

12 STRANGEST  
OLYMPIC SPORTS



THE QUEER  
VICTORIANS

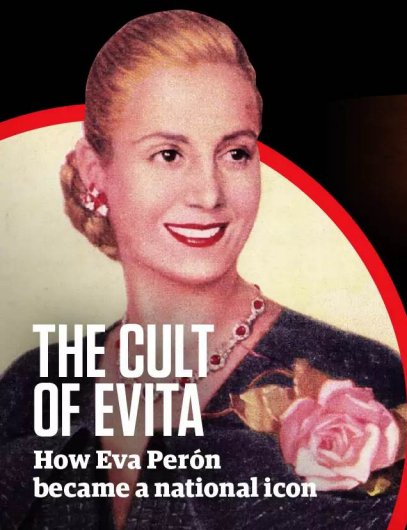


ALL ABOUT

# HISTORY

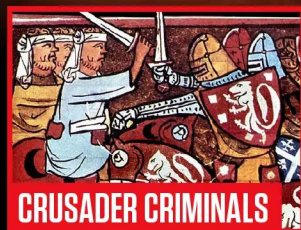
## KILL Hitler

Exposing the many plots  
to assassinate the Führer  
and why they failed



THE CULT  
OF EVITA

How Eva Perón  
became a national icon



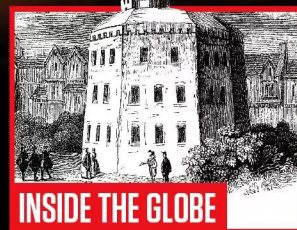
CRUSADER CRIMINALS

Why outlaws were drawn  
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Breaking down  
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NEWSLETTER



# Welcome

Why did so many Germans go along with Hitler? It's a common question regarding the rise of the Nazi party and the road that led to World War II. It's a question that gets to the heart of issues of human behaviour and the dangers of authoritarianism. But, it's also not an entirely fair question, because there were many Germans who stood against Hitler, from his earliest days rising up through German politics, right up to the final years of the war. The most extreme examples of this movement were those who attempted to assassinate him. The list of attempts is really quite extraordinary and speaks to the level of opposition, but also to the threat that people saw from the Führer.

Mike Haskew joins us to be our guide through many of these attempts on the life of Adolf Hitler, detailing how they planned their attacks and

why they proved to be unsuccessful again and again. Also in this issue you can learn about some of the strangest sports from the history of the Olympic Games, discover the life of queer Victorians, unearth some of the most spectacular ancient burials and delve into Shakespeare's world in our dedicated All About section. Some fascinating stories to dig into, so I hope you enjoy the issue.

**Jonathan Gordon**  
Editor



Portraits of members of the resistance groups who opposed Hitler during his time as Führer

## ALL ABOUT HISTORY

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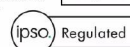
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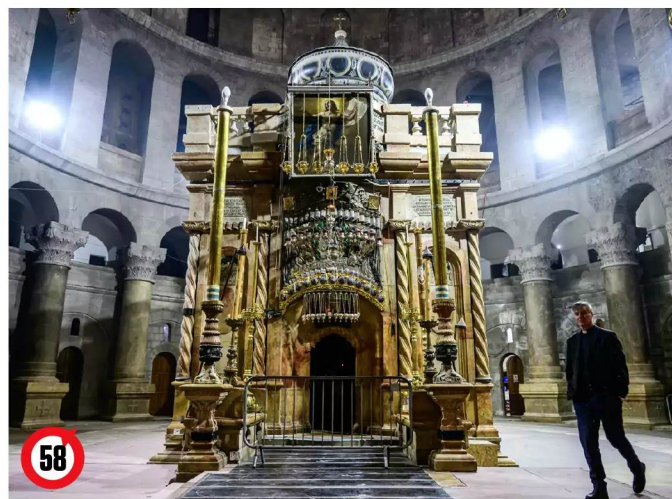
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# KILL HITLER

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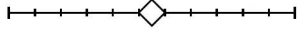
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**Exposing the many plots  
to assassinate the Führer  
and why they failed**



# ***Defining Moments***







15 July 1997

## GIANNI VERSACE MURDERED

On the morning of 15 July 1997, world-renowned fashion designer Gianni Versace was shot on the steps of his home in Miami Beach, Florida. His murderer was Andrew Cunanan, an American man who had already killed four other men during a spree. Versace was Cunanan's last victim before he killed himself days later. The fashion mogul's death inspired an outpouring of grief from the public and his funeral was attended by many high-profile celebrities such as Princess Diana and Elton John.



17 July 1955

## DISNEYLAND OPENS

Having been built over 160 acres in Anaheim, California, the Disneyland theme park was first opened on 17 July 1955. The park's building had been overseen by Walt Disney himself, and was intended to only welcome invited guests on its opening day before tickets were made available to the rest of the public. However, counterfeit tickets were circulated and around 13,000 uninvited guests turned up. The park was not yet ready for the number of visitors. However, this did nothing to affect the park's popularity, which remains a much-desired destination for Disney fans today.



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# ALL ABOUT SHAKESPEARE



**Walk the boards of the Bard's world, from the court of Elizabeth I to the streets of Stratford-upon-Avon**



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**WHO WAS WILLIAM  
SHAKESPEARE?**





# Key Events



Shakespeare's exact birth date is unknown, but it is traditionally celebrated on 23 April.

## 1564 BIRTH OF SHAKESPEARE

William Shakespeare is born in Stratford-upon-Avon to parents John and Mary. His mother comes from an affluent landowning family and his father is a successful glove maker who holds several municipal offices, enabling William to attend the local grammar school.

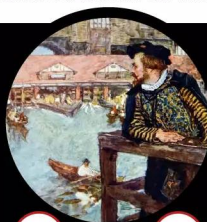
## THE RIDOLFI PLOT 1571

A Catholic conspiracy under the leadership of Florentine banker, Roberto di Ridolfi, plots to overthrow Elizabeth I and place Mary, Queen of Scots on the throne.



## THE LOST YEARS 1585-92

Shakespeare goes missing from the records until he is referred to in rival dramatist Robert Greene's pamphlet, *Groats-worth of Witte*, where Greene dubs him an 'upstart Crow'.



## PLAGUE OF LONDON 1592-93

A plague epidemic breaks out in London, killing around 15,000 people and forcing the theatres to close. Shakespeare turns his hand to writing poetry.



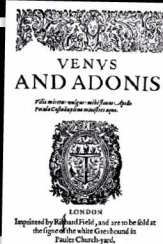
## 1564 1577 MARRIAGE TO ANNE HATHAWAY 1582

Shakespeare marries Anne Hathaway from the nearby village of Shottery. Their daughter, Susanna, is born in 1583, followed by twins, Judith and Hamnet, in 1585.



## 1588 1590 EXECUTION OF MARY, QUEEN OF SCOTS 1587

After managing to implicate her in another Catholic plot to overthrow the English throne, Elizabeth has Mary, Queen of Scots executed at Fotheringhay Castle.



## VENUS AND ADONIS 1593

Shakespeare's first known printed work, an erotic Ovidian poem entitled *Venus and Adonis*, is published. It is a huge success and helps to cement Shakespeare's early fame.



## 1588 THE SPANISH ARMADA

In retaliation for English raiding and support for the Dutch Revolt, Philip II of Spain sends a fleet of around 130 ships across the sea in order to pave the way for an invasion of England. The Spanish Armada is dramatically defeated in the English Channel.

## 1590 NORTH BERWICK WITCH TRIALS

On returning to Scotland with his new wife, Anne of Denmark, James VI of Scotland experiences stormy weather that he attributes to witches in North Berwick. Around 70 people are tried for witchcraft, with their supposed confessions providing inspiration for *Macbeth*.



## 1577 FRANCIS DRAKE'S EXPEDITION

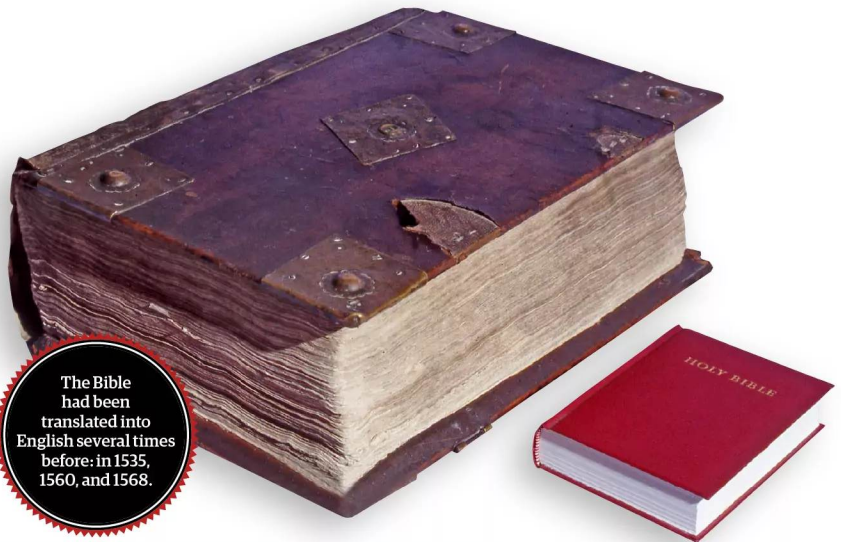
Francis Drake sets off from Plymouth on England's first circumnavigation of the globe. He conducts numerous raids of Spanish settlements along the coast of South America and amasses huge amounts of wealth for the English Crown, earning himself a knighthood.





## 1611 KING JAMES BIBLE

A new and definitive English translation of the Bible is published. Commissioned by James I and known as the King James Bible, it is produced by a collaboration of 47 scholars who go back to Greek, Hebrew, and Aramaic sources.

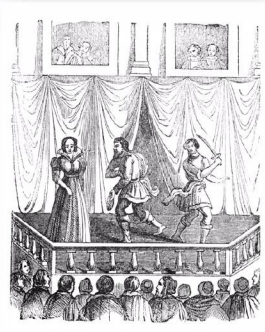


The Bible had been translated into English several times before: in 1535, 1560, and 1568.



