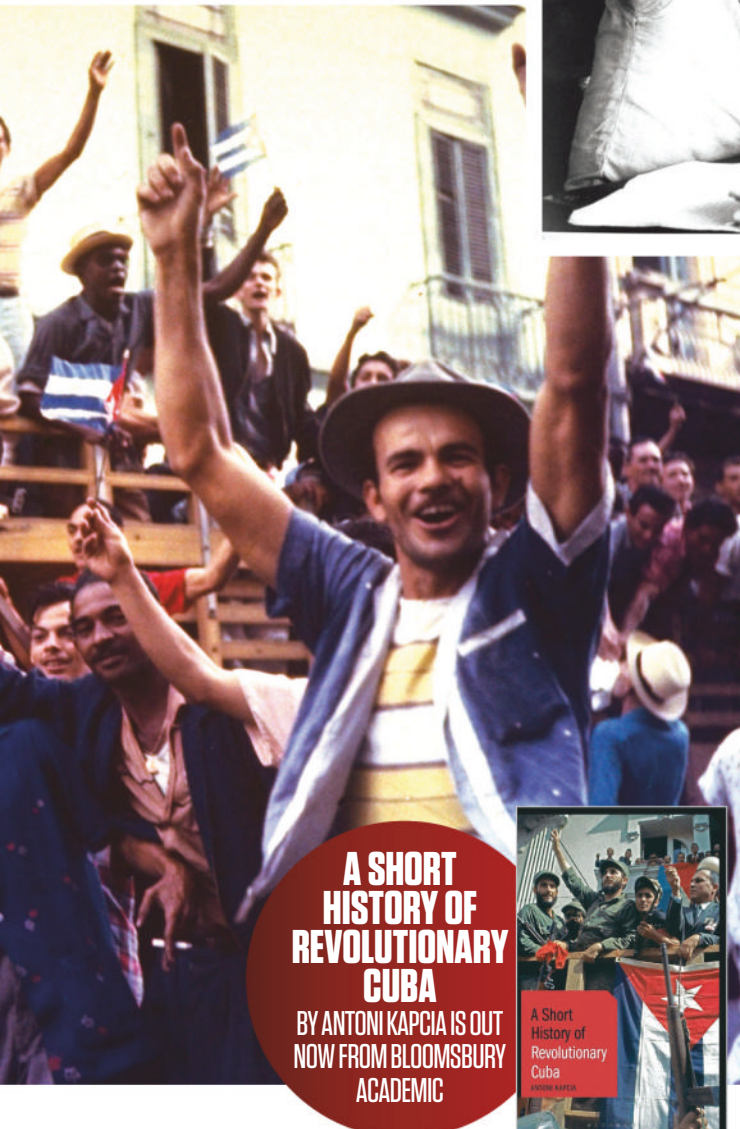
## ***How did the M-26-7 forces manage to overcome the government?***

Basically, the Movement took advantage of the political vacuum that existed by offering a genuine alternative that seemed attractive, determined and different, and seemed to promise a better and more genuinely independent Cuba. By late 1958, 'the revolution' had developed into a much broader alliance for the 'new Cuba'. In other words, they won the ideological argument with a counter to the hegemony of a divisive version of capitalism and a somewhat shameful dependence on a United States that never seemed to understand Cuba. In addition, Batista's forces became increasingly demoralised by the rebels' success and by the greater military skills and tactics that the rebels had developed. The final factor came towards the end of 1958 when the US government stopped supplying arms and aeroplanes to Batista's forces because of the embarrassment caused by his repression.

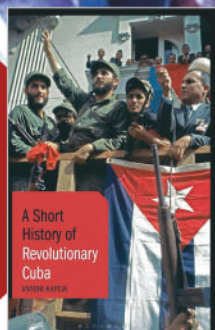
## ***Did material conditions for Cubans change much following Castro's victory?***

Very much so, and very rapidly. In the first three years (until 1961) almost all of

the promises made by Fidel in 1953 (in a famous defence speech at the trial of the Moncada rebels), which became the Movement's first manifesto, and, more importantly, many of the reforms promised by the 1940 Constitution, were enacted. Those changes included: a moderate land reform (redistributing large landholdings to the landless), cutting and then abolishing all rents, providing subsidies for and eventually ending payments for public transport, a successful literacy campaign in 1961 (reducing illiteracy from 23 percent to three percent), nationalisation of public services, utilities, health and education, and so on. Cubans' lives changed fundamentally and there was substantial income redistribution either directly or indirectly. That of course also meant lessening the income of landlords and ending private education, which helped generate a substantial emigration of the middle class, seeing their economic status and power reduced. Since most (over 80 percent) of the emigrants in the first decade were white, more redistribution effectively came for the poor and especially the non-white majority.



**A SHORT  
HISTORY OF  
REVOLUTIONARY  
CUBA**  
BY ANTONI KAPCIA IS OUT  
NOW FROM BLOOMSBURY  
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## Places to Explore

# CUBAN REVOLUTIONARY SITES

Here are five cities and sites where you can experience firsthand the impact of Fidel Castro's rebellion

## 1 THE SIERRA MAESTRA GRANMA, SANTIAGO DE CUBA PROVINCES

The largest mountain range in Cuba, the Sierra Maestra is where Fidel Castro and his fellow revolutionaries did battle with the forces of Fulgencio Batista using guerrilla tactics. In 1958 Batista launched Operation Verano, in which his men ventured into the mountains in an attempt to eradicate the rebels. The operation failed and Castro was able to launch his own offensive shortly afterwards.

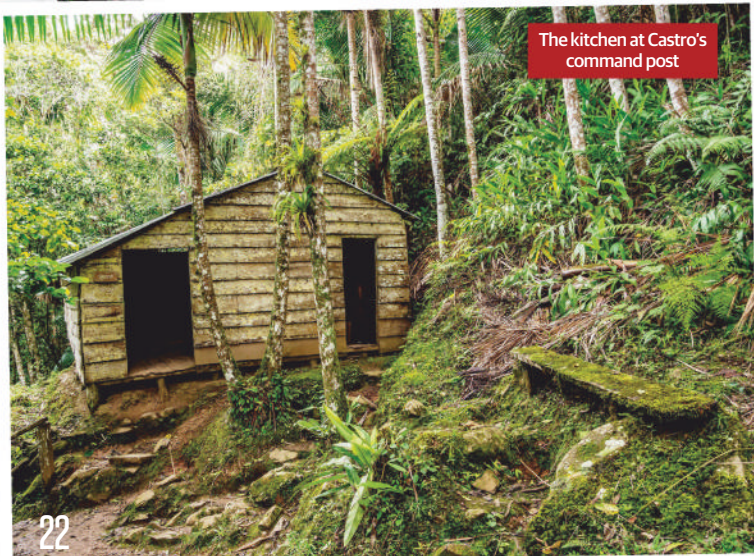
The Comandancia de la Plata, the original base from which Castro's rebel forces operated, can still be seen in the mountains. The 16 cabins and huts include a kitchen, a radio shack and 'Casa de Fidel' - where Castro himself stayed while hiding in the mountains.

Due to its remote, mountainous location, the Comandancia de la Plata can only be reached with a guide and it is recommended that visitors go with an established tourist group. For our more adventurous readers, many hiking tours to the Sierra Maestra are offered to tourists.

Cubans fought much of their guerrilla war in the Sierra Maestra



The kitchen at Castro's command post



## 2 SANTA CLARA VILLA CLARA

Santa Clara dates back to the 17th century, when it was a safe refuge for the inhabitants of Remedios, a coastal community that was frequently raided by bands of pirates. But Santa Clara also played a vital role in the history of the revolution.

In December of 1958, revolutionaries under the command of Che Guevara captured an armoured train full of weapons and supplies before going on to capture Santa Clara itself. Guevara is said to have fought the battle with his right arm in a sling after falling from a parapet.

Visitors to Santa Clara will want to ensure they visit the mausoleum complex of Che Guevara. As well as containing the remains of the famous revolutionary, the mausoleum also houses the remains of those combatants who were killed alongside him in Bolivia in 1967. Their remains were discovered in an unmarked grave 30 years later and were re-interred in Santa Clara.

The Che Guevara memorial complex contains his remains

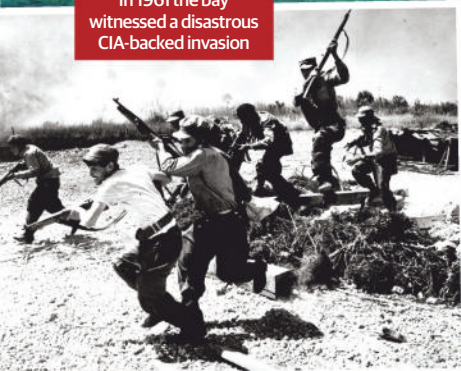


Santa Clara was founded in 1689 as a refuge from pirates





In 1961 the bay witnessed a disastrous CIA-backed invasion



### 3 BAY OF PIGS MATANZAS

On 17 April 1961, 1,400 Cuban exiles charged across the beaches of the Bay of Pigs on Cuba's southwestern coast. The attack, funded and arranged by the United States government, was an attempt to overthrow Fidel Castro's regime. But the assault was a disaster and those who were not slaughtered were quickly captured – the last prisoners were not freed until July 1965. The Bay of Pigs was one of the most notorious episodes in both Cuba's history and the Cold War, and the site is a must-visit.

While the bay is of obvious historical interest, there is much more to enjoy besides. It is renowned for its natural beauty and many of the surrounding forests and swamps are designated national parks. Most noteworthy, however, is the diving that can be done in the area. Within

the crystal clear waters can be found coral reefs, caves (known as 'cassimbas', a form of flooded cave) and a shipwreck. The latter is of particular interest to historians as it is the Rio Escondido, a cargo ship sunk during the invasion.

The small Museo de Playa Girón, located down the coast, tells the story of the aborted Bay of Pigs assault. Inside is a memorial to those killed, while outside some of the vehicles and aircraft used in the attack are on display.

While it's often cited that it was the American-backed invasion that earned the bay its unusual name, there is another much more likely origin to its title. The bay's name in Spanish, Cochino, translates as 'pig' also refers to a species of triggerfish that lives in the surrounding waters.

### 5 SANTIAGO DE CUBA SANTIAGO DE CUBA

Santiago de Cuba is located on the southeast of the island, surrounded by the mountains of the Sierra Maestra and the sea. Cuba's second-largest city, it was a key battleground in the Spanish-American war of 1898. The city is also culturally important, with a vibrant music industry that has played a prominent role in many Cuban musical genres.

As well as its rich history both culturally and historically, the city also played a crucial role in the revolution. Revolutionary hero Frank Pais was born in Santiago de Cuba and remained in the city, organising a movement of underground resistance. A statue in his honour can be found overlooking the bay.

Pais' grave can be found in the cemeterio de Santa Ifigenia, alongside that of Fidel Castro himself. Santiago de Cuba is also the place where Castro declared victory in 1959, standing upon the balcony of the City Hall.

But the must-visit revolutionary site in Santiago de Cuba is the Moncada barracks. It houses a museum that tells the story of the attack and displays a number of artefacts, including a photographic display of the 61 casualties the rebels suffered during the failed assault. The exterior of the barracks is just as striking – the bullet holes, which were filled in many years ago, have been painstakingly recreated.



Havana is packed with sites linked to the revolution

### 4 HAVANA LA HABANA PROVINCE

The Cuban capital has a number of must-visit sites for tourists looking to learn more about the revolution. The Museum of the Revolution is housed in what was once Batista's palace, which was also used by many of his forebears. Visitors to the museum will also be able to see the Granma yacht, which the Castro brothers used in their return to Cuba in 1956.

The Hilton hotel was where Castro set up his base when he first marched into the city in 1958, while Revolution Square, originally named Plaza Civica, witnessed addresses and public rallies by the Cuban leader for years after he took control. The plaza was originally constructed as a monument to Cuban national hero José Martí.

The square has become symbolic of the revolution and in the decades since has continued to hold celebrations and ceremonies related to it. Upon the death of Fidel Castro in 2016, the Cuban government announced a period of nine days of mourning. Thousands of Cubans went to the square to commemorate their leader.



Santiago de Cuba is Cuba's second-largest city



The Moncada barracks was the site of Castro's initial attack





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# RISE OF THE TUDORS

How an upstart noble family emerged from the Wars of the Roses to rule England

Written by Susan Abernethy

**T**he life of Margaret Beaufort epitomises the medieval concept of the Wheel of Fortune, the capricious nature of Fate, with its violent tenor of life. The Wars of the Roses (1455-85) had a disastrous effect on many an English noble, perhaps none more so than Margaret. But with her formidable and adaptable personality, along with her consummate diplomatic skills, she survived the turns of the Wheel long enough to see her son Henry Tudor ascend to the English throne and establish one of the world's most famous royal dynasties.

## LANCASTER vs YORK

At the foundation of the Wars of the Roses was a family conflict originating with the many children of King Edward III. It would come down ►







to the descendants of his sons Edmund of Langley, the 1st Duke of York; and John of Gaunt, Duke of Lancaster. When Gaunt's son Henry Bolingbroke deposed his cousin King Richard II from the throne, he became the first Lancastrian king, Henry IV. The House of Lancaster ruled until the ill-fated reign of Henry VI, who suffered from an inherited mental illness.

Gaunt also had several children, who took the surname of Beaufort, with his mistress, Katherine Swynford. The Lancastrian duke later married Swynford and had their children legitimised. All the legitimate Lancastrian families either passed away or had no surviving children, leaving only the Beaufort descendants. Margaret Beaufort was a great-granddaughter of Gaunt, the last living male-line survivor, and heiress of an exceedingly valuable patrimony. Elizabeth Norton, Margaret's biographer, states that Margaret's claim to the throne was widely known and acknowledged by her contemporaries and she was very proud of her royal status.

Richard, 3rd Duke of York, and later his son, Edward, Earl of March, pressed their claim to the throne after Henry VI's reign devolved into chaos, resulting in a years-long cycle of battles. Add into the mix, the Tudors. Once Henry VI's mother Queen Catherine of Valois became a widow, she married Owen Tudor, a Welsh squire. Henry VI ennobled their two eldest sons, Jasper and Edmund, staunch Lancastrian supporters, giving them the earldoms of Bedford and Richmond respectively. Edmund Tudor married Margaret Beaufort in November 1455.

In a decidedly controversial move, in order to gain possession of Margaret's considerable domains and income, Edmund consummated the marriage when she was 12 years old. Following the death of her husband a year later, Margaret was seven months pregnant and in dire straits. Under the guardianship of her brother-in-law Jasper at Pembroke Castle, she survived a difficult childbirth. Henry Tudor was born.

## HENRY'S EARLY YEARS

Historical sources for the first 14 years of Henry's life are obscure. As an infant, he probably lived with his mother at Pembroke. The Battle of Towton took place in September 1461 and resulted in the fall of the Lancastrian monarchy and the rise of the Yorkist king, Edward IV. The Lancastrian castle of Pembroke came under siege by the Yorkist noble William Herbert and surrendered on 30 September,



**ABOVE** Illuminated image of the Wheel of Fortune, depicting Fortune herself seated behind the Wheel

**RIGHT** 15th century image of the Yorkist King Edward IV of England and his brother Richard, Duke of Gloucester





## "MARGARET BEAUFORT'S CLAIM TO THE THRONE WAS WIDELY KNOWN AND ACKNOWLEDGED BY HER CONTEMPORARIES"

forever altering the prospects and circumstances of the young Henry Tudor.

In February 1462, Lord Herbert bought Henry's guardianship and marriage rights for £1,000, and by August, the new regime stripped Henry of the Richmond honour he inherited from his father. Jasper also forfeited his earldom of Pembroke. Edward IV's brother, Richard, Duke of Gloucester, received the Richmond and Pembroke lands. A later mandate gave the Richmond patrimony to the king's brother George, Duke of Clarence. There is no evidence the Duke of Gloucester ever took possession of the Pembroke lands.

Living mostly in the Herbert stronghold of Raglan Castle under the aegis of William Herbert and his wife Anne, Henry received an education and military training appropriate to his rank. Discussions ensued regarding the marriage of Henry to Herbert's daughter Maud. The young man impressed his mentors with his intelligence and quick capacity for learning. He seemed likely to marry into a prominent Yorkist family and possibly pursue a court career under Edward IV. In 1468, the king granted Herbert the earldom of Pembroke.

Margaret, expecting the recovery of her son's guardianship, the restoration of his lands and the title of Richmond, chose

to enter negotiations. But in the spring of 1469, the king's former collaborator and mentor Richard Neville, Earl of Warwick (known as the 'Kingmaker'), along with the king's brother George, started a rebellion against Edward's government. In July 1469, the Battle of Edgcote claimed Lord Herbert's life, yet Henry remained at Raglan until Henry VI's October 1470 restoration to the throne again changed his circumstances. Jasper took possession of Henry, and he was able to enjoy the company of his mother. But the good times did not last long as Edward, who had fled to the Continent, returned with an army to gain back his throne. Following the fateful Battle of Tewkesbury in 1471, Edward IV regained his kingship. Henry VI died in the Tower of London soon after.

Jasper and Henry fled from Tenby in Wales, intending to go to France. Bad weather in the Channel forced them off course, causing them to land in Brittany, where they remained in exile for 14 years.

### THE TUDORS IN EXILE

The Breton duke, Francis II, realised the value of the refugees and welcomed the two men, giving them shelter. Evidence suggests Henry and Jasper lived in relative comfort and freedom in Brittany, despite being a financial burden on the duke. Intermittently, over the next 14 years,



**LEFT** Edward IV battled for the Yorkist cause

**BELOW-LEFT** Elizabeth Woodville's marriage to Edward proved controversial

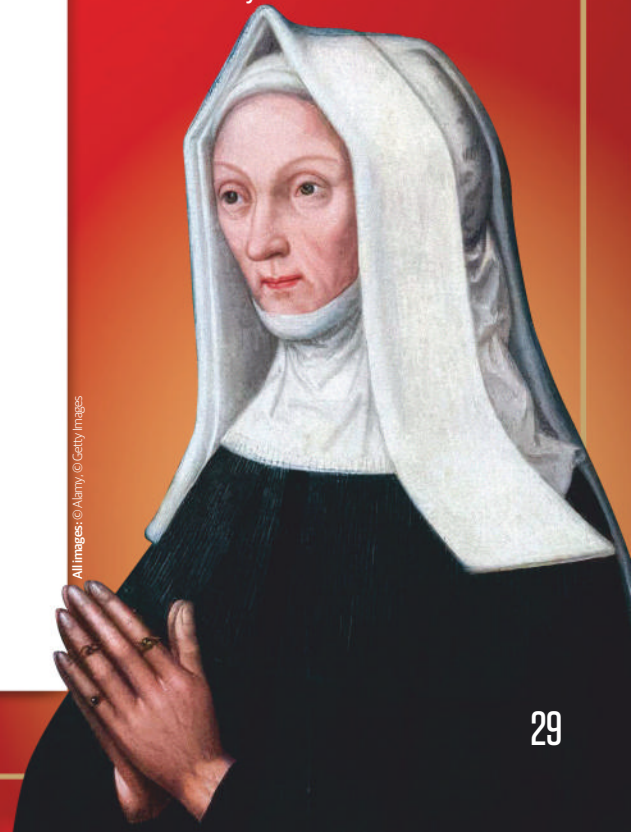


## MATRIARCH OF THE TUDORS

The many marriages of Lady Margaret Beaufort were made for political purposes

Margaret Beaufort, great-granddaughter of John of Gaunt, Duke of Lancaster, was born in 1443, the daughter of Margaret Beauchamp of Bletsoe and John Beaufort, 1st Duke of Somerset. When Margaret was six years old, the Earl of Suffolk arranged for her to marry his eight-year-old son John de la Pole. They were only children and when Suffolk was disgraced a year later, the marriage was annulled. Margaret never referred to de la Pole as her husband. Edmund Tudor and Margaret were married in 1455. He died in November 1456, before his son Henry Tudor was born in January 1457. Margaret, in need of protection, married Henry Stafford, son of the Duke of Buckingham, in 1458.

Stafford died of wounds suffered in the Battle of Barnet in April 1471 while fighting on the Yorkist side. Margaret married her third and final husband, Thomas Stanley, 1st Earl of Derby, in 1472. Thomas Stanley and his brother William were staunch supporters of the Yorkist kings and benefited greatly, gaining lands, income and offices. Both men were present at the Battle of Bosworth. Thomas held back with his men, but the battle would turn to Henry Tudor's favour when William Stanley joined his side in the fight. Thomas Stanley purportedly found Richard III's crown in a bush on the field and put it on the victorious Henry Tudor's head.



All images: © Alamy, © Getty Images



# HENRY'S SHOT OF BOURBON

Henry Tudor would not have been successful in his enterprise without Anne de Beaujeu

Her father, King Louis XI of France, described Anne de Beaujeu as the least foolish of her sex in the kingdom, which contained no wise ones. She inherited a great deal of intelligence from her father and had a ten-year apprenticeship under him, studying his political methods. Known as Madame la Grande, she married a younger son of the Duke of Bourbon, Pierre de Beaujeu. When King Louis died in 1483, leaving his minor son and heir Charles VIII to succeed him, he never named Anne as official regent, but the French court and foreign emissaries fully recognised her as the true ruler of France.

During the eight years she controlled the government, she adroitly guided the country through a series of political crises that threatened France both internally and externally. Anne's handling of these events as a young woman in her twenties is nothing short of astonishing. She could assess a situation and either pre-empt it or react appropriately, rarely making a wrong decision. Her rule lasted until her brother declared his independence and she retired to her estates in the Duchy of Bourbon. When she was eased out of power after the death of her brother, she left the country more stable than when she started her rule, an unusual feat for a regency. Anne had integrity and moral stature to complement her political skills. As her father stated, she was a woman who commanded admiration.

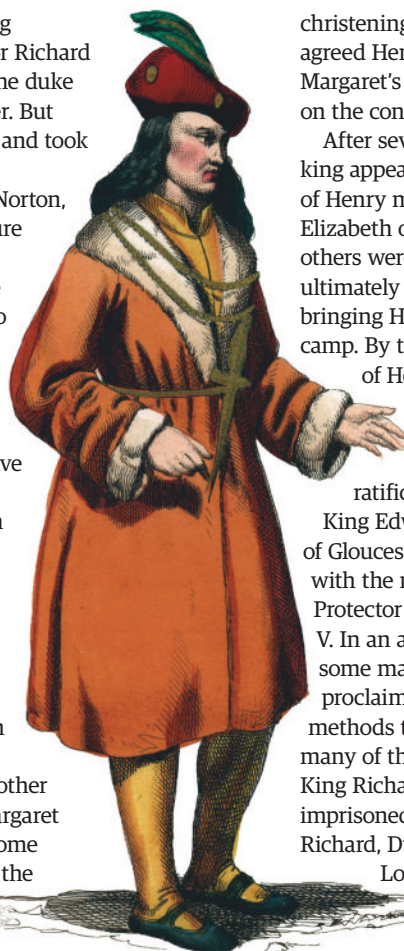


**"HENRY TUDOR SEEMED LIKELY TO MARRY INTO A PROMINENT YORKIST FAMILY AND POSSIBLY PURSUE A COURT CAREER UNDER EDWARD IV"**

the French King Louis XI and King Edward IV, as well as his successor Richard III, tried to strike a bargain with the duke to get custody of Henry and Jasper. But Francis made sure they were safe and took none of the offers.

In the meantime, according to Norton, Margaret worked tirelessly to secure Henry's rehabilitation and tried to persuade King Edward there were advantages to her son returning to England. Her objectives included obtaining a pardon for Henry, to have his father's patrimony and title of Earl of Richmond restored to him, to arrange for Henry to have some of the land and income of her own mother bestowed on him and for him to inherit Margaret's domains on her demise.

Margaret worked her way into the favour of the Yorkist king, maintaining friendly relations with Edward's queen, Elizabeth Woodville. She attended Elizabeth and her daughters during the reburial of Edward's father and brother in the church of Fotheringhay. Margaret also entertained the king at her home during his reign. In 1482 she held the king's youngest daughter, Bridget, during her



christening. By the summer, Edward agreed Henry could get a share of Margaret's lands worth £400 per annum on the condition he returned to England.

After several negotiating sessions, the king appeared to be amenable to the idea of Henry marrying his eldest daughter, Elizabeth of York. The king and many others were weary of the civil strife and ultimately recognised the benefit of bringing Henry Tudor into the Yorkist camp. By the spring of 1483, a draft pardon of Henry, along with the terms of his return, existed. However, King Edward's unexpected death on 9 April 1483 prevented the ratification of the deal.

King Edward's brother Richard, Duke of Gloucester, came to London ostensibly with the mandate to become Lord Protector for his nephew, King Edward V. In an astonishing turn of events, after some manoeuvring, Richard had himself proclaimed king by Parliament, using methods that were not approved of by many of the nobility. Richard was crowned King Richard III on 6 July. King Richard imprisoned Edward V and his brother, Richard, Duke of York, in the Tower of London and they were never seen again.



All images: © Alamy, © Getty Images



**LEFT** Richard III ascended the throne after his nephews were pronounced illegitimate

**BELOW-LEFT** Pierre Landais, Breton politician and advisor to Francis II, Duke of Brittany. He nearly surrendered Henry and Jasper Tudor to King Richard III

## A DARING ESCAPE TO FRANCE

Some agreed with the situation, but many found this state of affairs unsatisfactory. It is difficult to say when people considered Henry Tudor as an alternative to Richard III as king, but certainly by the autumn rebellion began in certain quarters and many left England to join Henry in France. The Duke of Buckingham rose in revolt against Richard III in October 1483. The Dowager Queen Elizabeth Woodville, as well as Margaret Beaufort, at the very least, assented to the rebellion, and at most, had a hand in planning it.

Where Margaret had trusted Edward IV in negotiating Henry's return, she probably feared Richard III's treachery. Because of the king's suspicions of Margaret, he placed her under a kind of house arrest. Despite her isolation in the north, her loyal servants enabled her to maintain contact with her son. Her current husband turned a blind eye to Margaret's activities and did not restrain her.

Henry had every intention of joining the Duke of Buckingham and the rebels with an invasion, and King Richard now had excellent reasons to want to capture him and bring him back to England. After Buckingham's rebellion, the number of exiles in Brittany increased exponentially and about 400 of them were living in

Vannes. Yet Duke Francis agreed to pay out over 5,600 livres to his impoverished English guests. Henry, encouraged by the newly arrived exiles, swore an oath to marry Elizabeth of York in Vannes cathedral at Christmas.

Following this scene, according to the Tudor historian Polydore Virgil, those present swore a further oath to recognise Henry as king. Ralph A Griffiths and Roger S Thomas, in *The Making of the Tudor Dynasty*, state it is unclear exactly when Margaret transformed her plans from rehabilitating her son's patrimony to plotting for his accession, but they believe "the disappearance of the princes was probably a crucial factor in making up her mind."

Richard stepped up his efforts, doing everything in his power to negotiate the surrender of Henry Tudor, including sending diplomats to Brittany, France and

the papal court. This shows he believed Tudor was a threat. Duke Francis had become very ill and was increasingly of unsound mind. The duke's

chancellor, Pierre Landais, received the messengers from King Richard;

Landais needed allies, as he remained unpopular with the Breton nobility, who resented his influence over the duke.

The wily old French King Louis XI died in August 1483. His admiration of the political skills of his eldest daughter, Anne de Beaujeu, had led him to give her and her husband Pierre physical custody of his minor son, King Charles VIII, along with other important offices and duties. Never officially given the title of regent, Anne ruled unquestionably as if she had all the rights and privileges of that designation, pulling the strings of government through her congenial husband, who served as president of the



**RIGHT** Elizabeth of York, eldest daughter of the King Edward IV and the first queen consort of the Tudor dynasty as the wife of Henry VII

**BELOW** Henry is believed to have been outnumbered at the Battle of Bosworth Field





regency council. Louis, Duke of Orleans, the current heir to the French throne, believed he deserved the regency and resented Anne and Pierre.

One of Anne's primary objectives was the annexation of the ancient and independent Duchy of Brittany to France. She would use any means at her disposal, including using Henry Tudor, to fulfil her ambitions. In addition, her regency was under serious threat from the Duke of Orleans. Landais had made an alliance with Orleans, and they wanted to add England to this coalition. The terms of the deal involved the invasion of France by England to help Orleans' effort to become regent.

Richard promised to send a contingent of archers to aid in securing Duke Francis' power against the rebellious Breton nobility and to fight

off annexation by France. In return, Landais promised to arrange for the capture and extradition of Henry and Jasper from Brittany. Richard additionally pledged to give Landais the income from Tudor's confiscated earldom of Richmond.

The deal with Brittany took effect on 1 July and was to last until April 1485 - the entire plot for England to gain possession of Henry and Jasper Tudor had reached fruition. Richard sent letters announcing his intention to invade France and offered to send at least 1,000 archers from Southampton to Brittany.

Although King Richard's promised troops never arrived in Brittany, his interference in Anglo-Breton affairs had offended the French government.

In the late summer and early autumn, there is evidence Henry made an offer

of alms at Vannes Cathedral. Accounts also mention the appearance of Sir James Tyrell, master of the horse for King Richard, who also gave alms. Just as the plot to capture Henry neared completion, someone warned him of the trap: John Morton, Bishop of Ely, who was living in exile in Flanders. Margaret Beaufort's chaplain and confessor Christopher Urswick acted as her agent and had travelled to Flanders. It remains unknown how Morton discovered the plot to capture Henry; however, he sent Urswick to Vannes to warn Henry and the other noblemen to leave Brittany for France with all speed.

Henry sent Urswick to the court of King Charles VIII to ask permission for asylum in France. Charles agreed. Urswick returned to Vannes, and Henry and



**ABOVE** A portrait of Richard III, who fought Henry Tudor at Bosworth

**BELOW** Henry's victory at Bosworth Field marked the end of the Plantagenet dynasty





Jasper began planning their escape. First, Jasper and a few men departed, giving the impression they were going to Duke Francis at Rennes, a city near the French frontier. They made a run for the border and headed for Anjou.

Two days later, Henry left the city with five servants, telling everyone he planned

gotten away, hurriedly dispatched some of his trusted servants in all directions to find, arrest and bring him back to Brittany. Once Landais' men got to the French border, they discovered Henry had crossed into Anjou only about an hour before they arrived. The 400 Englishmen remaining in Vannes knew nothing of

**"KING EDWARD, WEARY OF THE CIVIL STRIFE, ULTIMATELY RECOGNISED THE BENEFIT OF BRINGING HENRY TUDOR INTO THE YORKIST CAMP"**

to visit a friend at a neighbouring manor house. About 8km outside the city, he made a detour towards a nearby forest. With the help of his servant Matthew Baker, he changed his clothes, dressing like a common servant, and then rode straight across the border to Angers in Anjou, only stopping to let their horses drink.

Landais, informed that Henry had

Henry's escape, but when they heard of it, they became frightened. About the same time, Duke Francis recovered his senses. To his astonishment, he heard for the first time the news of his chancellor's treacherous scheme.

Duke Francis considered himself an honourable man. From the beginning, he had openly shown his support for the exiles and had no intention of stopping now. Furious with Landais, Francis turned him over to the Breton nobles

**BELOW-INSET**  
Henry VII is handed the crown of England following Richard III's death

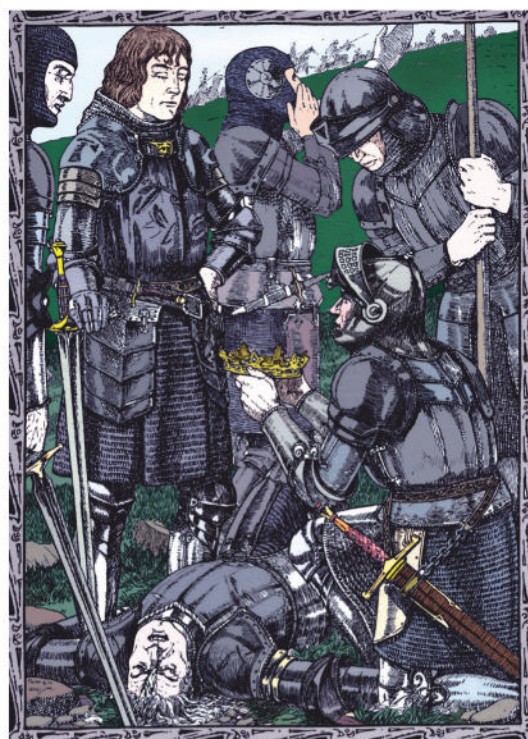


## THE BATTLE OVER BRITTANY

The duchy existed as an independent domain from ancient times until the 16th century

The history of Brittany on the Armorican peninsula of what is now France has its origins in prehistoric times. Before Roman rule, ancient megalith cultures and Celtic tribes inhabited the area. The Romans under Julius Caesar conquered Brittany in 56 BCE, and after years of quelling resistance a kind of renaissance occurred during the reign of Emperor Constantine (306-337 CE). Historians believe the fourth century saw the Christianisation of the area, and following the collapse of the Roman Empire migrants from Cornwall, Devon and Wales arrived. Various independent smaller Breton states later developed into the Kingdom and then the Duchy of Brittany.

The Bretons would resist being absorbed into the Carolingian Empire and the families of Montfort and Penthièvre fought the now legendary War of Breton Succession between 1341-64. In 1378, King Charles V of France attempted to annex Brittany, but the people resisted. The last independent duke of Brittany, Francis II, reigned from 1458 until his death in 1488. Francis harboured the Tudor exiles for many years, and upon the duke's death his 11-year-old daughter Anne became Duchess of Brittany. She married two successive French kings, Charles VIII and Louis XII, and had two coronations as Queen of France. During King Francis I's reign, Brittany lost its complete autonomy and became a French province in 1532.





# TUDOR TIMELINE

A brief history of Henry VII



**1457**

Henry Tudor is born to Margaret Beaufort and Edmund Tudor at Pembroke Castle.

**1462**

Lord Herbert, an ally of Edward IV, takes Henry as his ward.



**1469**

Lord Herbert is defeated at the Battle of Edgcote and executed by the Lancastrians.

**1471**

Henry is the last of the Lancastrian line following their defeat at Tewkesbury, forcing him into exile.



**1485**

Henry returns and defeats Richard III at the Battle of Bosworth Field, taking the throne of England.



**1486**

Henry VII and Elizabeth of York are married, uniting the houses of York and Lancaster, followed by the birth of Arthur Tudor.



**1487**

The Battle of Stoke sees the rebellious Earl of Lincoln and Lambert Simnel defeated by Henry VII.

**1489**

Margaret Tudor, Henry and Elizabeth's second child, is born.



**1491**

Henry Tudor, the third royal child and future Henry VIII, is born.



**ABOVE**  
The official coronation of Henry VII following his victory over Richard III

who backed the regent, Anne de Beaujeu. Arrested and accused of extortion, along with other crimes, they executed Landais on 19 July.

Duke Francis gave the remaining Englishmen money and offered them free passage to France. Henry sent a sincere message of thanks to the duke for his support. Henry then met up with Jasper and his men at the Chateau d'Angers, while Urswick travelled to Montargis to inform the French king the English had arrived. A delighted Charles sent Gilbert

livres tournois to buy clothing for his men.

Naturally, this unanticipated escape had been a complete catastrophe for King Richard, and relations between France and England deteriorated even further. Richard issued proclamations against Henry and the exiles and ordered the muster of men. England, now on high alert, prepared to fight off an assault.

## THE ROAD TO BOSWORTH

It would take a year before the French regime agreed to back Henry's invasion

**"DESPITE BEING OUTNUMBERED BY RICHARD'S ARMY, THE BATTLE TURNED INTO A VICTORY FOR HENRY WHEN RICHARD WAS KILLED IN THE FRAY"**

de Chabannes, Lord of Curzon and governor of the province of Limousin, to greet and welcome the English.

Henry met King Charles at Chartres a few days later and threw himself upon his mercy. He began his campaign to convince the French king he was the rightful claimant to the English throne, telling Charles his nobility called for his return to the kingdom. While not giving his complete endorsement, Charles expressed his support of Henry's mission to claim the throne. He agreed to provide lodgings for all the exiles in Sens and gave him 3,000

of England. The Estates-General of France, at the request of King Charles, granted Henry 40,000 livres to aid in the recovery of his kingdom, and Charles gave him permission to recruit men to raise an army. In truth, Henry only received about 10,000 of the 40,000 livres promised to him and had to resort to getting a loan from one of Charles' councillors, allowing the preparations to begin in earnest. This entailed the amassing of a convoy on the River Seine along with all necessary naval and military arrangements.



## Rise of the Tudors

1492

Peace achieved between France and England with the Treaty of Étaples.

1496

A fourth child, Mary Tudor, is born to the king and queen.

1499

Edmund Tudor, a fifth royal child, is born, but dies the following year.

1501

Arthur is married to Katherine of Aragon, but dies suddenly the next year.

1503

Elizabeth gives birth to a sixth child, Katherine Tudor, but both child and mother die shortly after.

1509

Henry VII of England dies, succeeded by his son Henry VIII.



Henry began his campaign in November 1484 by sending letters to England to gain support, writing these letters in a manner suggesting he was already king. In response, Richard issued proclamations against Henry, ridiculing his pretensions to the royal estate. Henry received good tidings from a servant of his mother of support in England by various nobles and the pledge of funds for his cause to be delivered to him once he arrived in Wales. By now, he had gathered a band of 500 Englishmen, 1,000 Scots as well as some footmen and an unknown number of French troops at Harfleur. It is believed the French troops amounted to about half of the entire invasion army.

Henry's fleet of about 30 ships sailed on 1 August 1485, bound for Wales to claim the English crown. They landed at Milford Haven on 8 August and began moving north-east to engage Richard, recruiting and welcoming men to Henry's cause as he marched. Many Welshmen joined him and his progress was largely unimpeded.

They arrived near Richard's troops bordering on Bosworth Field in Leicestershire, where the fight began

on 22 August. Despite being outnumbered, the battle turned into a victory when Richard was killed in the fray.

Now king of England, Henry reunited with his mother and married Elizabeth of York, unifying the houses of Lancaster and York. The newly founded Tudor dynasty would rule England from 1485 until the death of Elizabeth I in 1603.

**ABOVE** Henry's marriage to Elizabeth of York united the country

**LEFT** Portrait of King Henry VII of England, the first monarch of the Tudor dynasty, by an unknown Flemish painter, c.1505

### FURTHER READING

## SUBSCRIBER EXCLUSIVE

Read more about the Tudors in issue 151 via our digital archive



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# 24 LOST JOBS FROM HISTORY

Time has made these roles obsolete, but could they be your next career?

Written by Jonathan Gordon

**T**here's plenty of talk these days about the jobs that could be at risk thanks to the development of Artificial Intelligence technologies. There are all sorts of professions that could be streamlined or eliminated entirely by these new developments. History offers plenty of examples of professions that saw technology or changing tastes make them obsolete, but perhaps some of these long-lost roles are ripe for a comeback. Could one of these forgotten jobs from the past be revived as a lucrative form of employment today?

## ALEWIFE

**5TH-18TH CENTURY  
DUTIES: BREWING ALE**

Being an alewife was a pretty straightforward profession as it involved the brewing of beer. This role for married women emerged among working families in the Anglo-Saxon period, then spread to specialist alewives being employed as brewers for nobles. The term later came to include women brewing in alehouses. However, alehouses had poor reputations due to the drunkenness and rowdy behaviour they were seen to encourage and the social standing of alewives declined. Industrial brewing finally put paid to the role altogether.



## BOBBIN BOY

**18TH-19TH CENTURY  
DUTIES: MAINTENANCE  
& BOBBIN COLLECTION**

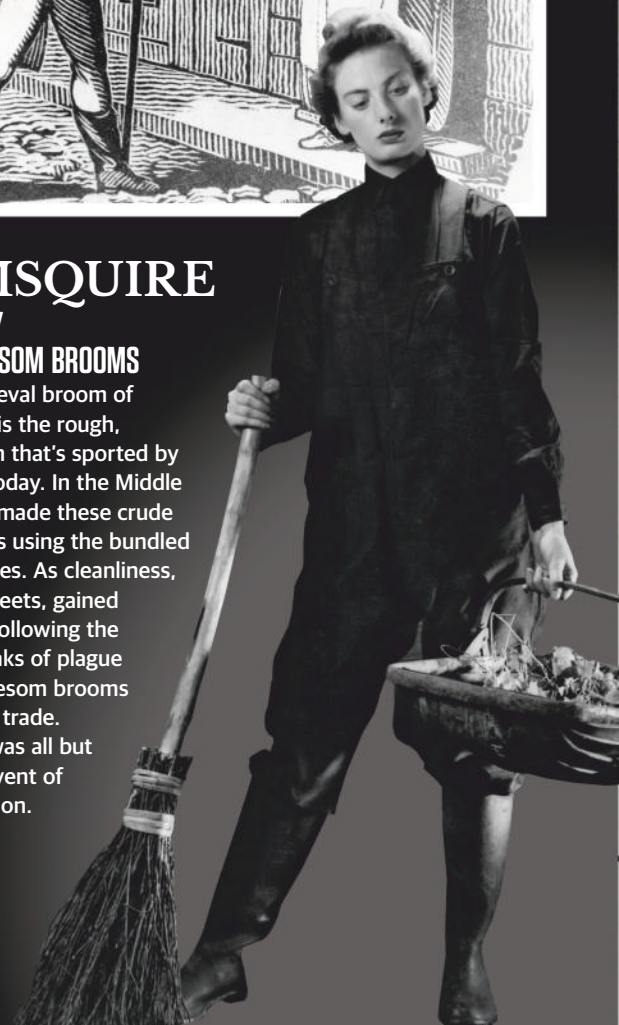
During the Industrial Revolution, when child labour was widespread, the role of the bobbin boy was a particularly hazardous one. Young boys were employed in textile mills primarily to collect and replace bobbins - the spools that gathered the thread being manufactured. The most dangerous part of the job came from doing repairs to the looms, and bobbin boys were frequently maimed or killed after getting caught up in the machinery.