## 1613 GLOBE THEATRE FIRE

On 29 June, the Globe Theatre catches fire during a performance of Shakespeare's *Henry VIII*. A stray shot from a theatrical cannon sets the thatched roof alight and burns the theatre down in about an hour, requiring the building to be rebuilt.



## THE KING'S MEN 1594

Shakespeare and others found an acting company called The Lord Chamberlain's Men. They perform frequently at court and later become known as The King's Men.

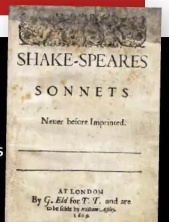
## PURCHASE OF NEW PLACE 1597

With his accumulated wealth, Shakespeare buys New Place, one of the largest houses in Stratford-upon-Avon. He buys a further 107 acres of land in 1602.



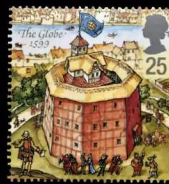
## PUBLICATION OF THE SONNETS 1609

The first edition of Shakespeare's complete collection of 154 sonnets is published. Less popular than his narrative poems, the sonnets are not reprinted during his lifetime.



## DEATH OF HAMNET 1596

Shakespeare's son, Hamnet, dies at the age of 11. This may provide inspiration for Constance's lament for her son in *King John* and elements of *Hamlet*.



## OPENING OF THE GLOBE THEATRE 1599

The Lord Chamberlain's Men, led by Richard and Cuthbert Burbage, use timber from an earlier theatre in Shoreditch to construct the Globe Theatre at Southwark.



## DEATH OF SHAKESPEARE 1616

Shakespeare dies on 23 April, the same day as his presumed birthday, at the age of 52 and is buried in Holy Trinity Church in Stratford-upon-Avon.

## 1603 UNION OF THE CROWNS

Queen Elizabeth I dies at the age of 69 after a 45-year reign, ushering in the end of the Tudor age. As a result, her cousin, James VI of Scotland, accedes to the English throne to become James I of England, uniting the two Crowns.

James VI published his own book, entitled *Daemonologie*, attesting to the dangers of witchcraft in 1597.







## Inside History

# THE GLOBE

London, England  
1599 – 1613

**B**y 1598, William Shakespeare's plays had been performed in London by the company known as The Lord Chamberlain's Men for around six years. Shakespeare and his company decided it was time to erect their own theatre, and to do so dismantled the building of the theatre they had first performed in and transported it across the river Thames, from Shoreditch to a new site in Southwark. They hurriedly built their new venue - an "O" shaped open air theatre called the Globe, which would become iconic as the stage for Shakespearean drama.

Shakespeare's new theatre was opened in May 1599. It is believed that the first play written by Shakespeare to be performed at the Globe was *Julius Caesar*, with other early productions staged there including *Henry V* and *Hamlet*. The venue became extremely popular, but the Globe's success was to be short-lived. Disaster struck one night in June 1613 when, during a performance of Shakespeare's *Henry VIII*, a prop cannon misfired and set the thatched roof of the venue alight. The famous theatre burned to the ground within an hour of the accident.

A second incarnation of the Globe was built on the site of the first, and the theatre was resurrected by February 1614. Theatrical performances continued to be staged there, even after Shakespeare himself had died in April 1616. By 1642, however, the theatre was closed by parliamentary decree, and a couple of years later the Globe was demolished. The version of the Globe that now stands on the banks of the Thames was reconstructed as part of a project headed by American actor Sam Wanamaker. He dreamed of resurrecting Shakespeare's theatre as accurately to the original design as possible, and from 1970 campaigned to do so. His dream was finally realised in 1997 when the new Globe Theatre opened to the public. ○

### THATCHED ROOF

The Globe's thatched roof was typical of Tudor buildings at the time. However, it was the building's undoing when it was set aflame by a rogue prop cannon shot in 1613. The current incarnation of the Globe Theatre has a thatched roof like the original, though special permission had to be sought to install it as these roofs were banned by law in London.



### SEATED GALLERIES

Including the pit, Shakespeare's Globe could hold 3,000 people in its audience. For those who could afford to pay more for tickets, the galleries that encircled the pit provided seating. The galleries reached 30 feet high and were split into sections that covered each of the sides of the theatre. Each section was split into three tiers that could be accessed by staircases.

### THE "O" THEATRE

The rounded "O" shape of the Globe was not atypical of Elizabethan theatre structures. The Theatre at Shoreditch was circular, before it was dismantled by Shakespeare's company, as was the Rose theatre, which was located near the Globe. Despite its rounded appearance, the Globe was actually built as a 20-sided polygon.



## THE FLAG

Shakespeare's theatre was christened the Globe by actor Richard Burbage, who likened the carrying of the theatre's timbers across the Thames to the story of Hercules carrying the globe on his back. A design of Hercules carrying a globe, along with the phrase "all the world's a playhouse" in Latin, featured on the theatre's flag which was flown from the top of the building to signal when a new play was being performed.

## STAGE

The central element of the Globe was, of course, the stage. Sitting five feet off the ground and visible from all sides of the theatre, the protruding thrust stage allowed the audience to feel close to the actors. A balcony at the back of the stage served as an important part in the staging of Shakespeare's plays, most famously in *Romeo and Juliet*.

## THE HUT

The structure on top of the Globe's stage was called the Hut. This enclosed area was used as a storage space that could be used by the company performing to keep props and sets. It also contained a machine that lowered actors and props from the ceiling of the stage.

## THE HEAVENS

Just as the trap door represented Hell, the Heavens above the stage were used as an entrance for deities and spirits like fairies. Actors playing these characters could be lowered onto the stage, which was known as "flying in", using the mechanism stored in the Hut. The Heavens were also used to help create sound effects: the sound of thunder was made by rolling a cannon ball across the floor of the area.

## BACKSTAGE

Behind the stage were several backstage areas that provided space for the actors and other members of the company. This area was used by actors to change their attire - it was known as the Tiring House for this reason - and to enter onto the stage from one of the area's three entrances. Costumes and props would be stored in these backstage areas, where actors would prepare for their performances.

## THE PIT

For those wanting to experience an authentic Shakespearean production at the Globe now, they might choose to stand in the pit area close to the stage. This open area allowed people to pay a cheaper fee for tickets and made theatre accessible to more people. The area could get unruly, as Elizabethan audiences could be very vocal while they were watching the play, and some audiences would have to stand for up to three hours depending on the length of the production.

## TRAP DOOR

In the centre of the stage's floor, a trap door played an important role in the staging of many of Shakespeare's plays. At times, the trap door represented Hell to the audience, and evil spirits and ghosts would come up through it when they entered a scene. It was also sometimes used as a grave, like in the tragedy *Hamlet* where it represented Ophelia's resting place.





# Anatomy

## TITANIA

England  
c.1600

### ACCESSORIES

In order to signify that a character was not from the Elizabethan era, or that they were supernatural, accessories would often be employed to embellish a costume. Elaborate headdresses were likely used to distinguish magical characters from mortals, while helmets were often used to identify heroes and gods.

### PALE SKIN

In order to make a male actor look like a woman on stage, white makeup was used to give them the desired pale complexion of a stereotypically beautiful Elizabethan woman. For magical characters, like Titania, crushed pearls were used in the white makeup to create a shimmering effect.

### MEN AS WOMEN

During the period when Shakespeare was writing his plays, it was customary that women did not act. Although there was no law prohibiting them from doing so, it was the norm for men and boys to play female roles on stage. Therefore, a character like Titania would have been performed by a male actor in a female costume.

### EXPENSE

Creating costumes for Shakespeare's plays could be expensive, especially for plays set in a specific historical period or with a supernatural element. It is likely that theatre companies would try and reuse costumes if they could, but it is still estimated that at this time a company would have spent over £35,000 a year in today's money on costumes.

### THE FAERIE QUEENE

In Shakespeare's comedic play *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, written between 1594 and 1596, Titania is the Queen of the Fairies. Her and her husband, Oberon, play a pivotal role in the play's plot as they use their magic to meddle with each other and the lead human characters.

### ELEVATED ELIZABETHAN

Several elements of this potential costume for Titania are inspired by traditional Elizabethan fashion. In many of Shakespeare's plays set in contemporary Europe, like *Romeo and Juliet* for example, actors would have worn Elizabethan dress, which made sense for the characters and sometimes helped to save the theatre company money.

### MASQUE COSTUMES

Though there is little evidence for what an original costume for Titania would have looked like, some historians believe that Shakespeare's magical characters would have worn outfits in the style of Italian masque costumes. Around ten years after *A Midsummer Night's Dream* was first written, designer Inigo Jones drew inspiration from Italian masque traditions when he sketched costumes for similar theatrical fairy characters.





## Historical Treasures

# THE LAST WILL AND TESTAMENT OF WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE

For centuries historians have studied this document for clues to the Bard's final moments  
England, 1613-1616

**O**n 23 April 1616, William Shakespeare died. It is likely he had been ill for some time and Shakespeare prepared for the event of his passing by creating a last will and testament bequeathing all his earthly belongings to his loved ones. Despite so little being known about Shakespeare's life, miraculously several copies of the will have survived and have become key documents for historians trying to learn more about the baffling bard. His cause of death, however, remains a mystery. Numerous myths and legends persist, from death by overindulgence of alcohol to typhoid, to syphilis (though some suggest this latter illness is less likely).

There are oddities surrounding the will's composition that have obsessed historians over the centuries. According to the BBC, it is believed that the will was first drafted in 1613.

Pages one and three were then new additions, significantly edited in both January 1616 and March of that same year. It is believed that these changes were made to reflect last-minute additions to his family, for example the marriage of his daughter Judith to Thomas Quiney. The latter was the subject of one of these alterations, where Shakespeare removed his mention. Much has been made of the fact that only one item was left to Shakespeare's wife, Anne Hathaway. While Shakespeare Birthplace Trust states that, although she would have been entitled to a third

of the Bard's estate, it is nonetheless unusual that she receives no further mention.

But for over a hundred years, this important piece of Shakespearean history went unmentioned and undiscussed. According to Shakespeare expert Bonner Cutting, a copy was mentioned as having been discovered in 1737 and the supposed original was recovered ten years later. Related documentation, such as the inventory of goods, are suspected to have been lost in the Great Fire of London when the Prerogative Court of Canterbury's offices were struck by the catastrophe.

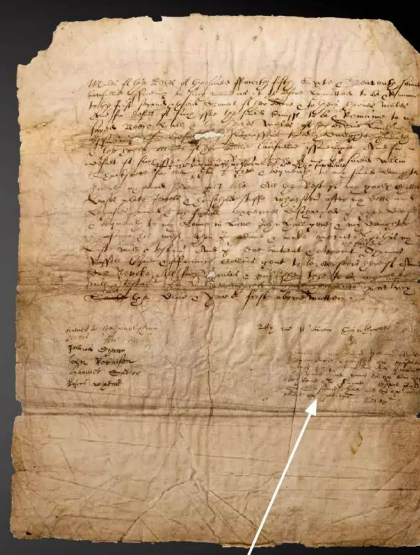
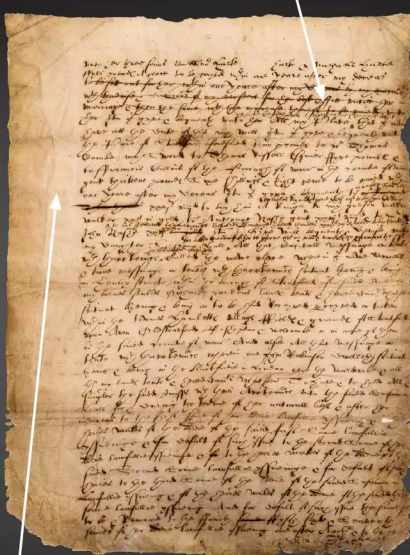
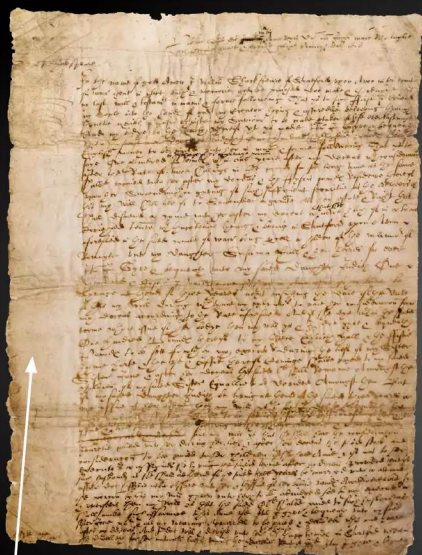
The original is part of the archive of the Prerogative Court of Canterbury, now in the collections of the National Archive. In 2016, a major conservation project was undertaken in an attempt to return the will to a condition closer to its original state. ○



**ABOVE** In 2016, the Will & Testament was placed on display at Somerset House as part of an exhibition marking 400 years since Shakespeare's death

### WRITTEN WHILE DYING?

Shakespeare Network states that the will is written in a shaking, unsteady hand. Historians have taken this to suggest that he may have already been ill, and possibly dying, when the will was composed.



### THE SHIRT ON HIS BACK

All of Shakespeare's clothing was bequeathed to his sister Joan. It is likely this was either for her to sell, due to the fine nature of some of the clothing, or intended to be given to her husband.

### ALL THE KING'S MEN

Within the will, Shakespeare bequeathed 26 shillings and 8 pence each to Richard Burbage, Henry Condell and John Heminges. The money was for them to buy mourning rings, as all three were close friends and members of the acting company - The King's Men.

### THE SECOND BEST BED

One of the most controversial bequests is Shakespeare's leaving of his 'second best bed' to his wife Anne Hathaway. Numerous theories have emerged as to why, the most popular being that the 'best bed' was more of a show item in Elizabethan times - the 'second' would have been the marital bed.





## Hall of Fame

# SHAKESPEAREAN PATRONS

Ten of the influential men and women who helped foster art and writing in the late Tudor and early Stuart period



## ELIZABETH I

1533 – 1603

With a reign that is credited as bringing about a golden age of art in England, it's no surprise that the queen herself was a patron of many creative works. She is noted to have particularly favoured the paintings of Nicholas Hilliard who worked as a court painter and produced many miniatures, which were popular at the time. In theatre Elizabeth had the Queen's Men, an illustrious, all-star acting company founded in 1583.

## ANNE OF DENMARK

1574 – 1619

Anne first began supporting British arts when she became Queen of Scotland upon marrying James VI (later James I of England) in 1589. Leonard Fryer was her Serjeant Painter when she arrived in London, believed to have been a silversmith rather than an artist as the title suggests. He was joined by artists John de Critz and Robert Peake the Elder once Anne was Queen of England. Anne had a particular fondness for masques (extravagant court dances) and so many artists contributed to these events as well.



## Henry Wriothesley, 3rd Earl of Southampton

Wriothesley was made a royal ward under Lord Burghley following the death of his father in 1581 when he inherited the earldom as a child. Following an education at Cambridge he arrived at court aged 17 and went on to support many writers, such as Barnabe Barnes, Thomas Nashe, Gervase Markham and William Shakespeare. The bard notably dedicated poems to Wriothesley, such as *Venus and Adonis* (1593) and *The Rape of Lucrece* (1594). Some of Shakespeare's sonnets addressed to a 'Fair Youth' are also believed to have been addressed to the young earl.



Wriothesley was imprisoned by Elizabeth after he married one of her waiting women in 1598.

## James VI and I

1566 – 1625

The son of Mary, Queen of Scots, James I would succeed Elizabeth to the throne of England, but, much like his wife, had already established his support of the arts before arriving in London. Made King of Scotland at a young age, he received a classical education and had a particular fondness for jewellery and fine clothing, which he supported along with many other creative arts. Many of the artists and artisans that gathered at his court in Scotland travelled south with him in 1603, but when he arrived he quickly granted a formal patent to Shakespeare's company, making them the King's Men.



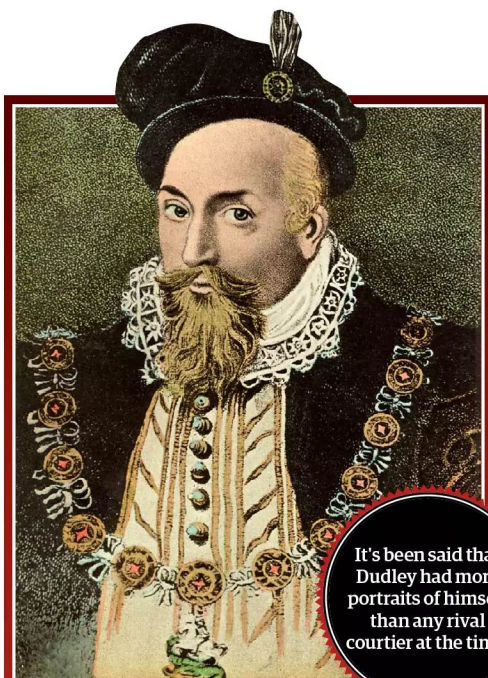
King James hired Inigo Jones to build Banqueting House in Whitehall, completed in 1622.

## William Herbert, 3rd Earl of Pembroke

1580 – 1630

Working under both James I and Charles I, a number of notable playwrights benefited from the support of Herbert. His love of the arts came from an early age, not least because his mother, Mary Sidney, was a noted poet in her own right. Famous names such as writer Ben Jonson and architect Inigo Jones were among those who enjoyed his patronage in later years. The *First Folio* of William Shakespeare was also dedicated to William and his brother Philip as "the most Noble and Incomparable Pair of Brethren".





## Robert Dudley, Earl of Leicester 1532 – 1588

Few figures attracted as much attention or controversy in Elizabeth's court as Robert Dudley and befitting such dramatic inclinations, he was a renowned patron of the arts, notably paintings. When he wasn't acting in his official duties as privy councillor, Knight of the Garter or commander he collected and commissioned a number of works, including from artists like Nicholas Hilliard, Paolo Veronese and Federico Zuccaro. He also understood the political power of portraiture for self-promotion as he rose in influence.



It's been said that Dudley had more portraits of himself than any rival courtier at the time.

## EDWARD MANNERS, 3RD EARL OF RUTLAND 1549 – 1587

Thought to be one of Shakespeare's earliest backers, Edward Manners was one of Queen Elizabeth's most devoted subjects and held a number of important roles under her reign. He suppressed an insurrection in 1569 and took important roles of steward and constable around Nottingham, eventually becoming lord chancellor briefly before he died in 1587. He was known for a lavish lifestyle, bringing with him a large coterie of servants. His family had owned the land on which Burbage's Theatre was built in Oxford, where Shakespeare's career began.



## THOMAS RADCLYFFE, 3RD EARL OF SUSSEX 1525 – 1583

Serving as English lord lieutenant of Ireland and in Elizabeth's court, Radclyffe is notable for his attempts to bring England closer to France, particularly favouring a marriage between Queen Elizabeth and a French prince and opposing Robert Dudley, Earl of Leicester. Through his office as Lord Chamberlain he was responsible for the entertainment of the court and moved things away from masques towards plays, appointing Lord Henry Hunsdon and Lord Charles Howard as vice Chamberlains, each patrons themselves of prominent acting companies.