## BROOMSQUIRE

**14TH-20TH CENTURY  
DUTIES: MAKING BESOM BROOMS**

The archetypal medieval broom of popular imagination is the rough, twiggy besom broom that's sported by Halloween witches today. In the Middle Ages, broomsquires made these crude domestic implements using the bundled branches of birch trees. As cleanliness, particularly in the streets, gained greater importance following the many deadly outbreaks of plague during this period, besom brooms enjoyed a significant trade. However, this craft was all but wiped out by the advent of mechanised production.







## BULLOCKY

18TH-20TH CENTURY

**DUTIES:** DRIVING A BULLOCK TRAIN

Known as a bullwhacker in the US, bullocky or bullockie was an Australian term for the driver of a bullock train. Seeing someone leading a long line of heavily loaded bulls through the rural towns of the outback was not an unusual site. Moving slowly and being assisted by a dog, it could be a gruelling job. Bulls were used to transport all sorts of heavy goods such as timber and farm equipment across the vast nation, before modern road and railway infrastructure rendered the bullocky obsolete.

## CHARWOMAN

14TH-20TH CENTURY

**DUTIES:** CLEANING

Since the term char or cherre merely meant a 'turn of work' or a chore, being a charwoman could mean a lot of different things depending on the circumstance. In the 14th century they were hired by the day to carry out all manner of lowly tasks. By the 18th century this was mostly cleaning work in grand houses, and being a charwoman was different to a maid, which was a full-time position. With the advent of modern office buildings, cleaners were sometimes still referred to as charwomen.



## COFFEE SNIFFER (DIE KAFFEERIECHER)

18TH CENTURY

**DUTIES:** IDENTIFYING CONTRABAND COFFEE

This is not a job that had a lot of security to it, since it was only around from 1781-87, but with coffee production jeopardised by climate change, it may become a thing again. In 1781 the Kingdom of Prussia banned the import of roasted coffee in order to control money leaving the country and focus on native industries. Coffee sniffers (or die kaffeeriecher) were about 400 injured war veterans tasked with literally sniffing out coffee. They even had permission to enter peoples' homes to hunt for contraband coffee that had been made without a permit.

## GANDY DANCER

19TH-20TH CENTURY

**DUTIES:** RAILROAD WORKER

Gandy dancer was a slang term for early railroad workers, especially those employed in the United States, such as on the transcontinental railroad. They would lay down the tracks for the lines that connected the nation's towns and cities. Where the term gandy dancer originated from is somewhat disputed. The 'dancer' portion may be in reference to the workers' synchronised motions when passing down and placing the sleepers and rails. 'Gandy' is less clear, possibly deriving from a tool company that supplied their equipment.

*"They would lay down the tracks for the lines that connected the nation"*



## DOFFER

19-20TH CENTURY

**DUTIES:** COLLECTING & REPLACING YARN SPOOLS

Similar to the role of the bobbin boy, doffers were typically children employed by textile producers to collect filled spindles and replace them with empty ones. They would also maintain the machines with grease and oil, keep the area clean and generally be available to perform tasks when needed. It was a role with promotion potential, too, as head doffers would organise the group, spot full spindles and pass instructions down from the supervisor.





## GARDEN HERMIT

15TH-18TH CENTURY

**DUTIES:** ADVISE AND ENTERTAIN

Sometimes also called an ornamental hermit, this role involved living on a wealthy estate in a specially designed hermitage. Garden hermits were given meals by the staff of the house but were expected to interact very little with anyone. They would offer sage council to the family of the house when requested, or act as a form of entertainment for their wealthy guests; a sort of garden curiosity. If this is all sounding a little odd, we're right there with you. But peace and quiet, time to read a book, and three square meals a day sounds like a pretty good deal!



## GONG FARMER

16TH-19TH CENTURY

**DUTIES:** CLEANING CESSPITS & PRIVIES

Before modern plumbing, human waste disposal was an even messier business. Cesspits were a common solution and they needed to be cleared of their unpleasant contents on a regular basis. In stepped the gong farmer, with 'gong' being an Old English term for the waste. They would arrive at night clear out a castle cesspit, and were also available for private privy clearing. To give you some idea of the quantities being dealt with, gong farmers could get two shillings per ton cleared.



## GROOM OF THE STOOL

16TH-17TH CENTURY

**DUTIES:** ATTENDING TO THE KING'S HYGIENE

To say that the groom of the stool dealt with the king's hygiene is leaning heavily into euphemism. The 'stool' portion of the job title is really where the truth lies, as it started as a courtier who attended to the monarch's lavatorial needs. The groom of the stool was also expected to report on these happenings to track the king's health. This intimate role, while not the most pleasant, was in fact a very influential one. It was carried out by a trusted confidant of the king and would extend to managing his finances and close staff.



## HOG REEVE

15TH-20TH CENTURY

**DUTIES:** CATCHING PIGS

'Reeve' was a Middle English term for a steward, and that is a fair description of the role of hog reeves: their primary duty was to catch escaped pigs in rural communities. In the early days this might have been an ad hoc role, but it turned into an elected office with expanded responsibilities to catch other wayward livestock, assess any damage and issue reprimands to the owners of the animals if necessary.



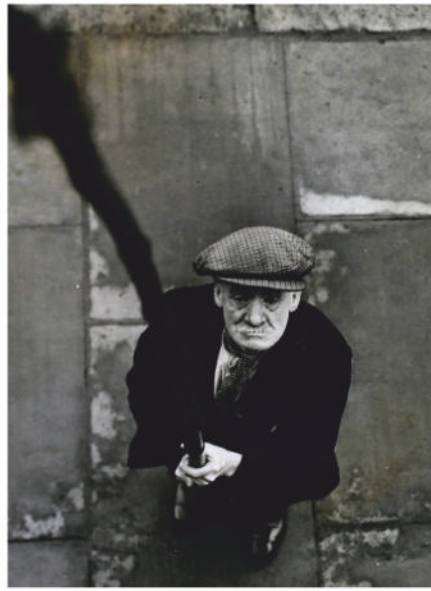


### KNOCKER-UP

18TH-20TH CENTURY

**DUTIES:** WAKING PEOPLE UP IN THE MORNING

In the time before people had affordable, reliable clocks at home, knocker-uppers were hired to tap on people's bedroom windows with long poles to make sure they weren't late for work. The job was particularly common in large industrial towns where many people worked in factories. We imagine this could often be a treacherous job - we only say that because we know how many times we've wanted to throw our alarm clock across the bedroom first thing in the morning!



*"Some criminal gangs employed link boys to lure people into dark alleys to be robbed"*

### LEECH COLLECTOR

18TH-19TH CENTURY

**DUTIES:** PROCURING MEDICAL LEECHES

You're probably familiar with the idea of leeches being used in medicine when bloodletting was a common treatment for all kinds of ailments. But where did they come from? Professional leech collectors did the slimy job, and it could be quite a lucrative profession if there was a high demand in the local area. They would gather leeches by wading bare-legged through bogs and marshes, collecting them when they attached themselves to their skin.



### LINK BOY

16TH-19TH CENTURY

**DUTIES:** GUIDING PEDESTRIANS BY TORCHLIGHT

Before the streets were illuminated at night, first by gas lamps and then electricity, walking home on a dark evening through the streets of London was a dangerous prospect. In stepped the link boys, who for a small fee would guide wary (and usually rich) people. Mentioned in the works of William Shakespeare and Samuel Pepys, some criminal gangs also employed link boys to lure people into dark alleys to be robbed.

### MASTER OF THE BUCKHOUNDS

14TH-20TH CENTURY

**DUTIES:** LEADING A HUNTING PACK

Once a powerful royal position, the master of the buckhounds supplied the hunting dogs for royal hunts. The English monarch's dogs were a prized breed, often exchanged as gifts with foreign dignitaries, so maintaining the hunting pack was important for the leisure of the reigning monarch and for diplomacy. In time the master of the buckhounds was also tasked with running Ascot racecourse, the home of Royal Ascot, although that responsibility and the role in general was retired in 1901.



All images: © Alamy, © Getty Images

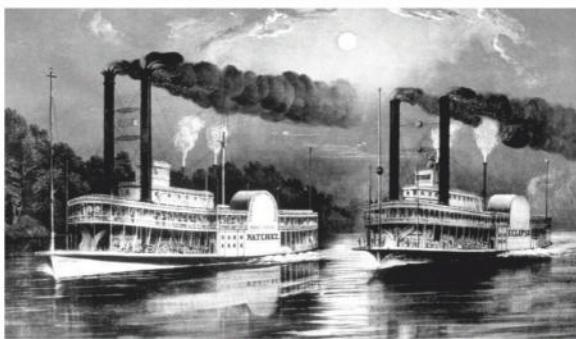


## MUD CLERK

19TH CENTURY

**DUTIES:** STEAMBOAT WORKER

In mid-19th century America, steamboats were a common sight, getting passengers from A to B and laying on pleasure cruises. These boats offered all sorts of job opportunities for young workers, such as the junior role of mud clerk. They were expected to do any and all duties required of them by the captain. The 'mud' element of the job title derived from their frequently having to wade through muddy river banks as the boat came alongside.



## POWDER MONKEY

17TH-19TH CENTURY

**DUTIES:** FETCHING GUNPOWDER FOR NAVAL ARTILLERY

From the earliest days of the Age of the Sail, young boys, mostly from poor backgrounds, were recruited to work on ships to carry out menial tasks, often acting as an apprenticeship for future employment as a sailor. Because of their agility and small size, one of their roles on board naval vessels was powder monkey, carrying gunpowder from the powder magazine (the room where it was stored) in the ship's hold to the gun crews. It was a demanding and dangerous job.



## PINSETTER

19TH-20TH CENTURY

**DUTIES:** REPLACING PINS AT BOWLING ALLEYS

Ever since the Industrial Revolution, many different types of job have been lost to mechanisation and advances in technology, including the humble pinsetter. Their role, as the name suggests, was to reset the pins during games of tenpin bowling. This is now done by machine, but in the early days of bowling alleys it was a full-time job. Pinsetters can still be found at some modern bowling alleys, but the job has evolved and today their primary responsibility is maintaining the machinery.



## PRINTER'S DEVIL

15TH-19TH CENTURY

**DUTIES:** APPRENTICE TO PRINTER

The printing press revolutionised the dissemination of information, making the printed word quick and cheap to produce at scale. It created a booming new industry and, like most skilled professions from the era, getting into that industry required an apprenticeship. Printer's devil was the term used for a junior role at a printing house, and their duties included mixing ink and getting the typeface to the printers. Why call them devils? Because the apprentice could be blamed for any errors and mishaps!





## RAGPICKER

15TH-20TH CENTURY

**DUTIES:** COLLECTING UNWANTED GOODS

As the production of goods became easier and consumerism took hold, a new problem emerged in people's lives: they kept accumulating old stuff they didn't want anymore. In stepped the ragpicker, also known as the junkman, old-clothesman, bone-picker or rag-and-bone man. Rubbish-collection jobs can be traced back to the Middle Ages, but the more modern type would gather unwanted items that had either been left out or offered to them, and reuse them or sell them on. The advent of recycling facilities and charity shops has for the most part replaced this role.

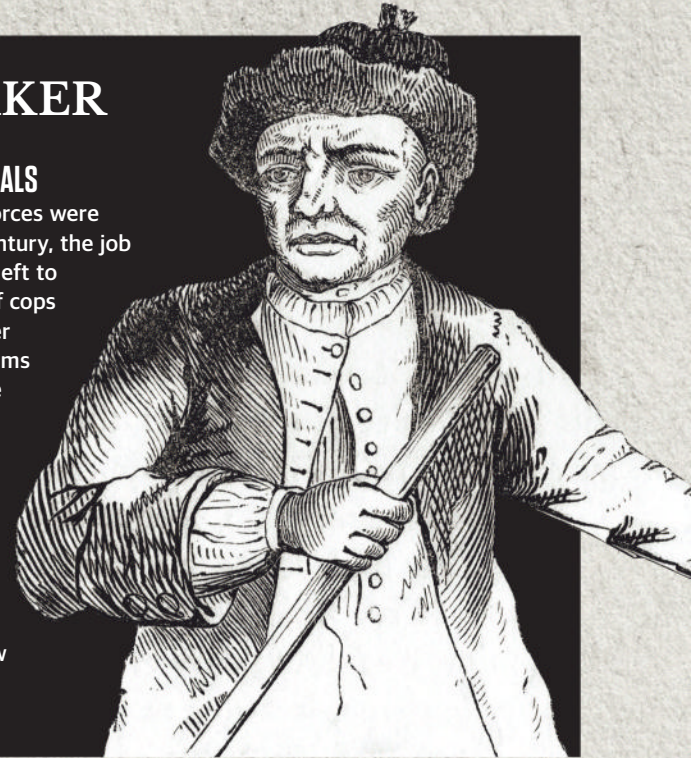


## THIEF-TAKER

17TH-19TH CENTURY

**DUTIES:** CAPTURE CRIMINALS

Before organised police forces were established in the 19th century, the job of catching criminals was left to civilians. In the absence of cops on the beat, the thief-taker was employed by the victims of crime to hunt down the culprits and bring them before the courts for prosecution. The role was not dissimilar to that of bounty hunters in later years, and significant rewards could be earned. As the state took more responsibility for law enforcement, the role of thief-taker declined.

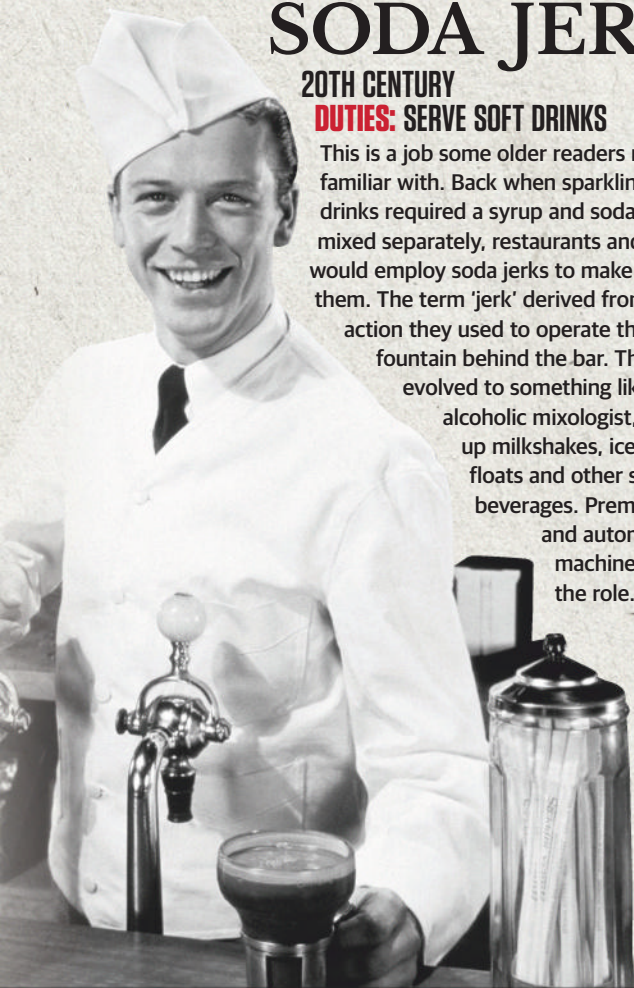


## SODA JERK

20TH CENTURY

**DUTIES:** SERVE SOFT DRINKS

This is a job some older readers might be familiar with. Back when sparkling soft drinks required a syrup and soda to be mixed separately, restaurants and diners would employ soda jerks to make and serve them. The term 'jerk' derived from the hand action they used to operate the soda fountain behind the bar. The role evolved to something like a non-alcoholic mixologist, serving up milkshakes, ice-cream floats and other sugary beverages. Premixed sodas and automatic machines replaced the role.



## TOSHER

19TH CENTURY

**DUTIES:** SCAVENGING IN SEWERS

In what is often regarded as one of the worst jobs ever, the tosher was someone who navigated the sewers of London at low tide to search for anything valuable. Since the sewers collected detritus from the street, this could mean bits of scrap, cloth and wood, as well as much more valuable items such as coins and jewellery. Entering the sewers was made illegal from 1840 due to the dangers of navigating the underground network.

*"Toshers navigated the sewers of London at low tide to search for scrap and valuable items"*





# THE SPOOKY STORIES OF SINISTER SPECTRES FIRST ARE NOTHING NEW. HERE, DR IRVING FINKEL TELLS US GHOSTS

ABOUT THE GHOSTS OF ANCIENT MESOPOTAMIA

Written by Callum McKelvie



## EXPERT BIO

### DR IRVING FINKEL

Dr Finkel is a specialist in cuneiform, the ancient writing system of Mesopotamia, and since 1976 he has worked among the collections of the British Library. His book *The First Ghosts* (Hodder & Stoughton) was published in 2021.









**C**hain-rattling phantoms, figures draped in white sheets, skull-faced spectres – we all know what ghosts are supposed to look like, but where do our ideas about them come from? Our fascination with ghosts stretches back thousands of years, and can be found in a variety of civilisations from across the globe. Some of the earliest records of encounters with spirits come from ancient Mesopotamia, around 600 BCE.

Dr Irving Finkel, curator at the British Museum and author of *The First Ghosts: Most Ancient of Legacies*, is an expert on the Mesopotamian belief in things that go bump in the night. Here he discusses ancient phantoms, rituals to ward off evil, and the disquieting similarities between ancient and modern accounts of spiritual encounters.

#### *What can you tell us about some of these early accounts of ghosts?*

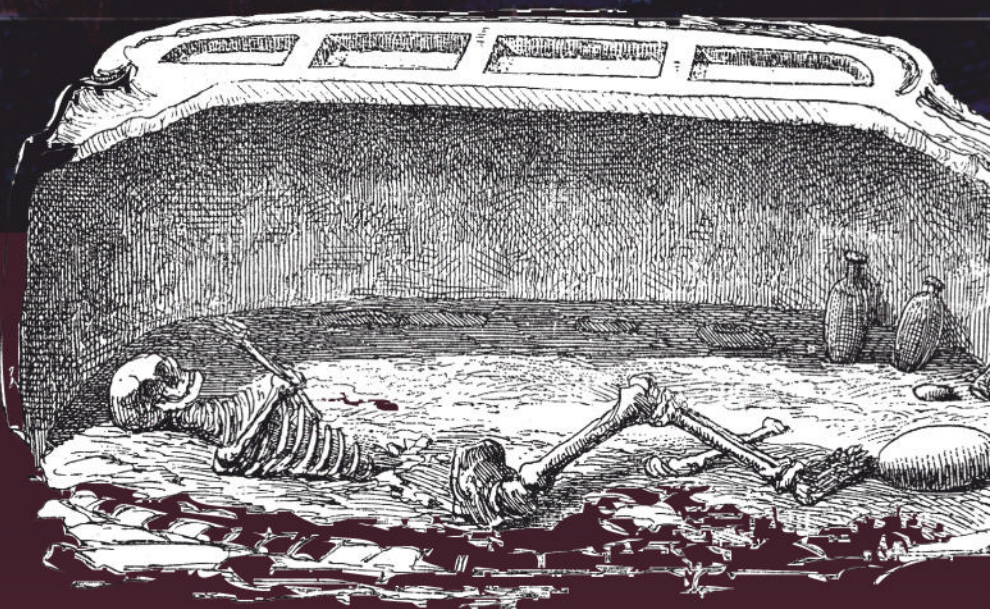
Ghosts are a funny topic. If people have had such experiences, they often don't talk about them. It's a kind of furtive matter in our modern society. One interesting area concerns the origins of ghost beliefs. If you ask people in general, they might think they originate in the Middle Ages. But the Romans and the Greeks in particular left a lot of literature about ghosts. This is quite a rich area for research and serious things have been written about ghosts in the classical world that are fairly accessible in modern books. However, I work with cuneiform, which is the writing system of ancient Mesopotamia. It began around 3500 BCE and lasted down till about the first century AD [CE]. Cuneiform was written on clay tablets, which survived very well. Among these is a surprising amount of material on the subject of ghosts.