## SIR FRANCIS WALSHINGHAM

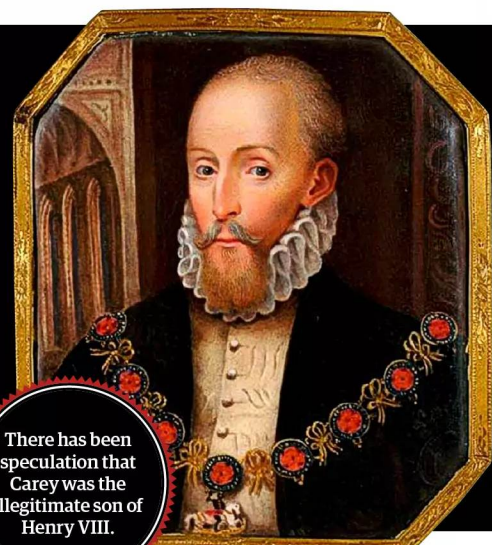
c.1532 – 1590

Best known as the principal secretary of Elizabeth I from 1573 to 1590, Walsingham was one of the most powerful and influential men in Elizabethan England. His spy network is legendary, exposing threats to the throne both foreign and domestic during his tenure. But it wasn't all informants and secret agents for Walsingham, who was also a strong believer in propaganda, commissioning plays that would promote the nation's strength and devotion to their queen. These plays would have been performed by the Queen's Men as her royally sanctioned acting troupe.



## Henry Carey, Baron Hunsdon 1526 – 1596

Cousin to Queen Elizabeth (Carey is the son of Anne Boleyn's sister and former mistress to Henry VIII, Mary), Carey rose to the role of Lord Chamberlain. A monument of him was built in Westminster Abbey not long after his death and remains the tallest in the building at around 11 metres in height. He partnered with Walsingham in arranging court entertainment and bought up property in London, eventually buying a theatre school in Blackfriars.



There has been speculation that Carey was the illegitimate son of Henry VIII.





## Q&A



# WHO WAS WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE?

## Professor Laurie Maguire debunks the myths and misconceptions about the playwright

### ***Why has the identity of William Shakespeare been a subject of historical debate?***

Shakespeare's life in Stratford-upon-Avon is well documented and we know a lot about his life in London as a playwright, but the link between the two, although logical, has eluded definitive proof: how do we know that the Shakespeare in Stratford was the Shakespeare in London? Heather Wolfe, curator and archivist at the Folger Shakespeare Library, has recently found documentary proof in the College of Heralds. These documents, about Shakespeare's coat of arms, describe him as 'Shakespeare, gent of Stratford' and 'Shakespeare the player'. So the Stratford Shakespeare and the London Shakespeare are demonstrably one and the same!

The debate about Shakespeare's identity also has elements of provincial and class bias. People find it difficult to believe that a grammar-school boy from Stratford-upon-Avon could write the magnificent documents of humanity that are *The Complete Works of William*

*Shakespeare*. In fact, the grammar-school education in Stratford was part of an Elizabethan national curriculum: Ben Jonson received the same education at Westminster and Christopher Marlowe got the same in Canterbury. The curriculum had a classical emphasis on rhetoric, debate, and on defending the opposite point of view; designed to train statesmen and lawyers, it was also the perfect training for a dramatist.

### ***What do we actually know about who Shakespeare was?***

We know a great deal about his family background, his social environment in Stratford, his financial success, his investments, his real estate purchases.

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Laurie Maguire is Professor of Shakespeare emerita at Oxford University and a Fellow of Magdalen College. She is the co-author of *30 Great Myths about Shakespeare* (Wiley-Blackwell, 2012) and is currently writing a biography of Judith Shakespeare.

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What we don't have is a strong sense of his personality. We hear about the iconoclasm and irascibility of Christopher Marlowe, or the inseparability of Beaumont and Fletcher, or Ben Jonson's attitude to his wife.

References to Shakespeare tend to be about his literary achievements rather than his personality. Clearly, Shakespeare

**BELOW** A statue of William Shakespeare outside his birthplace in Stratford-upon-Avon







was a great observer - of human life, of interpersonal tensions, of political problems. My sense is that he sat quietly in corners with the Elizabethan equivalent of a notepad, paying close attention but not pushing himself forward.

### **Did Shakespeare really have a strained relationship with his wife, Anne Hathaway?**

Certainly not at the beginning. *Sonnet 145* is a love sonnet to Anne Hathaway, structured around a pun on her name. The fact that she was pregnant when they got married is not evidence of a shotgun wedding - in those decades, 30 per cent of Stratford brides were pregnant. In fact, Lena Orlin has recently argued in *The Private Life of William Shakespeare* that marriage was what enabled Shakespeare to break his apprenticeship (apprentices had to be bachelors), freeing him to pursue opportunities in London. In his absence, Anne ran the household and

**ABOVE** People have often believed that the marriage between Shakespeare and his wife, Anne Hathaway, was a troubled one

**BELOW** The school in Stratford where Shakespeare may have received his comprehensive education as a boy

finances in Stratford. Again, absent husbands are not unusual - Stratford wives were competent businesswomen, managing property and investments while their husbands travelled; they also operated pop-up businesses (e.g. domestic produce) on a scale that we would now recognise as a cottage industry. A long-distance marriage is not



necessarily evidence of a strained one. Shakespeare gravitated home to Stratford each summer, and chose to retire there. But later? Well, the death of their son, Hamnet, in 1596 is an event that can put a strain on a marriage, then and now. It is this strain that Maggie O'Farrell depicts in her novel, *Hamnet*, as Shakespeare and his wife respond differently to their grief - but O'Farrell provides a beautifully redemptive ending.

### **Why have some people suggested that Shakespeare was not the author of the plays that bear his name?**

This is based on a fundamental misunderstanding about how the literary imagination works. Those who believe that the plays of Shakespeare were written by someone else argue that only a lawyer would have the plays' legal knowledge, only a politician would have the plays' political knowledge, only a soldier or an aristocrat would have visited Italy, and so on. This is a very literal approach. Shakespeare travelled to Italy in the same way as he travelled to ancient Rome - in his imagination.

But this biographical, literal approach is only applied selectively. No-one assumes that you have to be shipwrecked in Illyria in order to write *Twelfth Night*, so why do they worry about Messina or Venice?

### **Can you tell us about some of the other common misconceptions about William Shakespeare and his work?**

There are so many! That Shakespeare wrote alone (he didn't - a quarter of his plays are collaborative); that the sonnets are autobiographical (some of them probably are, but the sequence itself isn't); that he was the biggest box office success of his day (Thomas Middleton was as big a draw). So why has Shakespeare stood the test of time and why don't we have a Royal Middleton Company? Apart from his great tragedies (*The Changeling* and *The Revenger's Tragedy* are still performed today) Middleton's focus is topical, satirical and local. Shakespeare has a more transhistorical interest: the human heart (families, marriages, disappointment, betrayal, selfhood). *Romeo and Juliet* is about the pressures on young people, and the play's tragic solution - teen suicide - is sadly not confined to the 16th century. *Twelfth Night* is about being obsessively in love with someone who doesn't reciprocate. *King Lear* is about a king who abdicates i.e. takes early retirement. Shakespeare is a psychologist before the field of psychology existed as a profession. ○





## Places to Explore

# SHAKESPEARE'S STRATFORD

The town of the Bard's birth contains many must-see spots for the would-be Shakespearean tourist

## 1 ANNE HATHAWAY'S COTTAGE COTTAGE LANE, SHOTTERY

Eight years the Bard's senior, Anne Hathaway and William Shakespeare were married in 1582. Located a little outside of Stratford-upon-Avon in Shottery (around a mile and a half away), Anne and her family lived in a small farmhouse now known as Anne Hathaway's Cottage. First built in 1463, the first generation of Hathaways moved into the cottage in 1543 and various descendants lived there until 1911. In 1610 the house was purchased by Hathaway's brother who made numerous additions to the house, and his own descendants renovated the property further in the 17th century - according to the Shakespeare Birthplace Trust.

In 1892 the Shakespeare Birthplace Trust purchased the cottage, though the Hathaways remained tenants until 1911. Anne Hathaway's Cottage now houses a museum and is also the location of the famous Hathaway Bed, left to Anne by Shakespeare in his will. In 1920 a series of elaborate and picturesque gardens were created by Ellen Willmott.

*Anne Hathaway's Cottage is open daily from 10am to 5pm. Adult tickets cost £14.50. Please check before visiting.*



The exterior of the cottage where Anne Hathaway was born and raised



The bedroom inside Anne Hathaway's Cottage



## 2 SHAKESPEARE'S NEW PLACE CHAPEL STREET

Built in the late 1400s, Shakespeare purchased the house in 1597. By this stage in his career he was comparatively wealthy, living off his success as a playwright. This enabled him to purchase a property befitting his newfound status and so was considerably larger and grander than his previous homes. Following Shakespeare's death, he left the property to his daughter Susanna and her husband. His descendants would continue to own the property until 1670.

Unfortunately, the house was destroyed in the 17th century to make way for a different house, which itself was demolished over a century later. Now, the Shakespeare Birthplace Trust takes care of the land and, although the footprint of the house is marked upon the ground, unfortunately there is no physical property for visitors to walk through. Instead, visitors can explore a series of picturesque gardens featuring exquisite sculptures inspired by the Bard's many famous works. A museum is also located in a nearby property.

*Shakespeare's New Place is open daily from 10am to 5pm. Adult tickets cost £14.50. Please check before visiting.*



A view of the picturesque gardens





The house is now cared for by the Shakespeare Birthplace Trust who regularly host events for visitors

### 3 SHAKESPEARE'S BIRTHPLACE HENLEY STREET

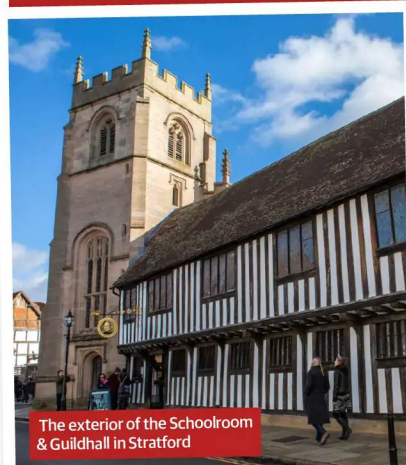
It was in 1564 that the town of Stratford-upon-Avon witnessed the birth of its most famous historical resident, as well as Britain's most celebrated playwright. The house William Shakespeare was born in was occupied by his parents, John and Mary Shakespeare, from at least 1552 until his father's death in 1601, when William Shakespeare began to rent the property out. Following his own death, in 1647 the house was transformed into the Swan and Maidenhead Inn, later becoming partly a butcher's shop. In 1847, the house was purchased as a national monument and the Shakespeare Birthplace Trust was created. This was purportedly an attempt to stop PT Barnum's plan to buy the house and ship it to the United States.

Between 1857 and 1868, the Trust embarked upon the task of attempting to restore the

property to its original state. They purchased the surrounding houses in order to isolate the home, and added a museum. Although the Trust's site claims there were plans to add a glass roof to protect the house, this never materialised.

The organisation's purpose was to care for and protect the property and over the decades the Trust was able to purchase several other sites. These include Anne Hathaway's Cottage, Hall's Croft, Shakespeare's New Place, and the Trust also operates the Shakespeare Centre. As well as individual tickets (prices listed here) the trust also offers a special ticket that allows access to all of the properties that it owns.

*Open daily from 10am to 5pm. Adult tickets cost £19.50. Please check before visiting.*



The exterior of the Schoolroom & Guildhall in Stratford

### 4 SHAKESPEARE'S SCHOOLROOM & GUILDHALL CHURCH STREET

Shakespeare's Schoolroom and Guildhall is a unique heritage site that allows visitors to learn about the early years of the Bard. As the name suggests, the building functioned both as the town's schoolroom and also as the location of its Guildhall, built by the Guild of the Holy Cross between 1418 and 1420. Shakespeare's education took place over seven years, from ages 7 to 14, and it was during this period that he first experienced theatre. Even more remarkably, the Schoolroom & Guildhall purport that it was here that he penned some of his early works, including some of the celebrated sonnets.

Visitors to the Schoolroom can explore the various rooms, which have been turned into an interactive museum, with elements such as films and even an opportunity to experience a lesson similar to one the young Shakespeare would have had to endure! The Schoolroom also hosts various Shakespeare-related talks and events throughout the year.

*Shakespeare's Schoolroom & Guildhall is open daily from 11am to 5pm. Standard adult tickets cost £13.50. Please check online before visiting.*

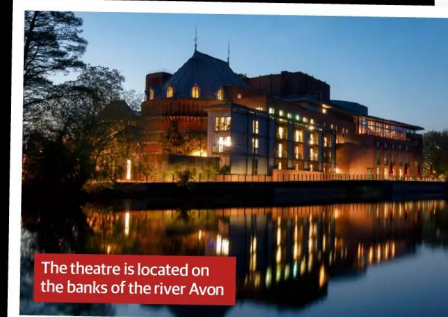
### 5 ROYAL SHAKESPEARE THEATRE WATERSIDE

Stratford-upon-Avon has a rich theatrical history, going back to the time of Shakespeare himself. The Shakespeare Memorial Theatre (as it was originally known) was first opened in 1879 and was the brainchild of brewer and Shakespeare superfan, Charles Edward Flower. The building was a unique mix of Tudor and Victorian Gothic styles, built on a picturesque piece of waterfront territory, donated by Flower, and seated 700 patrons. For over a hundred years this theatre would showcase productions of some of the Bard's most famous works, until 1926 when it was unfortunately all but destroyed during a large fire.

In 1932, Elizabeth Scott was selected to design a replacement, using the remains of Flower's original theatre as a shell. According to the Theatre's trust, Scott's design was controversial - earning the admiration of architects but the disdain of theatrical experts. Scott created a 'fan-shaped' auditorium which has been criticised for the difficulty it created when hosting performances. Nonetheless, the Royal Shakespeare Company claims that this iconic building was the first public commission by a female architect.

In 2007 the theatre underwent a massive redevelopment, not only of the main theatre itself but also the addition of restaurants, cafes and an observation tower. The redevelopment sought to solve many of the problems posed by Scott's design. The remains of Flowers' original theatre can still be seen in the Swan Theatre, first opened in 1986. The Royal Shakespeare Theatre continues to host many of the Bard's works, both famous and lesser known, and is a must-visit for any Shakespearean tourist.

*Full details of performances, as well as how to purchase tickets, can be found at: [www.rsc.org.uk/whats-on](http://www.rsc.org.uk/whats-on)*



The theatre is located on the banks of the river Avon





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# KILL Hitler

**Exposing the many plots to assassinate  
the Führer and why they failed**

Written by Mike Haskew

23

Before and during the 12 years of the Third Reich, Adolf Hitler was the target of dozens of assassination plots. Hitler stirred the people, rising to power through cunning, shrewdness, and projecting a messianic will. He became the symbol of a resurgent nation, and in doing so he also became a marked man. Historians and researchers have ostensibly discovered more than 40 attempts on the life of the Führer, from conspiracies that penetrated the highest echelons of the Reich's military command to lone wolves - from poison and pistol to bomb blast. Each would ultimately fail, some due to ineptitude; others to sheer happenstance, or even blind luck.

Ever aware of his polarising presence, Hitler took great pains to thwart would-be assassins, from both inside and outside the Reich. Even before his elevation to absolute ►









power, there were those who saw the spectre of some spectacular evil that had to be extinguished. In response, the Nazi leader surrounded himself with tight security. He varied his schedule, often abruptly cancelling or altering the timetables of public appearances, detouring from planned motorcade routes, or travelling by plane rather than automobile. He employed Gestapo and Abwehr watchdogs to keep tabs on 'subversives'. He used food tasters. And he was, at times, simply fortunate.

Despite his vigilance, Hitler felt the sting of the near-miss more than once, most spectacularly during the detonation of the briefcase bomb at Wolf's Lair in East Prussia, on 20 July 1944. Escorted to safety from the smoke and rubble of the conference room where several others died or were grievously wounded, he interpreted his survival as an omen of eventual Nazi victory even in the midst of a rapidly deteriorating military situation on all fronts.

In the end, Hitler chose to accommodate those who wanted him dead. By his own hand, he killed himself in the stifling Führerbunker beneath the rubble of

**RIGHT** The Hotel Kaiserhof where an attempted poisoning is claimed to have taken place

**BELOW** Posters put up around Berlin in 1932 for Germany's upcoming presidential elections. They read: We want work and bread! Vote for Hitler!



“ Shots were fired in the midst of the brawl, but Hitler was undeterred, ranting for another 20 minutes ”

Berlin, where the black heart of Nazi Germany was being assailed by a vengeful Red Army. The bullet to his temple and the crushing of the cyanide capsule, however, came too late to save the German nation from total ruin, degradation, and unimaginable suffering.

A successful assassination of Hitler would indeed have altered history, and contemplation of a few of the attempts on his life leads to varied conclusions regarding what might have been.

### MAYHEM, MYSTERY MEAL, MAIL, & MALICE

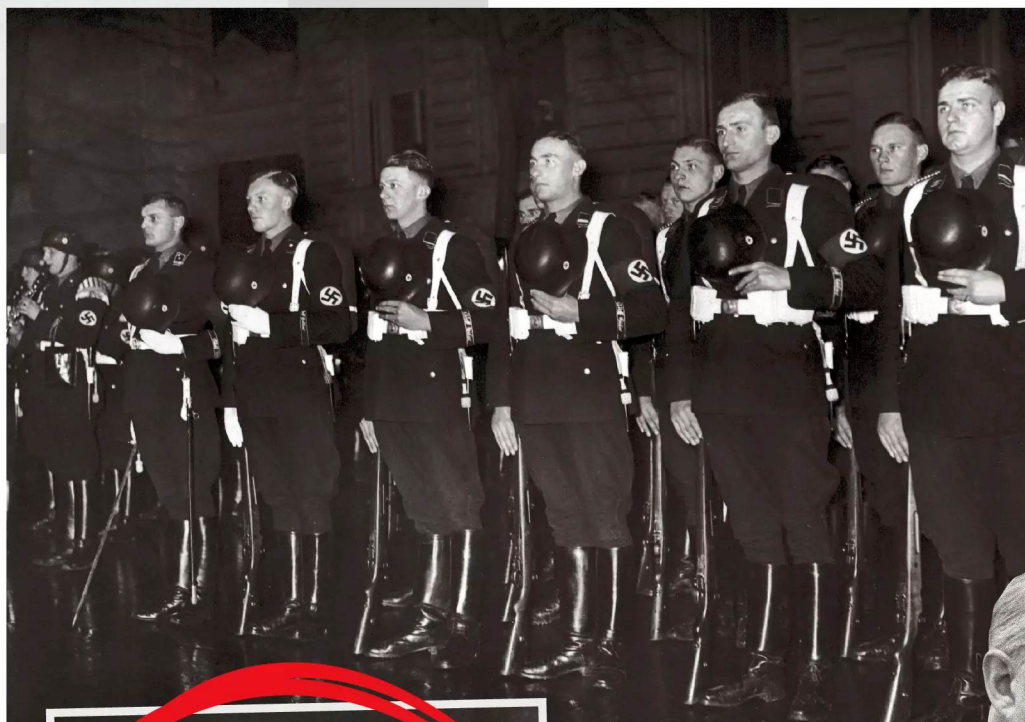
The earliest documented attempt to kill Hitler occurred as the Nazis engaged in street brawls and radical rhetoric. The leader of the fledgling Nazi Party rose in the Hofbräuhaus in Munich, his words whipping an already drunk audience to a frenzy. In November 1921, the opposition to the Nazis from communists and political centrists was quite active. Soon enough,

fists were flying, knives were brandished, and pistols were drawn. Shots were fired in the midst of the brawl, but Hitler was undeterred, ranting for another 20 minutes before the police reached the scene and the situation was defused. Hitler subsequently survived the ill-conceived Munich Beer Hall Putsch of 1923, although injured. Several of his cohorts were killed or wounded.