#### *How did you first become interested in the subject?*

I have worked in the British Museum all of my adult life, and we have 130,000 pieces of cuneiform. Once I had the idea of writing something on the subject of ghosts, I went through the collection and discovered a lot of accounts, mostly from around 600-400 BCE. The first thing that struck me was that they covered a whole range of material,

**RIGHT** An illustration of a Babylonian clay tomb from the city of Ur in ancient Mesopotamia

**BELOW-RIGHT** The British Museum has a vast collection of cuneiform tablets, a number of which detail accounts of ghost sightings



which I think a modern person interested in ghosts, who'd possibly even thought they'd seen one, would sympathise with and identify with. In ancient Mesopotamia, practically speaking everybody took ghosts for granted and they were part of human existence. When people died, it was believed that some part of the person survived in the 'great waiting room below'. They were supposed to stay there peacefully but since they were human – and humans often don't behave as they should – sometimes the ghosts came up to the land of the living. This generated a lot of literature, mostly about how to identify the ghost and what could be done to appease them.

#### *What might a typical Mesopotamian haunting be like?*

In ancient Mesopotamia, there were very large families, with uncles, brothers and grandfathers living together in quite large setups, with a great courtyard in the middle. The practice was often to bury family members in the courtyard. Comfortable families had a subterranean burial place, while others had something more economical. But the point is that the family dead were always quite nearby. So that meant if one of the family spirits sought to return, they didn't have far to go and people were sympathetic to them, feeling that if they were unhappy they should try and help them rather than be frightened of them. The fascinating thing to me is that, while most ghosts were not so troublesome, some were very dangerous – they could even cause disease. If we were to line a whole load of Babylonian ghosts up against the wall, there would be ghosts that vary from meek and nervous to bullying and savage.



**"IF YOU WERE A HORRIBLE PERSON, CHANCES ARE YOUR GHOST WOULD BE SIMILAR"**

Why? Because that's what people are like and ghosts are reflections of human beings. So if you were horrible as a person, the chances are your ghost would be rather similar.

#### *How would a Mesopotamian haunting be dealt with?*

There were two levels to dealing with a ghost. Firstly, they could buy spells and amulets and wear them around the neck. But if things got worse, they would have to call a professional in. The exorcist would then come to the house and see if they could find out who the ghost was, because if they knew the spirit's identity then they could put together a spell directed against that particular person. And they had a pocketful of spells. For example, they might make some kind of potion of different herbs and recite a spell over it, commanding the spirit to go down to the underworld. There were also other, incredibly complex rituals which were far beyond that sort of thing. For example, the exorcist





**MIDDLE-LEFT**  
The philosopher Athenodorus is said to have once exorcised the spirit of an old man

**LEFT** An amulet from ancient Assyria for protection against evil spirits. Similar amulets were commonplace in Mesopotamia



## How were Mesopotamian spirits viewed differently to our modern concept of the ghost?

The stereotypical image today is something in a white sheet, inclined to walk through walls and not taking any notice when addressed. But, like many phenomena in the modern human mind, pressure has come from Hollywood. All that stuff, practically speaking, is fictitious. When we find un-influenced, straightforward accounts by people who've seen ghosts, what they describe is very similar to those from antiquity. The central principle is that the spirit of somebody who died violently, for example, is somehow tied to the place where they lived or they died. This is as it was in ancient Mesopotamia, all that time ago. There the exorcists in Babylonia made long professional lists of who might turn out to be a ghost. There were 30 or 40 categories, including being burnt to death, gored by a bull, or dying in childbirth. The other belief that recurs periodically throughout Christian, Jewish and Islamic thinking is that a spirit of a dead person could be summoned to answer a question. The idea is strange – that the dead always knew what was going to happen.

## What did you learn from these early accounts?

There's a principle underneath shared by all Homo sapiens, and therefore it's something that's not easily dismissed. I would be very interested, if it could ever come about, in a research programme that investigated ghost belief in far-flung parts of the world. I say that because when I was writing the book, I read a work about Tibetan

magic and religion, which was written in the 1920s. It wasn't a deep or very scientific book, but it recorded a lot of things that people said and believed. There was a short chapter about ghosts in Tibet and it was astonishing because the way they were described was more or less indistinguishable from the Babylonian idea. And 20th century Tibet is quite a long way from the Mesopotamian world.

## What would you like people to consider when examining these early accounts?

When I take *The First Ghosts* to a literary festival I always ask: "Has anybody here seen a ghost?" Usually there will be dead silence. Then, after a while, somebody might put their hand up and say: "I saw my dead aunt when I was a girl." Then five or six other people dotted around the room might also come forward and say something strange happened to them. After that, maybe 20 people will approach me and say: "Well, actually, since you asked, something like this happened to me." People don't just make it up. In fact, for some of them it's a kind of release. They have never told anyone, not even their husband or wife. Of course, it can't be that they are all fantasies or drug-induced. What would be interesting is to collect the testimony of this unadulterated kind in many different contexts of the world and see what that leads to. But the overall matter is something worth clarifying, because my argument is this: if you're a scientist and somebody offers you evidence and you say you won't believe a word of it, is that a scientific attitude? I don't think it is. ○

might make figurines out of clay of the ghost, which were then buried in the ground – so it's a form of sympathetic magic. One of the tablets that came to light, which was written in about 500 BCE, was written by just such an exorcist. On one side of the tablet is written out a long spell but on the back is a drawing of the ghost and another figure. The ghost is an old man, tall and thin with a long beard, and he's walking with his hands tied in front of him, the rope being pulled by a woman. Then the exorcist would have tried to discover who the ghost was and perhaps they decided it was a great uncle who was never without female company. So the specialist would have provided him with a concubine. He'd make figures of the uncle and an attractive woman from this drawing and she would take him down to the underworld. Together they would live happily ever after in the underworld. This is a ritual which is childishly simple in its principle, but no doubt extremely effective.



# THE CONQUEST OF *Siberia*

*Driven by the hunger for new territory, in the 16th century Russia embarked on the ruthless subjugation of a vast and hostile land in the frozen east*

Written by Wayne Bartlett



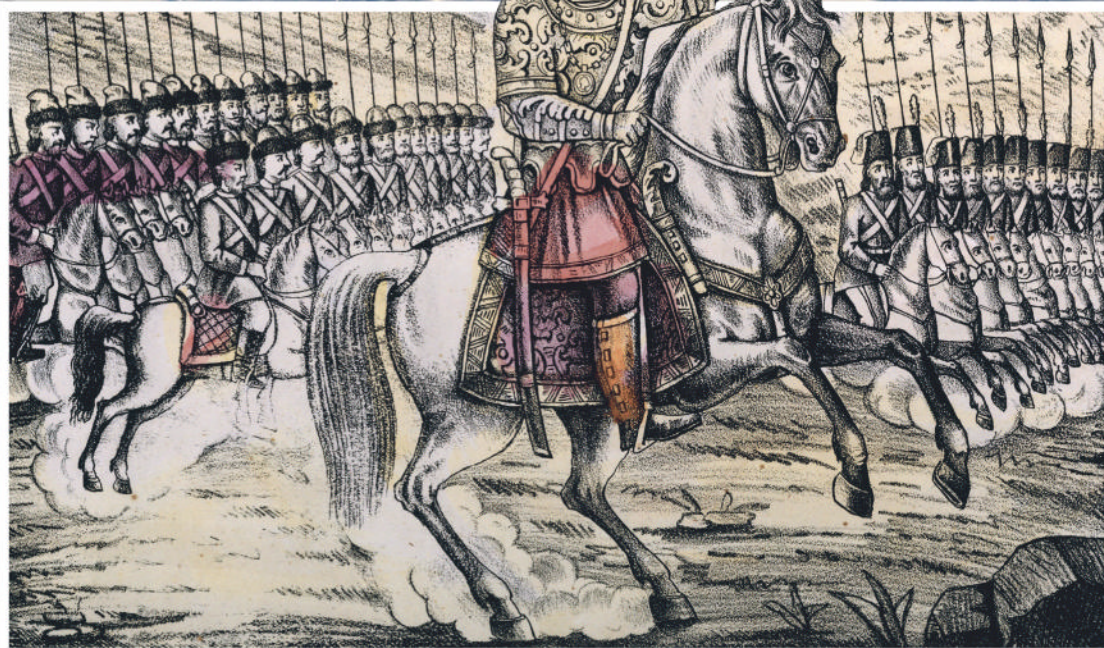
Siberia offered vast opportunities to Russia's tsars. It was rich in valuable natural resources, but at the time this was not the oil for which it would later become important but furs such as sable, black fox and beaver. This was lucrative in the mid-1500s, but obtaining access to it would not be easy. The enormous extent of the territory involved meant that there were many challenges to overcome. Siberia was a fragmented region peopled by various competing tribes who had a reputation (largely deserved) for ferocity. They would not take kindly to interlopers from the west seeking to extract tribute from them.

The first steps at trying to pry away the natives' wealth were made by adventurers who were prepared to gamble a great deal (including their lives) in the search for profit. The formidable Tsar Ivan IV (widely known as 'The Terrible') gave permission to a prominent noble family, the Stroganovs, to exploit Siberia's potential, essentially as his surrogate. In 1555, the rulers of Sibir

(just east of the Ural Mountains) agreed to pay tribute to the tsar. However, this was only a temporary state of affairs. By 1563, there was a new khan in place named Kuchum, who had risen to prominence in the region after wresting power from a rival. He made it clear that no future tribute would be forthcoming. This was a gradual process, but when in 1573 the tsar's ambassador to the khan was killed on arrival at his court, it was apparent that a moment of truth had been reached.

During the 1580s, one of the most formidable of the adventurers who opened up Siberia for Russia entered the scene: Vasilii Timofeyevich, better known as Yermak. He led a band of Cossacks, a tough group of warriors who were outstanding horsemen, hard to control, brave and cruel. Emanating from both Russia and Ukraine, they were a fearsome proposition for anyone unfortunate enough to be in their way. At the time fiercely independent, the Cossacks would be brought into the Russian orbit in 1654 by the Pereyaslav Agreement, under the terms of

**RIGHT** Cossack leader Yermak Timofeyevich began the Russian conquest of Siberia



All images: © Alamy, © Getty Images

The harshness of Siberia is typified by this scene of Chukotka



which the leader of the Ukrainian Cossacks ceded Ukraine to Russia. This was controversial at the time, leading to war between Russia and Poland, and to some extent its impact extends to the present day. It was precipitated by Cossack defeats at the hands of Polish forces, leading to the Cossack leader Bohdan Khmelnytsky, a Ruthenian nobleman, entering into the agreement with Russia.

When Cossack forces moved into Siberia in the early 1580s, they were supplemented by others including troops from the Stroganovs as well as conscripted prisoners. Crossing the Urals into Siberia during the winter, Yermak and his men then rested up. When the snows began to melt in the following spring they moved forward by river, using rafts for the purpose. Cunning played its part too. They put dummies made of straw on the rafts to give the impression that their numbers were greater than they actually were. But what Yermak lacked in numbers he made up for in other ways. His men had firearms whereas Kuchum's army relied primarily on bows and arrows.

**RIGHT** The dangers of exploration are apparent from this portrayal of Bering's ships being wrecked



## The Khanate of Sibir

It is worth noting that although Sibir gave its name to Siberia, the two should not be confused. The Khanate of Sibir was just one part of a much larger territory that we now know as Siberia.

The Khanate of Sibir had a long and chequered history by the time the Cossacks headed up Russian incursions into its territory in the late 16th century. A few centuries before, it had been overwhelmed when the Mongols pushed into the region, and between 1242 and 1502 it formed part of the extensive territories ruled by the Golden Horde.

But Mongol power slowly declined, and by the 15th century the Khanate

of Sibir, centred around the Irtysh River, had come into being with its first khan, Taibuga, after whom a dynasty, the Taibugids, was formed. Their rule was not uncontested, particularly by the Shaybanids, descendants of the Mongol khan Jochi, but in 1563 Kuchum became khan. Among his policies was a determined attempt to convert the shamanist Tatars of Siberia to Islam. However, his attacks on Stroganov trading posts led to dramatic and ultimately fatal consequences for his people. Tired of Kuchum's continued raids, Ivan IV unleashed the Cossacks on Sibir, a brutal force that would overwhelm the khanate.



A view of the Irtysh River, which ran through the heart of the Khanate of Sibir

*"The Cossacks were a fearsome proposition for anyone unfortunate enough to be in their way"*

The Cossacks moved on Iskar, Kuchum's capital, launching their attack in October (probably in 1582, the precise year is uncertain). Their first assault was beaten off but they returned a few days later and on 23 October they broke into the town. Ferocious hand-to-hand fighting ensued. Although the defenders had two cannons, the rest of their weapons were inferior to those of the Cossacks. A devout Muslim, Kuchum ordered his mullahs to pray for divine assistance, but his cannons were taken and it became apparent to him that the fight was lost. Some of his men deserted him "and fled on horseback to their homeland without return, to lie there like animals in wild forests", according to one account. Seeing that Iskar would fall, he fled, and the Khanate of Sibir that he ruled came to an end (though it did make a brief reappearance a few years later).

Cossack losses were heavy, though, and reinforcements were needed. Yermak therefore sent news of his triumph to Ivan IV in Moscow along with a selection of furs as tribute - including 2,400 sable, 800 black fox and 2,000 beaver pelts - and a request for help. Ivan for his part was pleased to add the title



## The Conquest of Siberia



'tsar of Siberia' to the others he already bore. However, it would be a long, hard process to complete the conquest and Yermak would not see it concluded. In August 1585, he was attacked in his camp by a group of Kuchum's men. He is said to have drowned in a nearby river while trying to escape dressed in full armour.

Kuchum remained a free man for some time, though he was forced to lead a nomadic existence in later years. He retreated to the territories of the Nogai Horde in southern Siberia and reached out to Tsar Ivan to ask that he be granted a small territory on the banks of the Irtysh River. Ivan invited him to Moscow, encouraging him into his service. Kuchum opted not to go, which given Ivan's reputation was probably wise. Kuchum, whose family had been captured, died in Bukhara in around 1605.

These were the preliminary moves in the conquest of Siberia that opened up opportunities for others to follow. Trappers and fur traders started to probe further into the region to take advantage of the rich natural resources to be found. But they needed protection, so winter outposts and forts were built at the confluences of major rivers and streams and important portages to subjugate the natives and collect yasuk (fur tribute). These developed into towns such as Tyumen (established by Vasily Sukin and Ivan Myasnoy in 1586).

Other important posts were established in the north such as at Beryozo in 1593 and Mangazeya (1600–01). Tobolsk (the second-oldest Russian settlement east of the Urals) became particularly important. Part of the process of conquest and domination involved bringing different tribal groups, such as the Nenets, progressively under the heel of Russia. The extent of control grew further as towns were established, such as Surgut and Tara in the east. These collectively



Vitus Bering, the Danish-born Russian explorer



Empress Elizabeth of Russia ordered the brutal suppression of native peoples in Siberia



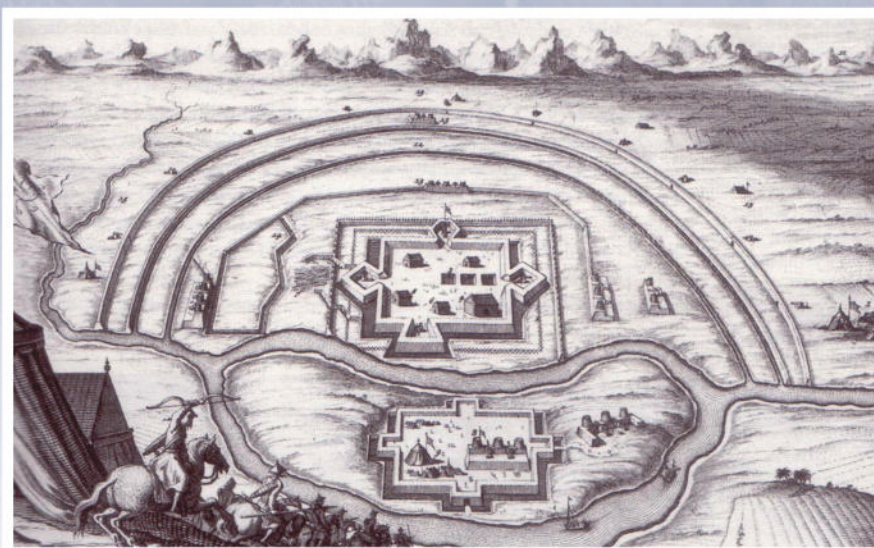
served several purposes. They were places of security but also of administration and trade, and also enabled a tighter grip to be gradually established over the increasingly vast areas that Russia claimed to rule.

Rivers played a key part in opening up Siberia further. In the early years of the 17th century, Russians pushed further up the Ob, and by 1605 they were on the Yenesei, transiting it to the Sym. As the Russian incursion spread, what were initially separate pushes eastwards joined up, further strengthening control over the region. Then it was on to Lake Baikal and the Sea of Okhotsk before finally the Amur River was reached.

Here the situation changed. Siberian resistance was evaporating, but the Russians had advanced so far to the east that a new challenge had emerged in the shape of China. This introduced a completely different element into the equation. The Chinese were equipped with powerful artillery and militarily they posed a strong obstacle to further expansion. Tensions were inevitable. At the Battle of Hutong, fought between a fleet of newly constructed Chinese ships (supported by Korean forces) and Cossacks who had taken up a defensive position on the Songhua River, the Chinese forces of the Qing dynasty scored a significant victory.

In June 1686, a Qing army led by Langtan laid siege to the Russian settlement of Albazin on the border between the two power blocs. An initial assault following a heavy artillery bombardment was beaten off by the Russians and the Qing incurred significant losses. What followed was not that different to a medieval siege. A total blockade around the city was put in place and ruthlessly enforced. Sickiness, a greater enemy sometimes than the soldiers they were fighting against, took hold. In October 1686, envoys from Moscow arrived in Beijing, and three years later, under the terms of the Treaty of Nerchinsk, the Russians abandoned Albazin in return for trading privileges with the Beijing government. When, as a sign of good intent, the Qing army called off the siege of Albazin in late 1686, only 24 of the original 500 Russian defenders were still alive.

Effectively the Treaty of Nerchinsk called a formal halt to attempts at further Russian expansion in the Amur region, but



this did not stop them from expanding in other directions. In 1639 they had reached the Pacific, a hugely significant development. Nine years later, Semen Dezhnev reached what later became the Bering Straits. This enabled Alaska to be accessed via some simple island-hopping, though this did not happen until 1761. What opened up the region more was the so-called Great Northern Expedition between 1733 and 1743. There were a number of academics and scientists involved in this expedition, which was led by Danish-born Russian commander Vitus Bering. However, the results went far beyond scientific research. The Russians gradually gained a better understanding of this vast region and its natural resources (including a greater awareness of nearby Alaska as well as Siberia), with major consequences for the area.

The Russians, in particular the Cossack forces, brought with them incredible hardship. Their actions were often violently oppressive. Three tribal groups - the Kamchadals, the Kuryaks and the Chukchi - were particularly harshly persecuted in

**ABOVE** The fortress of Albazin in the Amur region, site of an epic clash between Russia and the Qing dynasty

The Ural Mountains: the frontier between Russia and Siberia



*“Siberian resistance was evaporating, but the Russians had advanced so far to the east that a new challenge had emerged in the shape of China”*

an extended period that stretched from the mid-17th to the mid-18th centuries, and many other tribal groupings were also badly affected. Dissident men from these tribes were hanged from meat hooks and other terrors included diseases such as smallpox, which the local population had no natural immunity to. In some cases, native populations declined by up to 80 percent. In an attack initiated by the Russian Empress Elizabeth that lasted from 1744 to 1747, native men were killed and women and children were enslaved. This was done by Cossacks “with the help of Almighty God and to the good future of Her Imperial Highness”, according to one source. Not for the first time in history, religion was being deployed as justification for brutal repression. In 1778 Russia made a peace agreement with Chukotka, at the extreme north-easterly tip of Siberia (and indeed mainland Asia), bringing this phase of Russian expansion to an end.

The long-term results of this expansion were devastating. In Kamchatka, in the very far east of Siberia, today only about five per cent of the population is of indigenous origin. In 1882, the explorer Nikolai Yadrintsev identified 12 native groups that had been exterminated because of Russian expansion. Nature also suffered greatly, with local animal populations decimated in the hunt for fur. The shape of Siberia had been altered forever, but it had come at an unbearable cost to many of those who were unavoidably caught up in these momentous events. ○



**ABOVE** The corpse of the Cossack leader Yermak is mutilated by his enemies

**BELOW** A religious procession through Moscow in the time of Tsar Ivan IV












# Scourge of the Spanish Main

*Bloodthirsty privateer to some, heroic governor of Jamaica to others, the legacy of Henry Morgan is steeped in controversy*

Written by Callum Mckelvie



Of the 5,000 or so pirates who terrorised the Atlantic and Caribbean during the late 17th and early 18th centuries, few names have entered the history books. Alongside notorious figures such as Edward Teach, better known as Blackbeard (c.1680 - 1718), and Anne Boney, one of the most recognised is Henry Morgan - best known today for having inspired a popular brand of spiced rum. Yet Morgan was not a pirate in the traditional sense at all, but a 'privateer', meaning that the raids he carried out were upon special commission by the governor of Jamaica. Throughout the centuries so much has been said of Morgan's deeds that much of the truth has been lost beneath waves of myth and legend.