By 1932, Hitler was a national figure, campaigning for high office and riding the fervour of discontent with the Weimar government. At the same time he accused the communists of complicity in Germany's defeat and the current economic calamity. He sat down to dinner with associates one evening at the Hotel Kaiserhof in Berlin, and one by one the diners fell ill. Hitler's symptoms were milder than the others, perhaps due to his vegetarian diet, and though poison was suspected no perpetrators were identified. Around the same time, political opponent Ludwig Assner, a Bavarian State Parliament member and former Nazi turned communist, laced a letter with poison and







turned-rival Ernst Röhm, left dozens dead and sealed the cooperation between Hitler and the German Army's senior command. However, it also embittered some who had been loyal to the Nazi cause. Among them, Beppo Römer, a former right-wing Freikorps member who had turned toward the communists, apparently saw the purge, popularly known as the "Night of the Long Knives", as a national affront and vowed to kill Hitler. His desire for revenge was thwarted before he could act. Römer was imprisoned in Dachau concentration camp, and later executed in 1944.

### **RANDOM SHOTS & ALTERNATIVE DIPLOMACY**

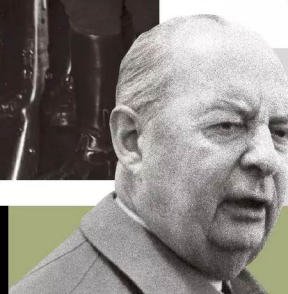
While Hitler solidified his hold on power, opponents found varied reasons to target the Führer, convinced that ending his life would right the ship of the German ►



mailed the deadly missive from France to his prominent target. An informant warned of the danger, and the letter was intercepted. A year later, Assner was arrested with a loaded handgun, intent on a second try at the Führer. He was imprisoned by the Gestapo and executed. Operation Hummingbird (30 June to 2 July 1934), the blood purge of the Sturmabteilung, or SA, headed by friend-

**TOP** A 1935 plot involved recruiting members of the SS, Hitler's own bodyguard, but it was thwarted by the Gestapo

**ABOVE** Henning von Tresckow was a longtime opponent of the Nazis and leading anti-Hitler conspirator



## **A WILLINGNESS TO Sacrifice One's Self**

*Major General Rudolf von Gersdorff was resigned to give his own life to kill Hitler*

While many were peripherally involved in the plots to kill Adolf Hitler, Major General Rudolf von Gersdorff was firmly committed. After forging a great friendship with prime conspirator Major General Henning von Tresckow amid their mutual desire to rid the world of the Führer, Gersdorff demonstrated his anti-Nazi fervour with a willingness to lose his own life.

Just a few days after Tresckow's attempt to kill Hitler with a "brandy bomb" had failed, Gersdorff became aware that the Führer was to visit an exhibition of weapons and equipment captured from the Soviet Red Army at the old armoury in Berlin. "At this point it became clear to me that an attack was only possible if I were to carry the explosives about my person and blow myself up as close to Hitler as possible," he wrote later.

On 21 March 1943, Gersdorff was to guide Hitler through the exhibit. In preparation, the general placed explosives in his coat pockets and ignited two fuses with 10-minute delays. Staying close to the Führer, he was surprised that Hitler whisked through the display and exited the building quickly though a side door.

A vexed Gersdorff excused himself and raced for a bathroom, where he was barely able to extinguish the fuses prior to detonation. His attempt remained undiscovered, and he returned to service on the Eastern Front.







## COME Retribution

*In the wake of the 20 July 1944  
assassination plot, Hitler took  
pleasure in vengeance*

Amazingly, Adolf Hitler suffered only burns, abrasions, a stiff arm, and a burst ear drum as a result of the devastating blast of 20 July 1944. Later that same day, he proceeded to the nearby railroad station to greet his Axis partner Benito Mussolini. The Führer's shredded trousers were displayed, evidence of his seemingly miraculous survival.

The outcome of the July plot only strengthened the delusional Hitler that he was destined to be victorious, and he told the German people just that during a radio address at 1am on 21 July: "German national comrades! Yet another of the countless attempts on my life has been planned and carried out... I take it as a confirmation of the mission of Providence to continue my life purpose..."

In the waning months of his despotic rule, Hitler grew even more mentally unhinged. Wreaking vengeance on those he believed were involved in the bomb plot, he delighted in watching films of the agonising deaths of many convicted in a Nazi kangaroo court - suspended from meat hooks by piano wire and slowly strangled.

Before the retribution had subsided, an estimated 7,000 people were arrested and 5,000 executed. Perhaps the most prominent of the victims of the plot's fallout was Field Marshal Erwin Rommel, a national hero. Rommel chose suicide rather than the humiliation of a show trial, his own execution, and repercussions against his family.

Rommel had been wounded in Normandy a few months earlier, and a pair of generals arrived from Berlin at his home in the town of Ulm to offer the choice to the field marshal. He explained the situation to his wife and son, and a few minutes later they received a phone call confirming the field marshal's death.

German state propaganda told the people that their hero had died of his wounds received in Normandy, and Hitler proclaimed a national day of mourning.

nation and spare it the troubles to come. On 15 March 1932, while Hitler travelled aboard a train from Munich to Weimar with close associates of future Nazi Propaganda Minister Joseph Goebbels and Interior Minister Wilhelm Frick, an unknown assailant fired multiple shots at the trio's railroad car. No one was injured, and the perpetrator was never identified.

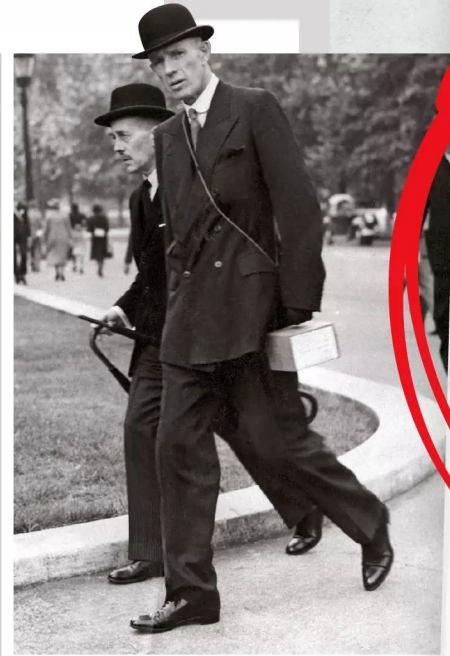
A year later, on the eve of the Reichstag elections that elevated the Nazi Party to power in Germany, Hitler took to the speaker's rostrum and delivered a fiery indictment of his political enemies. Karl Lutter, a communist sympathiser who worked as a carpenter and led a group of anti-Nazi conspirators, intended to shoot Hitler as he spoke to the crowd. However, a turncoat betrayed the plot, and every conspirator was arrested. Some time after the election, Hitler planned a victory speech in a church at Potsdam, a suburb of Berlin. Shortly before the ceremonies began, a freshly dug tunnel was discovered beneath the church, apparently intended to accommodate a large amount of explosives. No one was arrested.

As war clouds gathered in Europe, British Lieutenant Colonel Noel Mason-MacFarlane watched developments in Germany while serving as a military attaché and became convinced as early as 1934 that Hitler was preparing to plunge Europe into a second catastrophic conflict. His reports to London rang with a sense of urgency, but the warnings were generally discounted. Nevertheless, the officer made plans to assassinate Hitler as he made a speech at the Charlottenburger Chaussee in Berlin on the occasion of his 50th birthday, 20 April 1939. Sighting the speaker's platform with a sniper rifle from inside his own residence, the officer was instead instructed to stand down. Foreign Secretary Lord Halifax admonished, "We have not reached that stage... when we have to use assassination as a substitute for diplomacy."

As World War II dragged on, the British Special Operations Executive devised Operation Foxley, its own assassination protocols that might end the Führer's life. However, Foxley was never activated. The Royal Air Force even attempted to kill Hitler with a 1945 air raid, just weeks before the Nazi leader's suicide.

### REVENGE FOR RÖHM & NUREMBERG

In the wake of the Night of the Long Knives, one of Hitler's own bodyguards, Heinrich Grunow, sought in 1935 to avenge the death of Ernst Röhm. Grunow found a hiding place by the roadside where Hitler's



“ We have not  
reached that stage...  
when we have to  
use assassination  
as a substitute for  
diplomacy ”

LORD HALIFAX

car was to pass. He pumped five shots into the backseat of the car, killing the occupant. However, the unfortunate victim was not the Führer, who had moved to the front seat and was probably driving. The victim is presumed to have been the chauffeur. Grunow was sure that he had killed Hitler and subsequently killed himself. Also in 1935, Dr. Helmut Mylius concocted an effort to infiltrate the ranks of Hitler's dreaded SS. He successfully recruited 160 men to gather information on the Führer's activities, expecting to strike when the opportunity presented itself. However, Gestapo agents penetrated the conspiracy and arrested the entire group; Mylius narrowly escaped.

Brothers Otto and Gregor Strasser broke from the Nazis in the early 1930s, and their faction was even more extreme in its ideology. Helmut Hirsch, a member of the Strasser movement, known as the Black Front, used this as the impetus to act. A German Jew, Hirsch was instructed to pack two suitcases with explosives that were to





**OVER LEFT** Lord Halifax rejected the idea of assassinating Hitler following a plan set for 20 April 1939

**LEFT** Swiss theology student Maurice Bavaud seemingly made more than one attempt to track Hitler with the aim of killing him in 1938

be detonated at Nazi Party Headquarters in Nuremberg. From the beginning, the effort was compromised. A Gestapo double agent shadowed Hirsch during the run-up to the assassination attempt, posing as his internal contact. Hirsch was arrested and beheaded by guillotine in June 1937.

Swiss theology student Maurice Bavaud was a devout Roman Catholic, and he was sure that Adolf Hitler was the embodiment of evil, an "incarnation of Satan." Therefore, Bavaud went after the Nazi leader as an avenging angel. He stalked Hitler for some time as the Führer made his way from one engagement to the next. On 9 November 1938, Hitler arrived in Munich to mark the anniversary of the ill-fated Beer Hall Putsch of 1923.

The opportunistic Bavaud saw his chance and raised a loaded pistol as Hitler passed by along a parade route through the city. Just as his finger tightened on the trigger, however, the fawning crowd began to shout "Heil Hitler!" and arms were raised in stiff salute, blocking the would-be assassin's view. Bavaud was later arrested as he attempted to leave Germany by train, the handgun and a map of Munich's streets on his person. Under harsh Gestapo questioning, Bavaud confessed to his failed enterprise. He was executed in a Berlin prison in the spring of 1941.

## NEAR MISSES & CZECH MATE

It's been reported that one Hitler opponent tried to take advantage of the Nazi leader's love of dogs (the Führer's Alsatian, Blondi, is well-known to history) by infecting a hapless puppy with the rabies virus and presenting the pooch to the Führer as a gift with the preposterous expectation that the canine would bite Hitler, infecting him with the disease, thus inflicting a painful death. In the event, it is believed that the puppy actually bit one of Hitler's servants. Neither the fate of the servant nor the unfortunate puppy are known. About the same time, an inept German soldier attempted to end the Führer's life while he spoke at a rally in Berlin's Sportpalast. Apparently, the unknown assassin was foiled when he accidentally became locked in a toilet facility inside the complex and was unable to detonate the cache of explosives he had placed beneath the speaker's platform.

Throughout the Nazi era, officers of the Heer, the German Army, were sceptical of Hitler's plan for the reemergence of Germany as a world power. They dreaded the prospect of another disastrous war and believed - even though many had pledged their loyalty to the Führer - that Hitler was leading the nation to destruction. One of these officers was Major General Hans ►



**LEFT** One plot involved infecting Hitler with rabies through contact with a puppy

**BELOW** The funeral procession of Field Marshal Erwin Rommel winds through the streets of Ulm. The Nazi propaganda machine deceived the German people with news of the hero's death





**RIGHT** The remains of the Bürgerbräukeller following the assassination attempt where Hitler was marking the anniversary of the 1923 Beer Hall Putsch

**BELOW** Georg Elser's bombing of the Bürgerbräukeller killed eight people, but Hitler had left less than ten minutes earlier



Oster, who rose to the post of deputy chief of the Abwehr, German military intelligence.

Oster led a group of high-ranking military officers who believed Hitler was bent on invading neighbouring Czechoslovakia. If Germany went to war against the Czechs, the group intended to order troops to storm the Reich Chancellery, take control of the government, and restore the monarchy that had ended with the abdication of Kaiser Wilhelm II in 1918. In the process, Adolf Hitler would either be neutralised by arrest or assassination.

As it turned out, the shrewd Nazi leader leveraged British Prime Minister Neville Chamberlain and French Prime Minister Edouard Daladier, who pursued the naïve policy of appeasement, into signing the odious Munich Pact of September 1938, which was essentially the death warrant of the Czech nation with the cession of Sudetenland to the Germans. The occupation of the remainder of Czechoslovakia followed months later.

As Hitler's popularity soared in the wake of the Munich Agreement, it was feared that widespread support for a coup d'état

would not be forthcoming. Oster remained a staunch opponent of the Nazi regime and was executed in 1945. Several of the 1938 conspirators later participated in the famed 1944 assassination attempt.

### A CLOCKWORK BOOM & BUST

When Georg Elser, a communist carpenter who hated the Nazis, determined that Hitler should die, his meticulous planning and precision presented all the earmarks of success. Elser knew that Hitler would come to Munich and speak at the Bürgerbräukeller on the anniversary of the 1923 Beer Hall Putsch, and he set that date, 8 November 1939, for the Führer's demise. The carpenter put his skills to good use, moving to Munich and visiting the hall after hours to hollow out a space in a column just where the speaker's stand would be located. Inside, he planned to place a bomb with enough explosive power to kill within a wide radius. The bomb was equipped with a 144-hour timer, and Elser set the detonation for 9:20pm, when Hitler would be about halfway through his speech.

While Elser had taken great care to ensure success, he could not control Hitler's whim. The Third Reich was already at war, and pressing military matters



“I reasoned the situation in Germany could only be modified by a removal of the current leadership, I mean Hitler...”

GEORG ELSER

prompted a return to Berlin at the earliest possible time. The speech was moved up an hour to 8pm, and the Führer departed at 9:12. The bomb exploded less than 10 minutes afterward. The building was wrecked, and eight people lay dead with over 60 others injured.

On the night of the blast, Elser hurried toward safety across the border with Switzerland. He was almost there, just 80 feet away, when he was detained by German border guards. Taken to an interrogation room, he was questioned and searched, an incriminating wire cutter and sketches of the explosive device discovered in his possession.

The bomber was brutalised, tortured, and interrogated on numerous subsequent occasions. He once told his captors, “I reasoned the situation in Germany could only be modified by a removal of the current leadership, I mean Hitler...” Elser was held prisoner for the next five years and during the last days of the Nazi Reich

he was dragged from his cell at the Dachau concentration camp and executed by the SS.

### A BRIEFCASE FOR THE BEAST

Major General Henning von Tresckow, at first an ardent supporter of the Nazi cause, rapidly became disillusioned with the violence and anti-Semitism that began to characterise Hitler's totalitarian government. As early as 1941, Tresckow was in league with several other high-ranking German Army officers and political figures, including General Ludwig Beck, former Chief of the General Staff, politician Carl Friedrich Goerdeler, and General Friedrich Olbricht, Chief of the Army General Office. Field Marshal Erwin Rommel, a national hero and the famed “Desert Fox” of the North Africa campaign, became subsequently aware and gave tacit approval to the movement. He later killed himself when implicated.

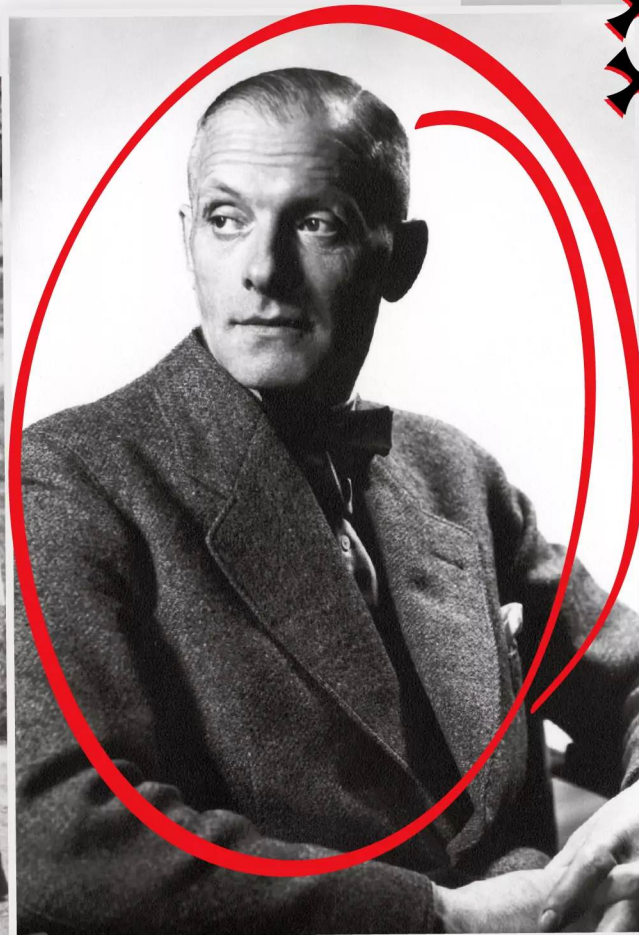
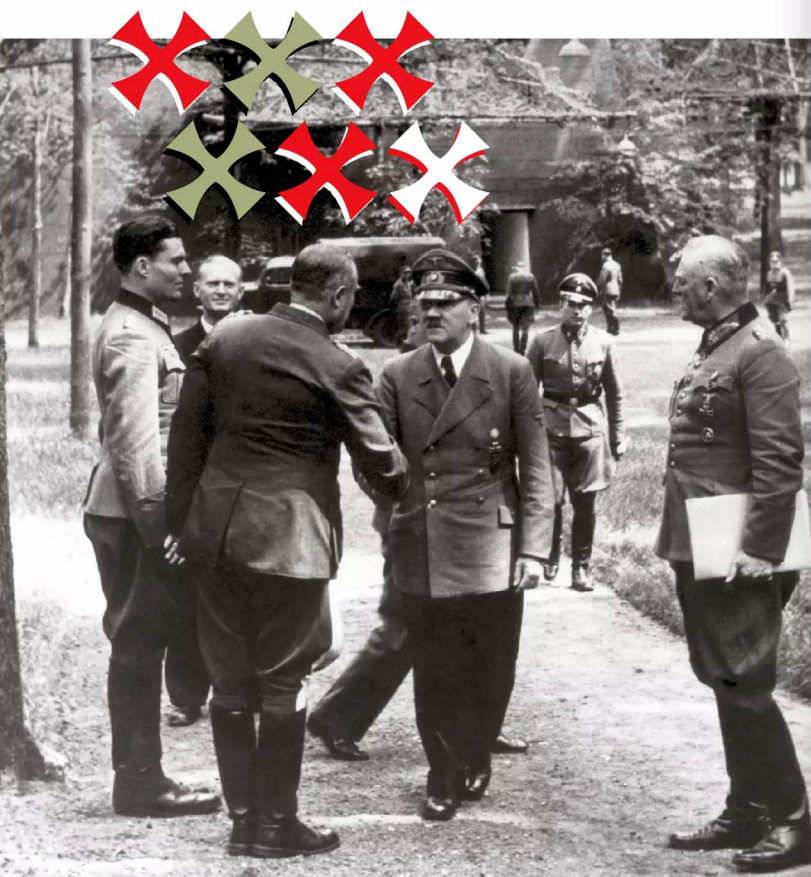
Tresckow, who rose to the post of Chief of Staff of the Second

**BELOW LEFT**  
Lieutenant Colonel  
Claus von Stauffenberg  
stands at far left near  
Hitler at Wolf's Lair five  
days before the 20 July  
1944 bombing

**BELOW** Major General  
Hans Oster rallied  
support against  
the invasion of  
Czechoslovakia with an  
eye to toppling Hitler and  
reinstating the monarchy

Army on the Eastern Front, led the conspirators, who became known as the Black Orchestra, in Operation Spark, the assassination of Hitler when an opportune time presented itself. By 1943, two years of military setbacks, including the disasters at Stalingrad and in North Africa, convinced the Black Orchestra that the time had come for the “spark” that would end Germany's national nightmare.