### *The mystery of Morgan*

Morgan's early years are shrouded in mystery but what is known is that he was a Welshman, born in Llanrumney in

Monmouthshire. It's likely he was born around 1635 due to his recorded age in December of 1671 being about 36, and it's possible he may have been the son of Robert Morgan, a wealthy farmer and landowner. But despite his pedigree, Henry Morgan claimed to have had little formal education as a boy, stating that he "left the schools too young" and was "more familiar with the pike [a long spear-like weapon] than the book".

However, the greatest mystery surrounding Morgan's youth is how he found himself going from a rainy village in the south of Wales to the Caribbean. His most famous biographer, Alexandre Olivier Exquemelin (1645 - 1707), claimed the young man was kidnapped and sold into indentured servitude in Barbados. Yet as we shall see, many of Exquemelin's claims have come to be doubted and a more popular theory is that Morgan may have first ventured to the Caribbean during the Anglo-Spanish War of 1654-60. ▶



## 'The Western Design'

Morgan was most likely one of the many troops sent to the Caribbean as part of 'The Western Design', an invasion of Spanish territories in the West Indies overseen by Sir William Penn and Robert Venables. In 1653, Oliver Cromwell had become Lord Protector of England and was concerned by the threat he believed Catholic Spain posed. The two nations were diametrically opposed religiously, but there may have been other incentives such as financial motivations or, as maritime historian John F Battick theorised in 1974, a plan to hinder Spain's vital trade.

After a disastrous assault on Santo Domingo in the Dominican Republic in 1655, in which a young Morgan may have been involved, Venables and Penn orchestrated a much more successful assault on Jamaica. Within five years all the Spanish residents on the island had been expelled, and Jamaica would remain a British colony until 1962. Morgan was most likely among those first British settlers who would have had to contend with frequent attacks from Maroons - escaped slaves - but also the harsh tropical climate and bouts of disease.

## Birth of a buccaneer

By 1660, the Restoration of the monarchy in England led to the end of the Anglo-Spanish War but it did not end the hostilities between the two nations. Spain's refusal to recognise England's annexation of Jamaica led to concerns that they were planning an invasion. A useful weapon against this perceived threat were the buccaneers, also known as privateers. Primarily active during the 17th century, unlike traditional pirates, who targeted commercial vessels regardless of nationality, privateers received commissions to carry out attacks against England's enemies.

There were rules, however. Attacks on Spanish settlements were forbidden as potential acts of war. Nonetheless they did occur and the perpetrators were rarely punished, after all any attack on Britain's enemies was still advantageous. To the privateers, the illegality of such attacks meant that, unlike assaults upon ships, they were not required to share their ill-gotten gains with the authorities. It's unknown when Morgan first became one of this infamous band, but in 1662 he is thought to have captained a ship during Christopher Myngs' attack on Santiago de Cuba.

## Thomas Modyford: Governor of Jamaica

On 15 February 1644 Thomas Modyford, an established figure in Barbadian politics and a notorious slave owner, was appointed Governor of Jamaica. Initially ordered to ensure privateering operations conducted from the island ceased, he disobeyed this command when he realised how crucial to Jamaica's security they had become. The threat of invasion still lingered and Modyford knew that the buccaneers' debilitating attacks kept the Spanish forces busy and Jamaica safe.

But there were also economic considerations. By the 1660s, buccaneering had become an important aspect of the island's trade, and nowhere was this more evident than at Port Royal on the southeast coast. From here, privateers would resupply and launch their ships and were always willing to spend some of their plunder. Modyford also found that his own coffers could benefit from the legally dubious trade. In fact, historian Margarette Lincoln believes that Modyford's main motivation was to "make enough money for himself while holding on to his post as governor."

In order to operate, privateers required a Letter of Marque, and in 1667 Modyford issued such a document to Morgan. This letter effectively gave Morgan permission to do whatever he wanted with Spanish ships, commanding him to use his "best endeavours to surprise, take, sink, disperse and destroy all the enemy's ships or vessels which shall come within your view." But Morgan had no intention of limiting his attacks to enemy vessels.

## Scourge of the Spanish Main

Morgan soon developed a terrifying reputation among the Spanish settlers, feared for his attacks on various ports and cities. From Port Royal he launched frequent raids on the area known as the Spanish Main, territories located in the Caribbean and modern-day South America. His attacks were too numerous to recount



here in full, but there were several that became particularly infamous due to Morgan's supposed cruelty.

One of these was his April 1668 raid upon Puerto del Príncipe, part of a legendary voyage during which he attacked many Spanish settlements. According to Graham Thomas in his work, *The Buccaneer King: The Story of Henry Morgan*, the attack was almost compromised by an escaped Spanish prisoner who was able to leak details of the oncoming raid.

Nonetheless, despite fearsome resistance, Morgan was able to capture the town and ransom its occupants.

**TOP** A Spanish prisoner cowers before Morgan following his capture of Panama

**ABOVE-LEFT** The privateer is depicted seizing a Spanish woman during a raid

**ABOVE-RIGHT** Morgan's attack on the Spanish Fleet at Maracaibo in 1669

**LEFT** Llanrumney Hall in South Wales is thought to be Morgan's birthplace





*"The threat of invasion still lingered and Modyford knew that the buccaneers' debilitating attacks kept the Spanish forces busy and Jamaica safe"*



Exquemelin, a crew member who later published an account of the voyage, wrote that Morgan carried out unspeakable torture upon the Spanish prisoners. However, numerous historians - Thomas among them - have come to doubt the veracity of these claims. Certainly many of the privateers committed act of torture, but historians question both Morgan's involvement and the extent to which this occurred.

One of Exquemelin's most shocking allegations concerns Morgan's actions in the city of Portobello in Panama, which he raided in July 1668, ransoming its occupants for 100,000 pieces of

eight - Spanish coins (not to mention the treasures and trinkets that Morgan and his cohorts were able to spirit away). During the capture of the Santiago Fort, Exquemelin claimed Morgan's men marched forward using prisoners as human shields.

But Morgan could be as audacious as he was purportedly cruel. In 1669, following attacks on Maracaibo and Gibraltar, he found his escape blocked by the Spanish fleet. Using a decoy ship, Morgan loaded it with explosives and sailed it towards the Spanish vessels, who failed to notice the ruse until it was too late. But it was Morgan's final attack ▶

## Morgan's Trail of Terror

The privateers' most notorious and devastating raids

### Maracaibo March 1669

Upon arriving in Maracaibo, Morgan discovered that the townspeople had been aware of his coming and many had fled. He occupied the town for several weeks, ransoming the wealthy citizens, with many purportedly tortured.

### Gibraltar March 1669

Following his attack on Maracaibo, Morgan attempted to sack the town of Gibraltar on Lake Maracaibo (not the famous territory bordering Spain). The town was empty but Morgan's men soon hunted down the locals, who were hiding in the woods.

### Granada 1663

Morgan, along with John Morris, David Marteen and Captain Jackman, attacked Granada. Indigenous people are said to have supported Morgan in the raid as a means to fight back against the Spanish invaders. The attack on Granada also saw Morgan leave with a significant portion of the loot, enough to purchase a plantation.

### Portobello 1668

One particularly troubling moment in Exquemelin's account of Morgan's attack is when he claims the privateers used captured Spanish prisoners as human shields, though the veracity of this, as with many of Exquemelin's claims, is hotly debated.

### Panama City 1671

Morgan's most audacious attack and the one that would put an end to his career as a privateer. It has often been claimed that Morgan himself started the fire that destroyed the city, though it has been suggested that it was in fact the Spanish settlers in an attempt to disrupt Morgan's plans.





## Captain Morgan Rum

Today the Scourge of the Spanish Main is better known for the popular alcoholic beverage that bears his name

By the 1940s, the Canadian company Seagram was one of the largest producers and suppliers of alcoholic beverages in the world. In 1943, seeking to diversify its product line from blended and malt whisky, the firm purchased the rights to produce a brand of spiced rum. The recipe was bought from a pharmacy in Kingston, Jamaica, which according to author and liquor expert Frank Flannery added "medicinal herbs and spices to raw rum". Perhaps seeking to emphasise this link to the Caribbean, Seagram chose to name their new product after Henry Morgan. A jovial mascot, which has more in common with the classic image of a pirate than accounts of the real Morgan, adorns the bottle today.



that would be his most infamous and the one responsible for putting an end to his privateering career.

### *The attack on Panama*

In 1670, Mariana, Queen Regent of Spain, ordered the Spanish Navy to begin striking British ships in retaliation for the privateers' raids. Modyford knew this action threatened not only the safety of the region but also his position as governor. Morgan was ordered to do what was needed to put an end to the matter and Panama Viejo, with its canal flush with ships carrying precious gold and silver, was chosen as an ideal target.

Historian Samir S Patel, writing in *Archaeology Magazine*, says Morgan assembled "the largest pirate fleet in history" for the operation, comprising "36 ships, 1,846 men and almost 250 cannons." In 1671, Morgan began his attack by striking Fort San Lorenzo before sailing up the Chartres towards Panama Viejo. But by the time Morgan and his band of marauders dropped anchor, news of their arrival had spread and many of the treasures they had hoped to seize had already been spirited away. According to legend, in revenge Morgan burnt the entire

city to the ground - its ruins can still be seen to this day.

But the attack had consequences, particularly for Morgan and Modyford. Shortly beforehand, England and Spain had signed a peace agreement, known as the Treaty of Madrid, which put an end to all hostilities between the two powers. Such was the anger at Morgan's attack that the Spanish demanded retribution and England's King Charles II, not wishing to endanger the treaty or possibly even start another war, ordered Modyford and Morgan to be arrested and brought to England.

### *'Sir' Henry Morgan*

Yet Morgan had little to worry about. To the people of England, he was a national hero and the authorities had no intention of punishing him. Although some sources claim he was imprisoned in the Tower of London, other evidence suggests he was a free man. Morgan was never put on trial and, although he did give evidence before the Lords of Trade and Plantation, he was found to have been unaware of the treaty and therefore not guilty. In fact, according to a letter from Modyford, Morgan spent his time in England "being feted in London







In 1682 Lynch was once more made Jamaica's governor and Morgan found himself stripped of his authority -he would spend most of his remaining days in the taverns of Port Royal. Morgan also owned three plantations, where he kept a large number of slaves. When Morgan's estate was probated in 1689, records show he held 131 enslaved people, 33 of whom were listed as "boys, girls or children".

## *'A certain false, malicious, scandalous and famous libel'*

In 1678 Exquemelin published *The Buccaneers of America*, in which he gave an account of his adventures as a member of Morgan's crew. When the book was translated into English in 1684, Morgan was furious at the claims made within. But what exactly incensed the ex-privateer? Some historians believe the graphic accounts of Morgan torturing Spanish settlers were the cause of his fury. But given the edition's origins as a translation of the Spanish text, the allegations are hardly surprising.

However, Mark G Hanna in his 2015 book *Pirate Nests and the Rise of the British Empire 1570-1740* suggests that it may have been "Exquemelin's claim that Morgan first came to the West Indies as an indentured servant," that angered him.

In 1685 Morgan pursued legal action against publisher Thomas Malthus, seeking damages of up to £10,000 - he was awarded £200. But the damage had already been done and, with few other contemporary accounts, Exquemelin's book became the version of Morgan's story upon which many others were based.

## *Bloodthirsty pirate or brave buccaneer?*

Three years after the libel case, Morgan died at the age of 53 in Port Royal, the legendary home of the pirates and privateers. In the centuries following his death he has been proclaimed as both "a brutal, rapacious, lustful, murderous villain" (*A Romance of the Spanish Main* by Cyrus Townsend Brady) and as "a man of courage, determination, bravery" (Thomas).

Today, Morgan remains a controversial figure. Despite the bearded, grinning fiend adorning the rum bottles that bear his name, we know he was no mere bloodthirsty opportunist of the high seas, yet this misconception continues. Some defend Morgan's actions as an archaic form of warfare, while others look upon him as a cruel monster. Whatever the truth, he will forever be remembered as the Scourge of the Spanish Main. ○

*"The ex-privateer found himself pronounced not only 'Sir' Henry Morgan but the new deputy governor of Jamaica"*

taverns and coffee houses, gambling and going to the races and theatres, and also visited his relatives in Wales."

But Morgan could not get too comfortable in England, because the king had need of his skills. In 1672, Jamaica's new governor, Thomas Lynch, had (in the words of historian Thomas) "sentenced those privateers he could and executed them," a stark difference to Modyford, who had "kept them close but with some degree of control during peace so that he had them there for war."

Unfortunately, that same year the Third Anglo-Dutch War began and, with the privateers gone, Jamaica was now relatively undefended. In 1673, Morgan was questioned on how best to defend the island from attack. The king, satisfied upon hearing Morgan's proposals, bestowed upon him the honour of a knighthood. A year later the ex-privateer found himself not only Sir Henry Morgan but also the new deputy governor of Jamaica.

## *Return to Jamaica*

Morgan served alongside Jamaica's newly appointed Governor John Vaughan, but the latter appears to have disliked the ex-privateer. Vaughan complained that Morgan "has made himself and his authority so cheap at the port, drinking and gaming at the taverns." Vaughan attempted to remove Morgan from his post, believing he had been carousing with French privateers, but Morgan claimed his actions were not illegal and were actually in the interests of preventing French commissions.

Vaughan left the island in 1678 and Morgan began the first of two terms as acting governor of Jamaica, focussing much of his time on rebuilding the island's fortifications. During this time his attitude towards the privateers also underwent a dramatic shift. One evening he is believed to have invited 17 men suspected of piracy to dine and drink with him. When they drunkenly confessed their guilt, he had them arrested and executed.

### TOP-LEFT

A contemporary depiction of Morgan's attack on Puerto del Príncipe

LEFT It's claimed Morgan frequently tortured prisoners

ABOVE Morgan depicted with Panama burning behind him

ABOVE-INSET The ruins of old Panama - was this city burned to the ground by Morgan and his privateers?





## EXPERT BIOS

### JACQUELINE KENT

Jacqueline is an Australian biographer and author who has written a number of acclaimed titles, including *A Certain Style: Beatrice Davis, a Literary Life* (Viking, 2001), which won Australia's National Biography Award.

### TOM ROBERTS

Tom is an historian and researcher and has authored several works, including *Before Rupert: Keith Murdoch and the Birth of a Dynasty* (University of Queensland Press, 2015) for which he won a National Biography Award.



# The life of transgender pioneer

# APRIL ASHLEY

*How the model and performer became one of the most significant figures in Britain's LGBTQ history*

Written by Emily Staniforth

**B**orn in Liverpool in 1935, April Ashley lived a vibrant but tumultuous life. She became one of the first British people to have gender-affirmation surgery, a procedure she underwent in Morocco in 1960. The following years were a stressful time for the performer and model: in 1961 she was outed in the national press, in 1963 she married a British aristocrat - the marriage broke down shortly afterwards - and in 1969 her gender and identity were dissected by the British courts during her high-profile divorce. But Ashley would not be cowed and continued to work, becoming a staunch advocate for the transgender community.

Here, we speak to Ashley's biographers Jacqueline Kent and Tom Roberts, co-authors of *Bonjour, Mademoiselle! April Ashley and the Pursuit of a Lovely Life*, who tell us about her

turbulent but glamorous story, a woman who became one of the most well known transgender figures in British history.

#### *What do we know about the early life of April Ashley?*

Quite a lot, actually. Ashley often spoke about her childhood in interviews. She was born into a working-class Liverpool family, designated male at birth and given the name George Jamieson. George had a desperately unhappy early life; having gone straight from school into the merchant navy, he tried to take his own life and was forced to undergo psychiatric treatment and a form of aversion therapy. Life improved when he went to London and got even better when he changed his name to Toni April, started living as a woman and joined Le Carrousel, a glamorous trans cabaret in Paris.



**Tell us about her gender-affirmation surgery, how she felt about it and how significant it was in 1960...**

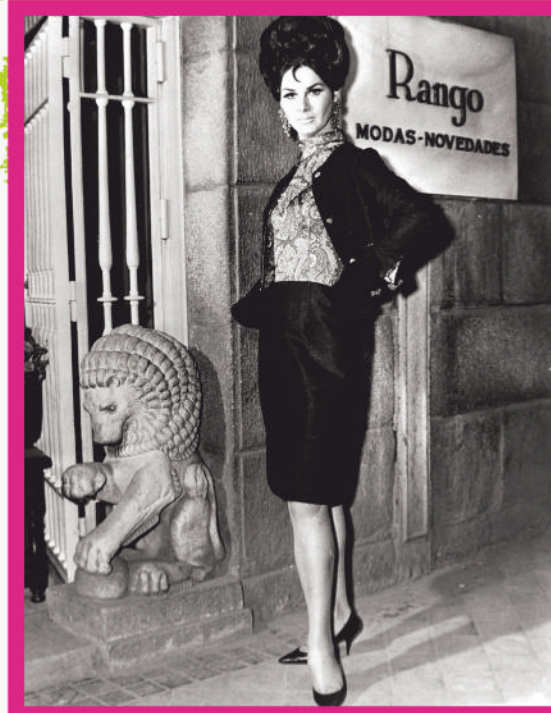
George Jamieson used to pray that he would wake up as a girl and achieved this ambition in 1960 when Toni April underwent the necessarily brutal surgery in Casablanca. In 1960 it was a decision that took enormous courage because the operation was only just being pioneered and could have been fatal. But she never wavered from her determination to take this step and was delighted when the operation was successful: the first words her surgeon spoke to her when she came out of the anaesthetic was: "Bonjour, Mademoiselle." Hence the title of our book.

**What was life like for Ashley in the aftermath of the surgery?**

She changed her name from Toni April to April Ashley and embarked on life as a model in London. Because she was beautiful - nearly six feet tall [1.8m] and with a gamine Audrey Hepburn look - she had no trouble getting work and for a while she revelled in her glamorous life, including a romance with a rich aristocrat named Lord Timothy Willoughby.

**What career opportunities were there for a transgender person in the 1960s?**

These depended wholly on the usual trio of assets: social class, money and



**ABOVE-LEFT**  
Tall and beautiful, Ashley's striking looks helped her forge a successful modelling career

**ABOVE-MIDDLE**  
During their divorce, her marriage to Corbett was declared null and void by the British courts because Ashley had been assigned male at birth



and it [was] decided his re-registration was invalid. It took three years and a lot of money before Forbes-Sempill's right to the title was conceded. Roberta Cowell, who'd had gender-affirming surgery in 1952, had gone to University College London as a male, and had become known as a fighter pilot, a racing driver and a successful business owner. April had none of these advantages, so therefore no means of earning a living apart from what she could find for herself. Being spectacularly good-looking, she could seek work as a model or a film or stage actor. She had some success as a model and hostess: for a while her face was her fortune.

## LE CARROUSEL DE PARIS

### How working in cabaret changed April Ashley's life

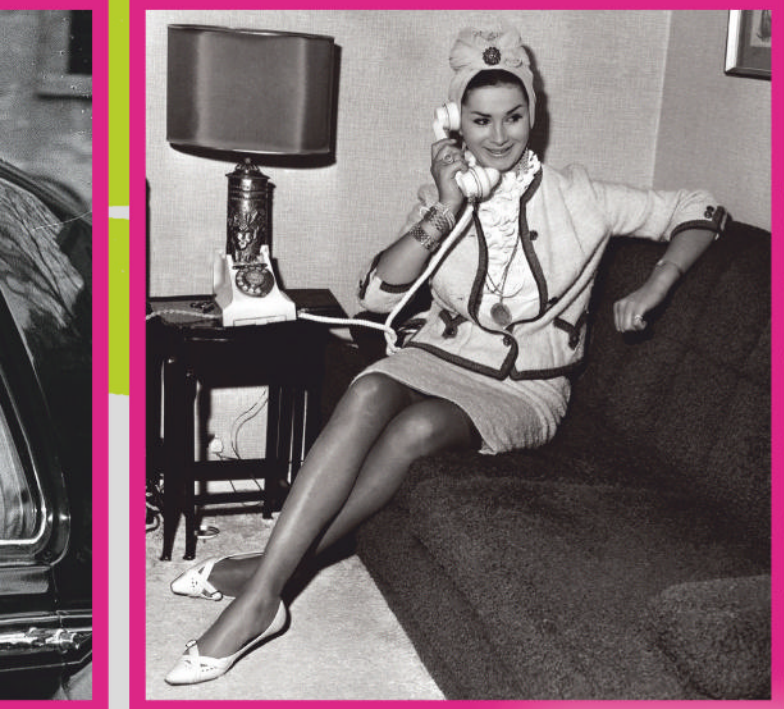
In 1947 Le Carrousel de Paris, a restaurant and cabaret venue near the Moulin Rouge, was taken over by nightclub owner Marcel Ouizman and moved to a new base near the Avenue des Champs-Élysées. Ouizman had already been at the head of Madame Arthur, Paris' first 'gender-twist cabaret' that, from the 1930s, hosted performers known as 'transformistes' - usually cisgender men acting as female impersonators.

By the late 1940s the stars of Madame Arthur were a group of transgender women who performed as singers, dancers and entertainers. Acts such as Coccinelle, a singer and celebrity, and Bambi, an Algerian-born showgirl, gained top billing at Ouizman's Le Carrousel, helping it to become one of the most successful nightclubs in Paris.

It was during this time that Ashley, having been discharged from the merchant navy and working in a tea house in London, became aware of Le Carrousel as a drag cabaret venue. She moved to Paris after getting a job there in 1956, performing alongside stars like Coccinelle under the name Toni April. Of the beginning of her career as a performer at Le Carrousel, Ashley said: "Little did I know it at the time, but I had found another home." While at Le Carrousel, she learned how Coccinelle had travelled to Casablanca, Morocco, in 1958 for gender affirmation surgery. Two years later Ashley followed Coccinelle's journey and underwent her own surgery by gynaecologist Dr Georges Burou. The following year she officially changed her name to April Ashley.







**LEFT** Ashley's modelling career suffered as a result of her outing as a transgender woman

**RIGHT** She refused to shy away after her divorce and had a variety of jobs in the UK and abroad

## How did Ashley get 'outed' as a transgender woman and what effect did this have on her?

A former housemate tipped off the tabloid newspaper *The People* about April's gender [confirmation] and a journalist came to interview her. She thought it best to explain the whole story, which was duly published in November 1961 with the headline "Her' secret is out". As a result April lost all her modelling work and therefore her income, and was almost destitute. She was very bitter about it, understandably.

## What was the public response like towards Ashley once she was outed?

As a result of the article in *The People*, April lost her entire modelling career. She received abusive phone calls and letters; people would shy away from her at parties. The aristocratic friends she had made refused to have anything to do with her. In fact, her entire social and professional life in London collapsed overnight. April Ashley paid a very high price for being the first transgender person with an established public profile to discuss transgender issues frankly.

## Ashley's marriage to Arthur Corbett ended in a high-profile divorce case that had ramifications for both Ashley and the transgender community. Can you tell us about it?

The court case forms the centrepiece of our book, and its details are both fascinating and enraging. Briefly: April married Arthur Corbett, a minor aristocrat, and when the marriage broke

down after a short time she felt entitled to compensation and asked for the villa Corbett owned in Marbella and which he'd said he intended to give her. Arthur counter-sued for divorce on the grounds that April had been born male and therefore the marriage was null and void. The matter went to court at the end of 1969, and the judge ruled that indeed the form of marriage should be dissolved, since marriage was between a man and a woman and April's birth certificate described her as male. April left the High Court with nothing except humiliation and despair. In its denial of legal status to transgender women, the ramifications of Corbett v Corbett were considerable, in the UK and elsewhere. The rights of trans men and women were set back for a generation.

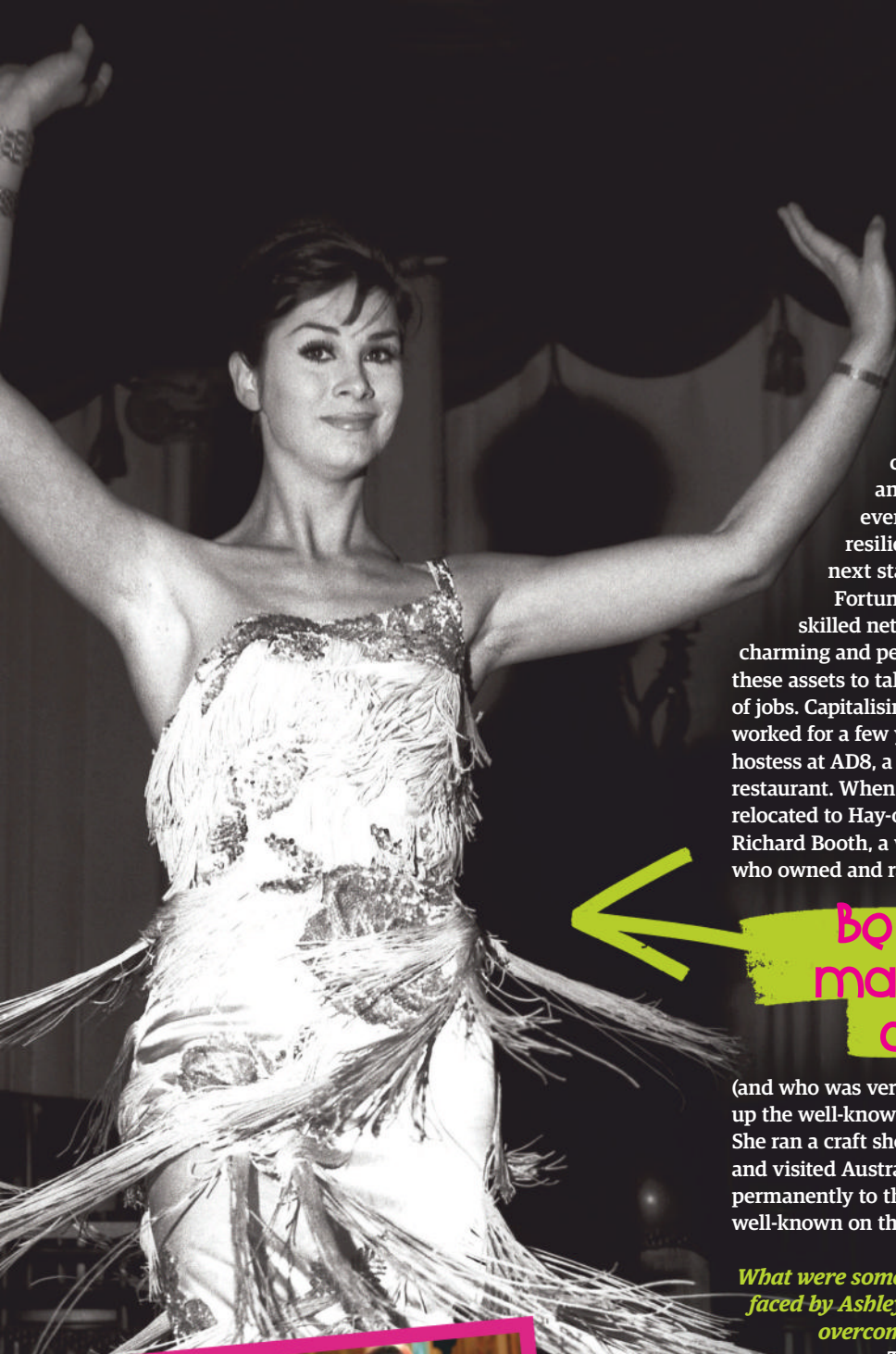
## What was Ashley's life like following her high-profile divorce from Corbett?

She had no intention of fading away quietly: she had become adept at handling the press and she made sure that the media knew how she felt. "I am completely unprotected and so are all the others in my position," she said. It was true. Her knowledge that because of



Her entire social and professional life in London collapsed overnight





her birth certificate her lived reality and legal states were completely at odds was worse than devastating. Her confidence in who she was had been completely destroyed and she needed to use every bit of her Scouse resilience to cope with the next stage of her life.

Fortunately, she was a highly skilled networker, as well as being charming and persuasive, and she used these assets to talk her way into a variety of jobs. Capitalising on her notoriety, she worked for a few years as a glamorous hostess at AD8, a successful London restaurant. When that job fell apart she relocated to Hay-on-Wye and worked for Richard Booth, a wealthy entrepreneur who owned and ran several bookshops

**How significant a figure was April Ashley in transgender history and what is her legacy?**

In her later years April gave a great deal of encouragement to the trans community and to gay men and women, as well as to people who wished to undergo gender [confirmation] surgery. She was appointed MBE for services to transgender equality in 2012; the then-Prince Charles, who awarded her the honour, said: "April, this has been a long time coming, hasn't it?" There were other honours and awards. April Ashley was the highest-profile transgender person in Britain for a long time, and her wit and forthright honesty about her life endeared her to many. "I write to people all the time," she told the ITV programme *Loose Women*. "Being trapped in the wrong body is a terrible thing, feeling so isolated and not knowing who to



**Be beautiful inside and that makes you beautiful outside, and be bloody brave**

(and who was very important in setting up the well-known literary festival there). She ran a craft shop in the USA for a while and visited Australia before returning permanently to the UK to live, becoming well-known on the TV talk circuit.

**What were some of the other setbacks faced by Ashley and how did she overcome them?**

There were many others, mainly concerned with health and money. April suffered cardiac and other medical problems, possibly due to the lack of hormone treatment after her 1960 surgery. She was always short of money but her strong and unsentimental work ethic saved her; she took on a dizzying number of different jobs in order to make ends meet. She lived overseas in what she considered enforced exile because of her notoriety and she never worked in England again.

turn to or what to turn to. And so the advice I always give is: I cannot help you, I'm not a professional, but I would be very kind to myself and to other people, be beautiful inside and that makes you beautiful outside, and be bloody brave." ☺

**BONJOUR, MADEMOISELLE! APRIL ASHLEY AND THE PURSUIT OF A LOVELY LIFE** (SCRIBE, 2024) BY JACQUELINE KENT AND TOM ROBERTS IS AVAILABLE TO BUY NOW



**LEFT** In 2012, Ashley was appointed a Member of the Order of the British Empire (MBE) for services to transgender equality

**RIGHT** Ashley was the highest-profile transgender person in Britain for many years



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*Greatest Battles*

# BATTLE OF FLODDEN

BRANXTON, ENGLAND  
9 SEPTEMBER 1513

Written by Marc DeSantis

Scotland's King James IV was a quintessential Renaissance prince, ruling his kingdom in an era when the great works of Greece and Rome were being rediscovered and classical culture reborn across Europe. He vigorously supported the new learning, but a king's first and foremost role in that day was that of war-leader, and James was every bit the warrior-monarch.

He adopted new weapons and tactics for his army, and poured vast resources into developing a national navy for Scotland that could compare with that of young King Henry VIII in England, Scotland's larger and more powerful neighbour to the south.

There had already been much conflict between England and Scotland for hundreds of years. In 1502, an attempt was made to bring calm to long-troubled Anglo-Scottish relations with the nations entering into the Treaty of Perpetual Peace, which saw James IV wed to Henry VII's daughter Margaret Tudor (also





the sister of Henry VIII) in the next year. While this agreement was not without its merits, it created an obvious threat to Scotland's long-standing alliance with France should events force James to choose between peace with England or his connections with the French.

Centuries earlier, Scotland and France had entered into the Treaty of Paris in 1295, which called for either to come to the aid of the other in times of war with England. This was the beginning of what was known in Scotland as the 'Auld Alliance', and it would play a significant role in the Flodden campaign. In 1513 Henry VIII, eager for martial glory, departed for France as part of his commitment to the anti-French Holy League. In response, James declared war against his brother-in-law, mustered his army in late July and struck into Northumberland in the north of England in a bid to show his support for his French allies.

### ORGANISING FOR WAR

With Henry away on the Continent, another figure would have to lead the defence of the English north. Senior command of the English army fell to 70-year-old Thomas Howard, the Earl of Surrey, and his son, also named Thomas, who was the Lord Admiral of England.

The main commanders of the Scottish army, which numbered an impressive 42,000, were of course James himself, and Lord Alexander, the Earl of Home. Home had charge of Scotland's difficult East March on the border with England and was well-acquainted with warfare. But he had no experience of commanding large numbers of troops in a set-piece battle.

England was a wealthier, more populous and stronger nation than Scotland. Yet many of England's best troops were currently in France with their king. In Northumberland, James would have

a strong numerical, and perhaps even qualitative, advantage over the English. It should also be borne in mind that he was not seeking to conquer England, something beyond his ability, but to mount a short and sharp raid in support of France that would win him glory and prestige.

The Scots had adopted the most modern weaponry and tactics then in use in Europe: the pike phalanx. This resembled a block of soldiers, arrayed in multiple ranks and files, with each man holding a 5.5m pike (an extremely long spear). The Swiss had perfected this offensive formation as a way to get to grips with an opponent as quickly as possible and trample them. James modelled his own army on that of the vaunted Swiss, and in the summer of 1513 French officers trained the Scottish conscripts in how to do battle in this deadly pike formation.

Meanwhile the equipment used by Surrey's English army was somewhat behind the times. The



## 01 Opening salvos

The Battle of Flodden begins with a cannonade. Though the Scottish guns are heavier, and fire bigger cannonballs, the English gunners are more experienced and with their lighter pieces inflict more losses on the Scots.

## 02 The Scottish charge

Scottish Earls Home and Huntly lead their pikemen into battle against the enemy's right under Edward Howard. The English are routed except for a small group of men around Howard, who is rescued by Lord Dacre's reserve of Border horsemen.

## 04 The king attacks

Taking a pike in his hands, James IV leads his own huge division into battle and encounters the same difficulties with the rain-soaked mire that lies between the Scottish army and their English foes.

## 03 A muddy mess

Earls Errol, Crawford and Montrose attack the Lord Admiral's division with their pike columns. Though English archery has little effect, the momentum of the Scottish charge is severely reduced by the deep mud and difficult terrain along Branxton Hill.



### 05 Close combat

The momentum of the pike charge has been lost, and the Scots throw down these weapons and fight with swords instead. These are outreached by English halberds and a bitter melee ensues.

### 06 King James falls

Seeing that the battle is going against him, James attempts to get to Surrey and kill him. It's reported that he almost reaches the earl before he is himself slain.

**"NOW 8KM INSIDE THE ENGLISH BORDER, JAMES HAD DONE WHAT HONOUR REQUIRED OF HIM TO DRAW OFF PRESSURE FROM HIS FRENCH ALLY"**

### 07 Stanley arrives

Sir Edward Stanley's division finally appears on the battlefield and takes up position on the English forces' left.

### 08 Highlanders routed

The Scottish highlanders under Earls Argyll and Lennox remain uncommitted to battle while the rest of the army fights against the English. They are put to rout by Stanley's men.

halberd, a relatively short 2.4m weapon combining an axehead and a spike was the ubiquitous footsoldiers' weapon. Also common was the famed longbow, a weapon with which so many earlier battles had been won by the English. Armies fight with the weapons that have previously brought them success, and the longbow was one in which the English placed great trust.

In one very significant regard the Scots and English forces were different from their medieval forebears. Both sides had powerful artillery trains, with the Scots having heavier pieces more suited for sieges, while the English had lighter field pieces better suited for open battle. An important English advantage lay in their having more experienced artillerymen.

### THE CAMPAIGN BEGINS

An opening Scottish move ended disastrously. On 13 August 1513, in what was later called the 'Ill Raid', Home's mounted raiders, slowed by their loot, were ambushed by English longbowmen, who inflicted heavy losses. Subsequently, the main Scottish army under James crossed the River Tweed, the traditional Anglo-Scottish border, at Coldstream on 22 August. Its initial target was Norham Castle, one of the great border fortresses. A siege began on 24 August, and the castle surrendered on 29 August. After an inauspicious start, James had won his first victory of the campaign.

Two other strongholds, Etal and Ford, fell in short order, and James made camp at Ford from 1 September to 5 September. On the 5th, he established a fortified position on Flodden Hill, overlooking Ford.

Flodden Hill, sometimes referred to as Flodden Edge, was an extremely favourable position, and having deployed his cannons to take full advantage of the high ground, the Scottish king waited for the English to arrive. He was not interested in going any further south - now 8km inside the

Lord Admiral Thomas Howard as he may have appeared on the field in 1513





English border, he had done what honour required of him to draw off pressure from his French ally.

In the meantime, Surrey was raising his forces. While at Durham on 29 August he took possession of the banner of Saint Cuthbert, patron saint of northern England, for use as the standard of his army. Surrey arrived at Newcastle on 30 August, with the city having been selected as a prime muster point because it was a good port through which supplies could be transported. On 1 September, having collected several contingents there, Surrey moved his army to Bolton, where the full English muster met him on 4 September. All told, it's thought that he had about 26,000 men under arms, including 1,200 experienced marines from the fleet brought by his son, Lord Admiral Thomas Howard. But the gathering was hampered by several days of bad weather.

With the armies now in close proximity, there came an exchange of heralds. On 5 September, Surrey sent Thomas Hawley, Rouge Croix, to the king, while the English moved to make camp at Wooler Haugh the following day. James sent a messenger of his own, Islay Herald, to Surrey on 6 September. As well as delivering messages, heralds were tasked with getting a good look at the enemy's forces and positions. Hawley delivered the accusation that James had invaded England without good cause, and offered him battle on 9 September. James accepted the challenge.

The heralds returned to their respective armies on 7 September. Surrey now sent Hawley back to James with a proposal that the battle be fought on level ground, which would mean James would have to give up his excellent defensive position on Flodden Hill. Despite his chivalric nature, he was understandably unwilling to do this.

Time was not on the side of the English. Surrey's large force was proving difficult to feed, and he would not be able to keep his army in the field for much longer. With his supplies close to exhaustion, Surrey could have backed away from battle, not an illogical decision to modern minds, but this was

an era in which personal honour was all. To march away would have possibly resulted in his own loss of face and a diminishment of his position, since Surrey had himself challenged the Scottish king to battle and James had accepted that challenge. So for Surrey, it was either fight now with a hungry army against a Scottish force in a good position on Flodden and likely lose, or risk humiliation by refusing battle altogether. He chose to fight.

With James unwilling to leave Flodden, Surrey decided to take a huge risk. A frontal assault against the fortified hill would in all probability be repulsed at huge cost to his army. But what about a flank attack? To the north of Flodden Hill lay Branxton Hill. If he could put his own army on Branxton he would be between the Scottish army and its line of retreat back to Scotland. Surrey would turn the tables on James and besiege him in his fort on Flodden. The earl decided that he would cross the River Till, head north in a semicircular movement, recross the Till, and then head southward again for Branxton. On 8 September, the English crossed the river and marched on to Barmoor, where they made their final camp.

## BATTLE COMMENCES

The English broke camp at Barmoor in the early morning of 9 September. The strung-out army was vulnerable while on the march, but fate was kind to Surrey. His army crossed the River Till in two places: his own main division at the Heaton Fords and the vanguard under his son at Twizell Bridge, further to the north and west.

The Scots knew of the English movement, but appear to have guessed that the enemy's objectives might be Berwick on the coast or to mount a punitive raid into southern Scotland's borderlands. But once it was known that Surrey had recrossed the Till and was again west of the river, it was clear that Surrey had outflanked them. Their once envious position on Flodden now left them overextended in enemy territory, with no direct route back to Scotland. To make things worse, the Scottish troops were still oriented in the direction from which they'd hoped the English would attack, but Surrey had shrewdly refused to give the Scots what they wanted. Now they themselves were in peril.

James reoriented his army on the fly to face northwest along the nearby Branxton Hill, which would force the English to face the guns and pikes of the Scots once more. The Scots would also have the advantage of a defensive slope, just as they had on Flodden. Their cannons could pound the English from a distance, and if the artillery did not crack open the English line then the Scottish pike blocks, attacking in echelon, Swiss-style, would. But not all was well. Though the repositioning was carried out, it did not leave the Scots enough time to take a good look at the terrain around their new position at Branxton Hill, and this was likely the cause of much grief to follow.

The English march to Branxton, once the recrossings were made, was troubled. Howard was in the lead with the vanguard, but a yawning gap



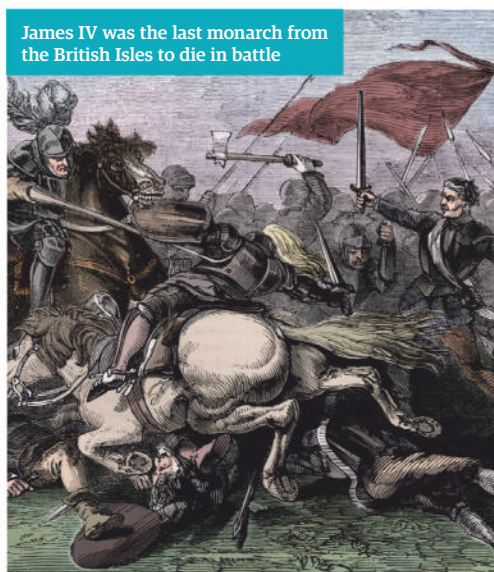
Edinburgh after the Battle of Flodden, 1513.  
From *Cassell's History of England* (1905)

of nearly two kilometres had opened up between the last of his soldiers and his father's main body of troops. The English were outnumbered as it was, and if James had struck right then he might have wiped out the advance elements. Learning of his son's difficulty, Surrey hurried his soldiers onward. Meanwhile, James refrained from going on the offensive, perhaps thinking that it would be better to have the whole English army in front of him so when his pike blocks moved ahead they would crush the entire English force all at once.

This gave the English the time they needed to form a proper line of battle in front of the Scots, between the slope of Branxton Hill and the Pallinsburn, a narrow stream. They deployed in four major divisions. From right to left was the division, or 'battle', of Edmund Howard, comprising his retainers and levies. To his left was the Lord Admiral's division. Beside that was the main English division commanded by Surrey himself. Behind them all were stationed Lord Dacre's (Dacre was warden of the English West March) division of Border horsemen. Trailing far behind was another division under Sir Edward Stanley, a younger son of the Earl of Derby. His men would only reach the field a good while after fighting had started.

On the other side, from left to right, the Scots had deployed their own Border horse and highlanders under Home and Earl Huntly. Another battle under the Earls Errol, Crawford and Montrose was to their right. Beside these earls was the king's own division, and on the far right was a division of highlanders commanded by Earls Lennox and Argyll. A division under Earl Bothwell was held in reserve behind the main Scottish line on Branxton Hill.

James IV was the last monarch from the British Isles to die in battle





**“TIME WAS NOT ON THE SIDE OF THE ENGLISH. SURREY’S LARGE FORCE WAS PROVING DIFFICULT TO FEED, AND HE WOULD NOT BE ABLE TO KEEP HIS ARMY IN THE FIELD FOR MUCH LONGER”**

It was late afternoon when the battle began with a resounding cannonade. Scottish and English guns opened fire, and the English had the better of the exchange, with James’ weapons having little effect on the English. The Scottish artillerymen may have had a harder time shooting downwards, and their shot did little damage, plunging deep into the soft ground that had been turned into mud by the endless rain. In contrast, the English artillery train, despite being composed of lighter pieces, was skipping their shot over the ground and killing many Scots while they stood in formation.

Now the Scottish soldiers went into action. Home and Huntly’s division started first, and because the Scots wore armour the English longbows, also hampered by the wind, made scant impression on them. The hedge of Scottish pikes shattered Howard’s division, with the majority of the men fleeing the field, leaving him behind with just a few retainers. Surrey restored order by sending in his reserve force of Border horse under Dacre. The horsemen rushed in, rescued Edmund, and stopped Home and Huntly’s forward progress.

Next to go on the offensive were the pikemen of Errol, Crawford and Montrose, who attacked the Lord Admiral’s division. The earls found themselves unexpectedly bogged down in the rain-soaked grass, a waterlogged dip between them and the English, and then a slight ascent towards the enemy. It didn’t help matters that the already dreadful muck had been made even worse by the charge of thousands of Scottish pikemen.

At roughly the same time, James picked up a pike and led his division of around 15,000 pikemen against the English. For the king to take such an enormous risk to his own person may seem reckless, but this was an age when monarchs still led armies from the front as a matter of honour. His own pikemen encountered the same terrible terrain as had the troops to their left.

The Scots pulled off their shoes to get a better purchase on the soft ground, but their pike phalanxes were quickly losing cohesion, leaving them in dire straits. They threw down their pikes in favour of their swords, but these were outreached by English bills and the Scots were unable to sustain their momentum.

A bloody struggle ensued up and down the line of battle that continued well into the evening and no quarter was given to the Scots, whether lord or commoner. With the battle slipping away, James tried to fight his way to Surrey. If he could kill the earl, he might salvage something from the day. It is said that he got to within a spear’s length of Surrey before being cut down. James’ body was found later with an arrow lodged in his jaw, his throat gashed and his left hand dangling from his arm.

Lennox and Argyll, with their highlanders, had in the meantime stayed out of the fighting, maybe because they’d received no direct orders to attack. Eventually, the straggling division under Stanley appeared, better late than never for the English, and Argyll and Lennox’s men were driven from the field. Both of the Scottish earls were slain.

## COUNTING THE COST

Scots of all ranks lay dead in droves at Flodden. In addition to their king, they lost around 10,000 men, including large numbers of noblemen. Scottish casualties were no doubt increased by the refusal of

the English to take prisoners. In addition to James and Earls Argyll and Lennox, Earls Errol, Crawford, Montrose and Bothwell were slain, while Earls Home and Huntly managed to flee to safety. The victory wasn’t bloodless for Surrey – some 4,000 Englishmen also lay dead on the battlefield – but it was a clear-cut triumph.

Need the Battle of Flodden have turned out this way? On the morning of 9 September, James had held a seemingly impregnable position atop Flodden Hill. Victory was close, if only Surrey had done what James had wanted him to. Instead, Surrey outmanoeuvred the king with his risky but successful crossing and recrossing of the River Till. Surrey pried James from Flodden and forced him to fight from a less satisfactory position on Branxton. At least some of the unexpected difficulties that the Scots experienced when attacking over the waterlogged ground must be due to the Scots’ hasty repositioning, which did not allow for a proper examination of the terrain.

In the deep, sticky muck of Flodden, the Scottish pike phalanx soon lost its all-important cohesion and the shorter English halberd had the better of the chaotic close-quarters combat. Perhaps if James had had the benefit of fair weather and a flat, dry battlefield, he might have won a brilliant victory over his English foes. That was not to be, and the king lay dead alongside thousands of his subjects before the day was out. ○

With their deadly halberds, the English gained the upper hand in the close-quarters fighting





# THE CONFEDERACY HAD WON AT ANTIETAM?

Confederate victory at Antietam might have contributed to the end of Abraham Lincoln's presidency in the election of 1864

## INTERVIEW WITH



### DR GARY W. GALLAGHER

Dr Gallagher is the John L. Nau III Professor in the History of the American Civil War, Emeritus, at the Corcoran Department of History, University of Virginia. He received his Bachelor of Arts degree at Adams State College in 1972 and Master of Arts and Doctorate at the University of Texas, Austin, in 1977 and 1982. Dr Gallagher is the author or co-author of numerous books, essays and published lectures, receiving many awards and accolades as one of the preeminent Civil War historians of our time.

**G**eneral Robert E Lee's Confederate Army of Northern Virginia was turned back during the Battle of Antietam, its first invasion of the North during the American Civil War (1861-65). General George B McClellan, commanding the Union Army of the Potomac, claimed victory but has been criticised for failing to win decisively. Still, Antietam was a turning point in the war. In its aftermath, President Abraham Lincoln issued the Emancipation Proclamation, support for recognition of the Confederacy and even direct intervention by Great Britain was quelled, and Lee's wounded army retired to the safety of Virginia. So how would a Confederate victory at Antietam have impacted the Lincoln presidency and the course of the Civil War?

### *How would a Confederate victory at the Battle of Antietam have affected the presidency of Abraham Lincoln?*

The late summer of 1862 was a very difficult time for Lincoln and the Union. The terrible fighting of the Seven Days and then the defeat at Second Bull Run had put Lincoln in a rough place. The off-year elections were looming, and the ability to retain control of the government was always linked to how the armies were doing in the field. The House of Representatives and the Senate included many Democrats, and Democrat voters made up about 45 percent of the electorate.

To move forward on emancipation, Lincoln needed broad support, and he not only needed Republicans in the army but

Democrats as well. The ante was upped considerably when the most famous Rebel army crossed the Potomac River into the United States. A Union defeat at Antietam would not have been good for the Lincoln administration, that's for sure. It would have complicated Lincoln's life tremendously. It would have deferred the Emancipation Proclamation at least for a short time, pushing that down the road until what at least appeared to be a victory had occurred. I don't know if the victory at Stones River in Tennessee in the Western theatre at the end of the year would have been enough.

Lincoln would not have resigned. He had two more years before he had to run

again, and things can shift so quickly and dramatically in wartime. Look at the summer of 1864: it was the darkest time of the war, and it appeared as though he would not be re-elected. He issued the famous Blind Memorandum that stated as much and that the war would have to be won before the Democrats took over since they would not be in a position to win after they had taken the White House. Then General [William] Sherman took Atlanta and General [Philip] Sheridan won victories in the Shenandoah Valley. That turned things around completely, and when things shift on the battlefield, then morale shifts behind the lines.

### *What would have happened to Lincoln if he had not been re-elected in 1864? Would he have survived?*

He would have become a one-term president who'd failed, who had presided over a failed war effort. A lot of things had to click into place for his assassination to have occurred. I think Lincoln would have had to be re-elected for his assassination to take place. I do take John Wilkes Booth at his word as he said he was in the audience when Lincoln gave a speech stating that Black men would be given the right to vote. That was it for Booth. He could not stand the thought of Black men voting.

Lincoln won the election of 1864 because Atlanta fell to Sherman's Union army and because of Sheridan's Valley campaign with the victory at the Third Battle of Winchester. These occurred between the first and third weeks of September, and then Sheridan won



**RIGHT** General Robert E Lee led the Confederate Army into Maryland in 1862







## THE PAST

1862

### MCCLELLAN SQUANDERS OPPORTUNITY

General George B. McClellan's Union Army of the Potomac substantially outnumbered General Robert E. Lee's Confederate Army of Northern Virginia during the Maryland Campaign, but even the discovery of Lee's Special Order No. 191 failed to spur McClellan to decisive action. The order, found in a camp recently occupied by Confederate troops, outlined Lee's entire plan for the campaign. When he read it, McClellan shouted:

"Here is a paper with which, if I cannot whip Bobby Lee, I will be willing to go home." Still, McClellan was slow in his pursuit of Lee and committed his troops piecemeal during Antietam, which resulted in a tactical draw but enough of a strategic Union victory to compel Lee to withdraw into Virginia.



1863

### LINCOLN ISSUES EMANCIPATION PROCLAMATION

On 22 September 1862, Lincoln issued a preliminary proclamation. The final version of the Emancipation Proclamation was signed on 1 January 1863, and declared that "all persons held as slaves" in states then in rebellion against the US "are, and henceforward shall be free". The proclamation did little to change the circumstances of slaves in territory not under the control of the Union army, but the character of the Civil War changed in that the abolition of slavery became a declared war aim of the US.

1864

### AFTER WINNING REELECTION, LINCOLN IS ASSASSINATED

Lincoln defeated McClellan in the November election, 212-21 votes in the electoral college. "Lincoln was lucky that he had his best commanders come forward when they did," explains Dr. Gary W. Gallagher. "He was fortunate to have General [Ulysses S.] Grant, and that partnership was key." In winning another presidential term, Lincoln sealed his own fate and was assassinated by John Wilkes Booth in April 1865, just weeks after delivering his second inaugural address.



**ABOVE** Union troops charge Confederates at the Battle of Antietam

**BELOW** George B. McClellan commanded the Army of the Potomac at Antietam

another victory, at Cedar Creek in October. These were huge victories, and that is the elephant in the room. If Sherman and Sheridan had not won on the battlefield, Lincoln would have lost the election of 1864, maybe not to George McClellan, but to some Democrat. And this is despite the fact that a Confederate force under General Jubal Early had threatened Washington, DC, in June 1864 and actually lobbed a few artillery shells into the city.

During his second inaugural address, Lincoln acknowledged the significance of the fact that the Union was winning



the war when he said: "The progress of our arms, upon which all else chiefly depends..." To me, anyone trying to figure out why this or that might have happened must always look at what the armies were doing. Trying to craft a narrative that doesn't involve the military situation is so wrong-headed.

**How would the Union war effort have been affected in the immediate aftermath of a Confederate victory at the Battle of Antietam?**

General McClellan would have hunkered down and stayed close to Washington, and a Union defeat at Antietam would have brought into even sharper relief that someone had to rise up to command the US armies in the Eastern Theatre of the war. Lincoln could not just put a sign up that read: 'Capable Army Commander Please Come In.' I don't think a Union defeat at Antietam would have lost the war, but I do think it would have complicated Lincoln's life quite a bit.

**Aside from delaying the Emancipation Proclamation, how would a Confederate victory at Antietam have impacted the cause of emancipation?**

Emancipation was tied directly to what the soldiers were doing. Wherever the US armies went, there was a chance for emancipation. Juneteenth occurred in Texas in 1865, and that was because





emancipation didn't come to Texas until 1865. The Union army didn't get to Texas until that time. Generals like Sherman didn't particularly care about Black people, but the army was the engine of emancipation during the Civil War just like the British Army had been during the War of 1812 and the American Revolution.

**ABOVE** Lincoln issued the Emancipation Proclamation after victory at Antietam

**ABOVE - RIGHT** A crowd gathers in Washington, DC, for Lincoln's second inaugural address

## Would Great Britain have become involved in the American Civil War with a Confederate victory at Antietam?

British Prime Minister Lord Palmerston and the Foreign Secretary John Russell had already discussed the possibility that Britain might attempt to broker a deal that would bring the war to an end. A Confederate victory at Antietam would have certainly brought some kind of reaction from London. It would not necessarily have involved sending troops to support the Confederacy, but who knows exactly what it would have been? Regardless, it would not have been good for Lincoln or for the United States.

## Why didn't the people of Maryland rally to the Confederate cause as General Lee had hoped?

The Army of Northern Virginia was in the wrong part of Maryland, the Unionist part and the part that did not have many slaveholders. Lee's army was in horrible condition in the autumn of 1862, and only a general with Lee's audacity would have taken that army into the United States, crossing the Potomac River.

Lee's army was ragged and in its worst shape until late in the war, but he wanted to give respite to the farmers of northern Virginia and provide them an opportunity to bring in their harvest,

while he supplied his army in Maryland and the northern part of the Valley. Lee knew he was outnumbered and felt that the best tactic was to make his opponent conform to what he was doing. He has been criticised for that, but I think he was right. The Army of Northern Virginia was played out logistically. Lee needed to give that respite to the people of northern Virginia and to replenish his army as well.

## What would have been the next military move of Lee and the Confederate Army of Northern Virginia following a victory at the Battle of Antietam?

Lee's army was really small in September and October, with about 50,000 men and with only about 35,000 present at Antietam, and it haemorrhaged [men]. McClellan had 85,000 men, so there were real limits to what Lee could accomplish at Antietam, and the relative proximity of the two armies to logistical support was easier for McClellan.

Lee was not in a position to threaten Washington, DC, or Philadelphia so I believe he would have tried to remain in the North as long as possible, manoeuvring through the rich agricultural part of Maryland and possibly defending the passes in South Mountain, while knowing that every day he was on US soil would cause problems for the Lincoln administration. His presence there would also help the Democratic party's opposition to Lincoln, and that was good for the Confederacy.

If you swap commanders at Antietam, I believe Lee would have been the victor. McClellan failed to use his numerical superiority - some of the Union troops were not even engaged in the fighting at Antietam. After the battle, Lee stayed on the field for a full day and then withdrew across the Potomac in one night. It took McClellan seven weeks to cross the river. ○

## THE POSSIBILITY

1862

### MARYLANDERS SUPPORT THE CONFEDERACY

General Robert E Lee believed that a victory on Union soil might yield immense benefits for the Confederacy, including the support of Marylanders. Recruits, he hoped, would rally to the cause and augment the ranks of his battle-worn Army of Northern Virginia. Maryland farmers would contribute to the sustenance of the Confederate forces, and Virginia farmers gather their harvests amid a temporary peace. While Marylanders were initially reluctant, a Confederate victory at Antietam might have led to Maryland seceding from the Union and joining the Confederacy.

1863

### GREAT BRITAIN INTERVENES

The British government weighed the advantages and risks associated with involvement, diplomatic and/or military, in the American conflict. The British textile industry depended on the availability of Confederate cotton, but direct intervention might mean war with the US. A Confederate victory at Antietam, which followed the battlefield success at Second Bull Run, might have brought Britain closer to direct support of the Rebel cause, perhaps even with a commitment of naval and land forces.

1864

### LINCOLN EXITS, DEMOCRATS NEGOTIATE PEACE

A Confederate victory at Antietam could have led to the eventual end of Lincoln's political career and decreased the probability of his assassination. Assuming he gained the Republican nomination for a second term in 1864, continuing battlefield defeats would have meant the Democratic challenger in the presidential election would likely have won the White House. A Confederate victory would likely have ended General McClellan's military and political careers too. He had stated his intent to see the war through to Union victory, denying his party platform's peace plank. The end of McClellan's ambitions would have paved the way for another Democrat to take centre stage and negotiate an end to the Civil War.









# ANCIENT INDIAN ARTEFACTS

A new exhibition explores the imagery of ancient Indian religions and their role in today's society

Three of the world's oldest faiths  
- Hinduism, Buddhism and Jainism  
- have been practised in India for centuries, with ancient devotional art for each religion created side by side in the same workshops. As a result, the sacred imagery of these faiths shares many similarities; similarities that are highlighted in a new exhibition at the British Museum that explores how these beliefs have transformed over time into the "living traditions" of today's Hindus, Buddhists and Jains.

In partnership with an advisory panel of representatives from each faith, the Ancient India: Living Traditions exhibition brings together over 180 objects from the British Museum's South Asian collection and from other institutions around the world. It "examines how India's ancient indigenous religions moulded its sacred landscape and continue to influence spiritual and artistic traditions. Ancient India also brings to the fore the provenance of every object, their stories and the journey from their creation to acquisition by museums." The exhibition will also delve into the importance of nature spirits in these religions and how symbolic depictions of gods transformed to show them in human form.

## THE BUDDHA IN CHINA

Inspired by earlier Indian devotional images, this watercolour painting of the Buddha is one of the oldest in China's famous Library Cave in Dunhuang. Dating from between 701-750 CE, the artwork is an example of how Indian Buddhist missionaries spread their faith in other countries.

## JAVANESE GANESHA

This sculpture of the god Ganesha dates from between 1000-1200 CE and was made in Java, Indonesia, from volcanic stone. The pose of the elephant-headed god with his feet together is typical of Javanese portrayals of Ganesha.







## THE HUMAN BUDDHA

▲ It's thought that the representation on this casket is one of oldest dateable images of the Buddha in human form. The gold reliquary is thought to date from the 1st century CE and shows Buddha standing between gods Indra and Brahma.



## SACRED SERPENT

▲ Featuring a five-headed cobra, stone plaques like this were sometimes placed next to sacred tree shrines in India. Depictions of divine snakes have been venerated in Indian religions since ancient times and continue to be worshipped today.

## ENLIGHTENMENT

► Made from white marble, this statue is in the shape of an enlightened teacher from the Jain religion, known as a tirthankara, and dates from between 1150 and 1200. In the centre of his chest, the meditating tirthankara has an endless knot – a sacred symbol.

## SPIRITUAL GANESHA

► The god of new beginnings Ganesha is worshipped across the Hindu, Buddhist and Jain faiths and is often depicted alongside imagery of nature spirits. In this sandstone sculpture he is shown with a snake wrapped around him.

**Ancient India:  
Living Traditions**  
is at the British Museum  
until 19 October 2025





## DOUBLY DIVINE

► In this painting, the Hindu gods Shiva and Parvati are represented as two halves of one figure. On the left side, Shiva is shown with the River Ganges flowing from his head, while on the right Parvati wears a crown.



## FORTUNATE GODDESS

► Dating from around 1780, this image is of the goddess Gaja-Lakshmi (also known as Elephant Lakshmi). Gaja-Lakshmi is the goddess of good fortune, with the elephant motif symbolising monsoon clouds ready to bring life and fertility to earth.





# REVIEWS

The books, TV shows and films causing a stir in the history world this month



© AP/Ron Feltm

## DAVID FROST VS

Learn about one of TV's greatest broadcasters in this new documentary

**Directors:** Matthew Hill, Liz Mermin, Francis Longhurst **Streaming:** Sky **Released:** Out now

**S**ir David Frost was arguably one of the greatest television interviewers ever to grace the airwaves. In 1962, the 23-year-old Cambridge graduate hosted the satirical *That Was The Week That Was*, becoming a household name overnight. In 1968 he took his talent across the Atlantic when he began to host an eponymous television programme on stations in the USA. Throughout a 50-year career, Frost interviewed personalities such as John Lennon, Richard Nixon and Muhammed Ali (above, with Frost).

Now, Sky TV's new documentary series *David Frost Vs* tells the story of the TV giant through some of his most famous and challenging interviews. Each episode focuses on a specific person or topic and explores the history of that subject, as well as Frost's examination of them.

The episode focusing on Elton John primarily concentrates on the singer's personal struggles, bringing in everything from Ryan White (the American teenager who contracted Aids after a blood transfusion) to the death of Princess Diana.

While the result is certainly emotional, this episode can't help but feel slightly unfocused. By the end, it comes across more as a celebration of John's strength and perseverance than his relationship with Frost.

More successful episodes, such as the one concerning Frost's legendary 1974 interview with Richard Nixon, spend time engaging with the interview process as well as the subject matter. Celebrity life stories can be fascinating but are well documented elsewhere. Elton John's life has been the subject of numerous documentaries and films. *David Frost Vs* is only truly engrossing when it devotes time to Frost himself.

The Nixon episode is a good example of this, where the history of the interview itself takes up the majority of the runtime. Although this landmark piece of television was previously the subject of the 2008 movie *Frost/Nixon* starring Michael Sheen and directed by Ron Howard, the episode shows that Frost's ability to pull off such a coup was far more audacious than any

Hollywood film could portray. One of the most fascinating inclusions is the behind the scenes footage from the original recordings, which provides a rare insight into one of television's most compelling moments.

The crown jewel of the series is its finale, focussing on Frost's interviews with individuals at the heart of the Israel-Palestine conflict. The documentary makers set themselves the unenviable task of covering the history of the conflict, while also examining Frost's discussions with figures such as Yasser Arafat and Benjamin Netanyahu. Alongside all of this it also wraps up Frost's own story and assesses his legacy as a television interviewer and talk show host.

*David Frost Vs* is a compelling introduction to one of television's greatest personalities. While some episodes are more successful than others, on the whole it makes for fascinating viewing and is a fitting tribute to Frost's legendary talent. **CM**





Reviews by  
 Callum McKelvie, Jackson van Uden, Catherine Curzon

## WHAT TO EXPECT WHEN YOU'RE DEAD: AN ANCIENT TOUR OF DEATH & THE AFTERLIFE

Everybody dies, but how have we dealt with it?

**Author:** Robert Garland **Publisher:** Princeton University Press

**Price:** £25 **Released:** Out now

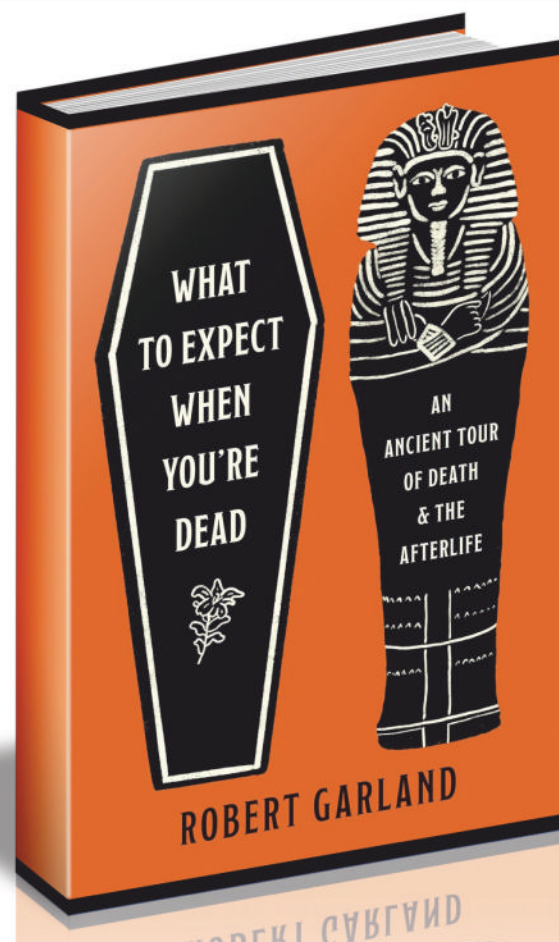
“Studies prove that everybody dies eventually” is an apt and amusing opener from Robert Garland as he introduces his tour of death and the afterlife. It’s a tour that ranges from the prehistoric mists of the Neanderthals to the colourful world of the ancient Egyptians to the stiff-upper-lipped attitudes of the British.

It’s a fascinating topic when you consider that around 100,000,000,000 people have died since the last Ice Age, from societies and cultures that had distinctly different perceptions, attitudes and feelings towards death and what happens afterwards.

Our favourite part of *What to Expect When You’re Dead* is learning about how different societies disposed of their

deceased, the various attitudes attached to those rituals and how practices that are commonplace today were reserved for a select few during other eras. Garland best highlights this when talking about cremation, a commonplace method today that the ancient Egyptians reserved for criminals and the Holy Roman Emperor Charlemagne outlawed entirely.

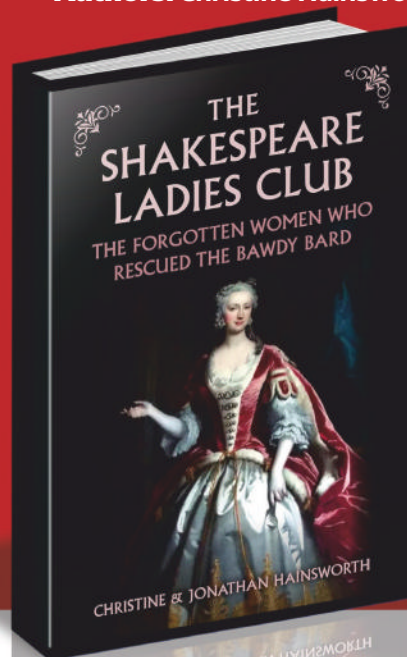
As well as an incredible depth of knowledge, one of the highlights of this book is the occasional light, humorous touch that Garland brings to one of life’s most difficult topics. He shows us how past societies dealt with death and the idea of an afterlife in a way that was often full of vibrancy. **JvU**



## THE SHAKESPEARE LADIES CLUB: THE FORGOTTEN WOMEN WHO RESCUED THE BAWDY BARD

Discover the remarkable females who saved Shakespeare.

**Authors:** Christine Hainsworth & Jonathan Hainsworth **Publisher:** Amberley **Price:** £22.99 **Released:** 15 June 2025



This book tells the story of the four women who became the Shakespeare Ladies Club. Formed in 1736, more than a century after William Shakespeare’s death, these women loved the work of the Bard so much that their small group met regularly to read and discuss the playwright’s works. Highly influential in society, they threw their weight and money behind a campaign for more productions of Shakespeare’s plays, helping keep his memory alive.

Christine and Jonathan Hainsworth’s book is readable, accessible and sensibly laid out, comprising short biographies of each of the women before bringing their threads together. It examines how they campaigned for a statue of Shakespeare and more productions of his plays, and generally brought Shakespeare back into the limelight, with each contributing to the status he enjoys today.

But despite the efforts of the Shakespeare Ladies Club, many of their achievements are still credited to men, and the authors do their best to correct this. They also delve into the legacy of the women and consider their successors, celebrating the names of other women who have been influential in the Shakespearean theatrical sphere.

Unfortunately, because no contemporary letters or papers survive that document the meetings of the club, we are denied an insight into the gatherings themselves. This is not the fault of the authors, of course, and we do hear from the women via letters and other papers. There is also a fascinating afterword that pays tribute to other scholars whose work into the Shakespeare Ladies Club inspired and informed this book. **CC**







## Weird History of the Victorians

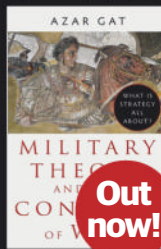
Thanks to much of the popular cultural output from the era, the Victorians have a reputation for being a relatively buttoned-up and mannered people. But from freak shows to the occult, there's much more to the period of history and its people than that.

**Out now!**

Buy *Weird History of the Victorians* in shops or online at [magazinesdirect.com](http://magazinesdirect.com) Price: £14.99

## HISTORY WAR

RECOMMENDS...



## Military Theory and the Conduct of War

Author Azar Gat Price £18.99 Publisher Hurst & Company

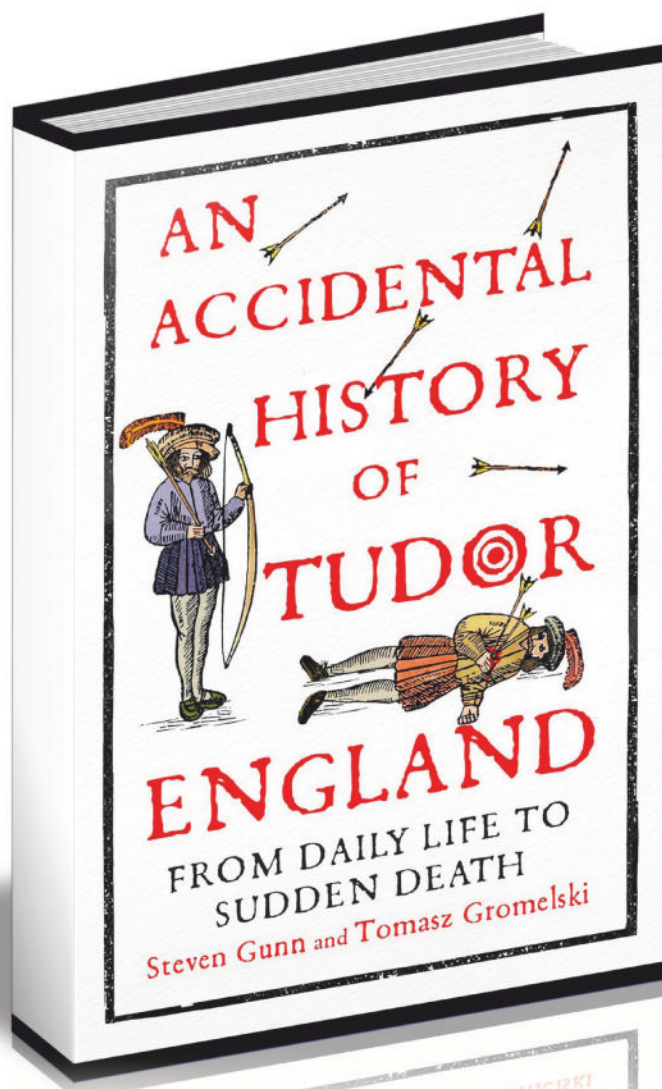
**Out now!**

War has changed throughout history, most notably under the influence of technological revolutions in modern times. In his authoritative analysis Azar Gat addresses the relationship between politics and war. He examines the meaning of victory and concepts such as the principles of war and military doctrine.

# AN ACCIDENTAL HISTORY OF TUDOR ENGLAND: FROM DAILY LIFE TO SUDDEN DEATH

A history of a people, through their unfortunate deaths.

**Authors:** Steven Gunn and Tomasz Gromelski **Publisher:** John Murray **Price:** £25 **Released:** 19 June 2025



*"Rich in insight and compellingly readable, this is a wonderful book with a unique and evocative approach"*

In *An Accidental History of Tudor England: From Daily Life to Sudden Death*, authors Steven Gunn and Tomasz Gromelski take a unique approach to a subject that has already been extensively explored. Over 300 fascinating and eminently readable pages, they delve into thousands of coroners' reports and discover a history of Tudor England where death tells the stories.

Far from the dramas of the Spanish Armada and the endless cut and thrust of Hampton Court Palace, this is a world in which setting foot outside one's house can be dangerous, let alone staying at home to face the perils it contains. In these pages men drown in monster potholes, bell-ringing turns deadly, and even the innocent frolicking of a puppy can prove fatal to its owner. Among the eye-poppingly weird stories there are run-ins with desperate criminals, tragic accidents, appalling domestic violence and all manner of sickness and disease.

Gunn and Gromelski bring the world of Tudor England to life as never before. Far from the nobles and aristocrats, they conjure up a world of the lower classes and bring it vividly back to life. Although the foundations of this book are in reports of death and its myriad causes, the pages bustle with life and colour. The authors evoke a sometimes-neglected and forgotten world in every word, bringing together thousands of reports into one remarkable social history.

While it might have been easy to compile a compendium of the Tudor world's strangest deaths, instead Gunn and Gromelski's scholarly research and approach shines through. Their expertise enables them to transform what could be a simple approach into something far deeper, bringing back to life names that may not have been heard in centuries. That these names belong to ordinary people, whose stories now weave into a greater history of their times, is a fitting testament to the role the public plays in shaping their world, far beyond throne rooms.

Often moving and always insightful, *An Accidental History of Tudor England: From Daily Life to Sudden Death* serves not only as an historical record but also as a reminder that people really haven't changed that much at all. Many of these people will be instantly recognisable in their daily struggles and in illustrating these similarities, as well as their differences, it makes their stories even more compelling. This book really takes the reader into the homes, workplaces and surrounding streets and countryside of the Tudor people, turning the not-always green and pleasant land into a place where death lurked around every corner.

*An Accidental History of Tudor England: From Daily Life to Sudden Death* is highly recommended and will appeal to a broad range of readers. This is history at its best. **CC**





# HISTORY HOLLYWOOD

Fact versus fiction on the silver screen



## THE FLESH AND THE FIENDS

**Director:** John Gilling **Starring:** Peter Cushing, June Laverick, Donald Pleasence **Country:** Britain **Year:** 1960

This film tells the gruesome tale of Burke and Hare, but does it sacrifice facts for blood and gore?



**VERDICT:** Despite drawing largely on the folklore of the murders, the film is more accurate than other retellings.

**01** The movie follows William Hare (Donald Pleasence) and William Burke (George Rose) as they commit murders in Edinburgh. They sell the bodies to Dr Knox (Peter Cushing) for dissection. The film portrays five killings but Burke and Hare murdered at least 16.

**02** Cushing's Knox has a damaged eye. This is factual, with Knox scarred by smallpox. Cushing said Knox "closed his one good eye to the way in which Burke and Hare obtained cadavers so he could pursue his researches for the ultimate good of mankind".

**03** Billie Whitelaw plays Mary Patterson, a sex worker who romances medical student Chris Jackson. Later, Jackson is killed by Hare. There is no evidence that Patterson was a sex worker, and Jackson and his gruesome death are fictional.

**04** Burke is executed after Hare gives evidence against him. This occurred, but Hare's fate, blinded by a flaming torch, draws on a rumour that he was thrown into a lime pit and ended his days as a blind beggar. We'll probably never know the truth.

**05** Knox ultimately feels remorse, but in truth his guilt has always been in doubt. Burke claimed Knox had no knowledge of their crimes but many doubted how a doctor could not have been suspicious. Knox relocated to London in 1856.



All images: © Alamy



**Did you know?**

This dish is usually prepared the night before, allowing the flavours to penetrate the beef.



# ROPA VIEJA

STEWED BEEF SPAIN/CUBA, 16TH CENTURY – PRESENT

## Ingredients

- 900g braising beef or skirt steak
- 1 yellow onion
- 3 bell peppers (green, yellow and red)
- 4 cloves of garlic
- 200g of tomato paste
- 2 tsp dried oregano
- 2 tsp ground cumin
- 2 tsp sweet paprika
- 1 tsp smoked paprika
- 1/8 tsp ground allspice
- 1/8 tsp ground cloves
- 120ml of dry white wine
- 235ml of chicken broth
- 480g tin of crushed tomatoes
- 2 bay leaves
- 1 large peeled carrot
- 1 large stick of celery
- 135g of green olives
- 20g of fresh chopped parsley

All images © Getty Images

Considered to be the national dish of Cuba, ropa vieja doesn't actually originate from the Caribbean island. Its roots can be traced back to the Sephardic Jews of Spain and the wider Iberian peninsula. A prohibition in Judaism against work on the Sabbath led to the creation of this overnight stew made from beef, tomatoes and paprika.

The name translates as 'old clothes' but don't let that put you off! Cuban legend has it that an impoverished man shredded and cooked his own clothes to feed his family, praying all the while, only for the meal to transform into a hearty stew of meat and vegetables. The ingredients for ropa vieja are, therefore, fairly humble and cheap but offer plenty of bang for their buck.

## METHOD

- 01 Preheat the oven to gas mark 4 (180°C) and thinly slice the onions and peppers.
- 02 Pat the beef dry a little before seasoning with salt and pepper. Heat a Dutch oven on medium high and add olive oil before searing the steak. To avoid overcrowding the pan cut up the beef and work in batches, if necessary.
- 03 Set aside the meat once browned, but keep any juices in the pan. Add the onions and peppers and cook until tender. Add the garlic and cook for an additional minute and then lower the heat.
- 04 Stir in the tomato paste and herbs, cooking for an additional minute. Then add the white wine and bring everything to a simmer for two minutes or until the alcohol smell has cooked out, deglazing the pan as you go.
- 05 Return the beef to the pot and add the bay leaves, carrot, celery and tomatoes. Add enough stock to just cover everything and then cover the Dutch oven and transfer to the preheated oven to cook for at least 90 minutes or until the beef is tender.
- 06 Remove from the oven and take out the bay leaves, carrot and celery. Set aside the beef and, using two forks, begin shredding it. Return the beef to the pot along with the olives and stir through.
- 07 Return the Dutch oven to a medium heat on the stove and simmer until the sauce has reduced to a rich glaze for the meat.
- 08 Stir in the parsley, season with salt and pepper. Serve with rice and beans.

**NEXT MONTH**

**GODS OF NORSE MYTHOLOGY**

**ON SALE  
10 JULY**







## A new perspective on your family story

### CENSUS, ENGLAND, 1921.

Prescribed by Regulations under the Census Act, 1920, as the form to be used in England (excluding Monmouth), for returns in respect of (a) Private Households, (b) Hotels, Clubs, or Common or other Lodging Houses, and (c) Other persons to whom no other form of schedule is prescribed.

This space is to be filled up by the Enumerator.	
Registration District.	Registration District.
Name of person responsible for making the return.	
Postal Address.	



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*Eith Wilson*

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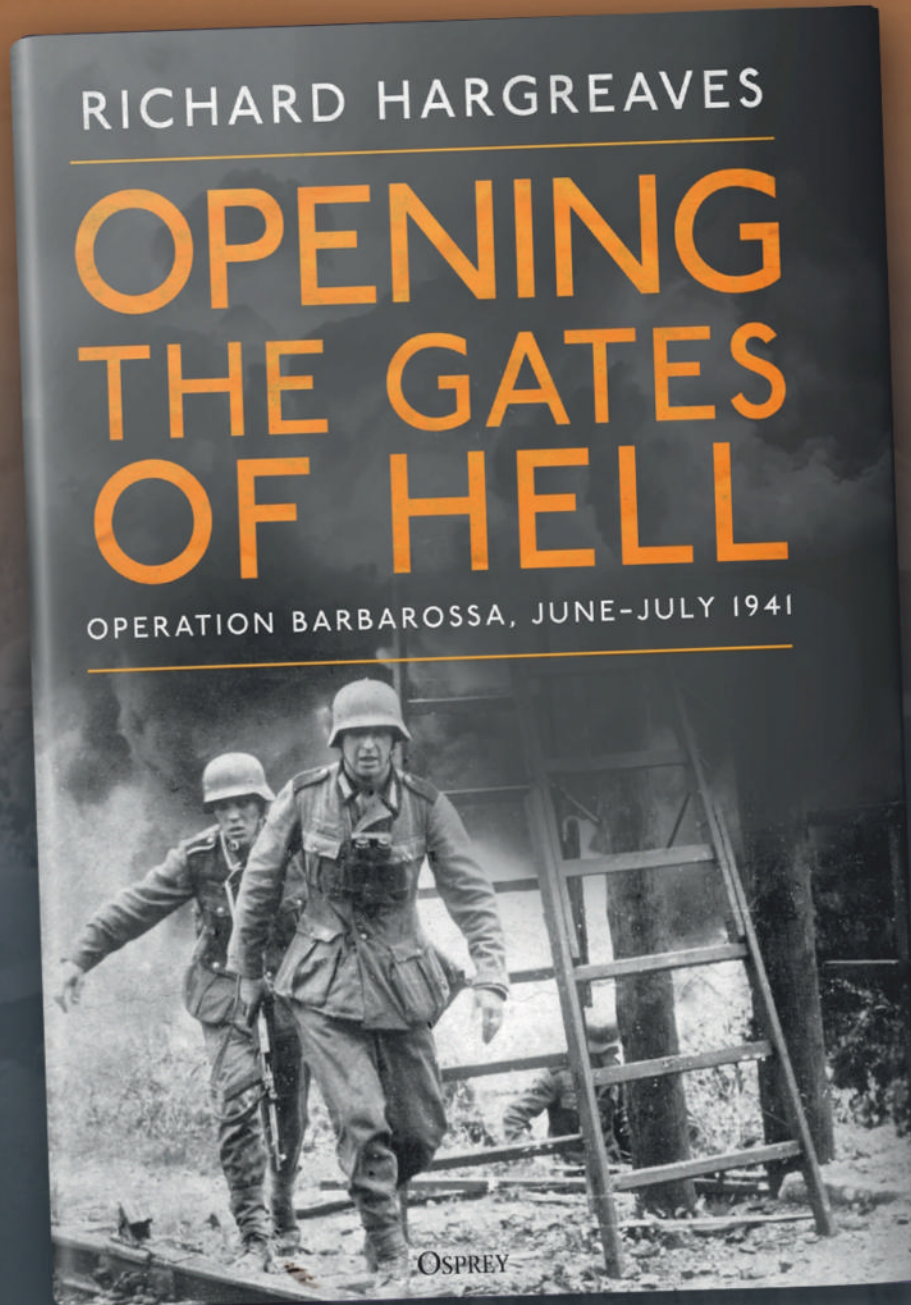




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