Several attempts were subsequently made on the Führer's life. On 14 March 1943, Tresckow managed to persuade another officer to carry a package aboard Hitler's plane for the return flight from a visit to a field headquarters in Smolensk, Russia. The officer was told that the package contained two bottles of brandy that were intended as a gift for a friend. Actually, it was a bomb that failed to detonate. Tresckow was stunned when he received word that the aircraft





landed safely in Berlin and despatched a co-conspirator to retrieve the package, narrowly avoiding discovery of the plot.

The conspirators were undeterred and resolved to strike again. This time, the effort led to the famed 20 July 1944 assassination attempt at Hitler's Wolf's Lair headquarters near Rastenburg in East Prussia.

The central figure of the July plot was Lieutenant Colonel Claus von Stauffenberg, a highly decorated combat veteran who had lost his left eye, right hand, and two fingers of his left hand, in an explosion in North Africa. After recovering from his wounds, Stauffenberg was appointed Chief of Staff

to General Friedrich Fromm, commander of the Home Army in Berlin. Stauffenberg was a regular attendee at Hitler's daily military briefings and agreed to carry a bomb, secreted in his personal briefcase, into the Wolf's Lair meeting on the fateful day.

The bomb was so powerful that its detonation was "certain" to kill everyone in the conference room, or so the conspirators believed. With Hitler dead, an existing plan called Operation Valkyrie would be initiated in Berlin. The leaders of the conspiracy would seize the reins of government as the Home Army took control in the streets and rounded up leaders of the SS or other organisations that were deemed loyal to the dead

“**Stauffenberg was a regular attendee at Hitler's daily military briefings and agreed to carry a bomb**”

Führer, decapitating any resistance. Across Germany and Nazi-occupied Europe, similar scenarios would play out in major cities and political districts.

Stauffenberg entered the briefing room on 20 July, placed his briefcase beneath

**RIGHT** The conference room where Count Stauffenberg's bomb exploded at Wolf's Lair was a shambles on 20 July 1944

# INSIDE THE Wolf's Lair

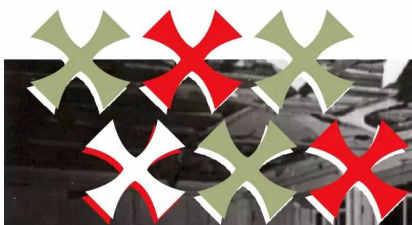
*Stauffenberg's briefcase bomb came inches away from killing Hitler, but others were caught in the blast*

- |   |  |   |
|---|--|---|
| 01 - <b>ADOLF HITLER</b>  | 09 - <b>WALTHER BÜHLE</b><br>Chief of the Army Staff of Wehrmacht High Command | 17 - <b>NICOLAUS VON BELOW</b><br>Luftwaffe Adjutant to Hitler                  |
| 02 - <b>ADOLF HEUSINGER</b><br>Chief of the Army General Staff        | 10 - <b>KARL-JESKO VON PUTTKAMER</b><br>Naval Adjutant to Hitler               | 18 - <b>HERMANN FEGELEIN</b><br>SS Group Leader                                 |
| 03 - <b>GÜNTHER KORTEN</b><br>Chief of the Luftwaffe General Staff    | 11 - <b>HEINRICH BERGER</b><br>Stenographer                                    | 19 - <b>HEINZ BUCHHOLZ</b><br>Stenographer                                      |
| 04 - <b>HEINZ BRANDT</b><br>Aide to General Heusinger                 | 12 - <b>HEINZ ABMANN</b><br>Staff Officer                                      | 20 - <b>HERBERT BÜCHS</b><br>Adjutant to Jodl                                   |
| 05 - <b>KARL BODENSCHATZ</b><br>Liaison Officer for Göring and Hitler | 13 - <b>ERNST JOHN VON FREYEND</b><br>Adjutant to Keitel                       | 21 - <b>FRANZ VON SONNLEITHNER</b><br>Foreign Ministry representative           |
| 06 - <b>HEINZ WAIZENEGGER</b><br>General Staff Officer for Jodl       | 14 - <b>WALTER SCHERFF</b><br>Military Historian                               | 22 - <b>WALTER WARLIMONT</b><br>Deputy Chief of Staff of Wehrmacht High Command |
| 07 - <b>RUDOLF SCHMUNDT</b><br>Chief Aide of the Wehrmacht            | 15 - <b>HANS-ERICH VON</b><br>Liaison Officer                                  | 23 - <b>ALFRED JODL</b><br>Chief of Staff of Wehrmacht High Command             |
| 08 - <b>HEINRICH BORGSMANN</b><br>Army Adjutant to Hitler             | 16 - <b>OTTO GÜNSCHE</b><br>SS Adjutant and Bodyguard to Hitler                | 24 - <b>WILHELM KEITEL</b><br>Chief of Wehrmacht High Command                   |

**KEY**  **KILLED**  **SERIOUSLY INJURED**  **SLIGHTLY INJURED**  **LOCATION OF BOMB**







the heavy oak table, and excused himself on the pretext of a telephone call. After he exited, another officer innocently moved the deadly bomb to the opposite side of a stout leg under the table and further away from the intended target. As Stauffenberg walked briskly away from the building, the blast appeared lethal, shattering the conference room. Bluffing his way past guards, he returned to Berlin expecting Operation Valkyrie to be underway, but was stunned to find that virtually nothing had been done as Olbricht and others awaited confirmation of Hitler's death. Precious time had slipped away, and their plot swiftly unravelled.

Major Otto Remer arrived at the Ministry of Propaganda to place Goebbels under arrest on the orders of the conspirators, believing Hitler to be dead. Instead, Goebbels informed the officer that Hitler was very much alive and allowed him to speak to the Führer over the telephone. Promoted to lieutenant colonel on the spot, Remer proceeded to suppress the rebellion.

Stauffenberg and several other leaders of the conspiracy were cornered, arrested, and summarily shot within hours. Tresckow chose to kill himself, clutching a hand grenade below his chin.

With the failure of the 20 July plot, Hitler would go on to lead the Third Reich for nine more disastrous months and then to die by his own hand - blaming the German people and not himself for the *Götterdämmerung* that had befallen them. ○



**LEFT** Hitler meeting with wounded bodyguards following the 20 July assassination attempt

**BELOW LEFT** The execution of the 20 July plotters in Bendlerblock, as depicted in a 1970 documentary

**BELOW RIGHT** A German Resistance Memorial now stands in the Bendlerblock, where the 20 July plotters were executed, with the street renamed after Claus von Stauffenberg





# CRUS LAW &

**C**riminality and lawlessness have historically gone hand in hand with major conflicts. Whether perpetrated by the combatants involved or by those on the sidelines, profiteering or exploiting the chaos of conflict to avoid accountability, it's often assumed to come with the territory. But what of the Crusades? After all, the Christian invaders and Muslim states considered this to be a holy war, full of religious significance and repercussions for both sides. As Steve Tibble's new book *Crusader Criminals: The Knights Who Went Rogue in the Holy Land* explores, the Crusades were not exempt from criminal activity and the reasons why tell us a lot about the darker sides of human nature. We were delighted to have the chance to discuss the topic with him.

***Do you think the amount of lawless behaviour during the Crusades was significantly higher than might have happened during European conflicts in this era?***

Yes, absolutely. The era of the Crusades, in which wars raged more or less continuously across the Middle East for almost 200 years, was different - and much worse. It was far more conducive to criminality than would have been

***Steve Tibble explains how even pious men could become thieves and murderers in the Holy Land***

Interview by Jonathan Gordon

normal in most European wars or times - and even that, of course, is a very low bar of comparison indeed.

The big issues that made the Crusades so different were three major interconnected factors - and they are not what you would expect. These problems all seem terribly modern to our eyes, but in fact just demonstrate how little things change when one looks at the macro factors propelling humanity. They were: climate change, mass migration, and demographics. Ironically, none of these were primarily related to religion.

Firstly, there was climate change. One hundred years of unusually poor weather on the western Eurasian steppes impoverished local communities and propelled waves of Turkic nomads into the Middle East in search of a better life, or, indeed, any life at all.



# CRUSADES LAW & ORDER

## EXPERT BIO



### STEVE TIBBLE

Steve Tibble is a research associate at Royal Holloway College, University of London and a leading expert in the history of the Crusades. His previous books include *Templars: The Knights*

*Who Made Britain* (Yale University Press, 2023), *The Crusader Armies* (Yale University Press, 2018) and *The Crusader Strategy* (Yale University Press, 2020).

Secondly, this initial mass migration had the knock-on effect of destabilising the local sedentary communities - and it is important to realise that this took place regardless of whether they were Christian or Muslim. The local sedentary societies fought back to try to fend off these nomads. From the European perspective we call this fight-back 'the Crusades', but Muslim sedentary societies such as the Fatimid empire in Egypt and the local Arab states all defended themselves in much the same way.

Thirdly, there was the longer term impact this had on demographics. The wars ran on for 200 years, and had the inevitable consequence of pulling in a huge stream of young men to act as mercenaries and soldiers. Men coming from all over Europe, as far away as the Atlantic Coast of Ireland, sub-Saharan

Africans, streams of nomadic warriors from the Silk Roads, as well as all the local Arabs, Armenians and Egyptians.

This was a perfect storm for criminality. Climate change produced mass migration. Mass migration produced unending war. And unending war created an enduring demographic tsunami.

Captain Renault, the Vichy police officer in *Casablanca*, famously refers to "rounding up the usual suspects". In the period of the Crusades, the 'usual suspects' of violent crime (young men, dislocated and under-employed) were there in enormous numbers, completely destabilising the societies they were ostensibly trying to protect. But the tragedy of the Crusades is that the criminals didn't need 'rounding up' - they had already rounded themselves up, in their hundreds of thousands, year after year.

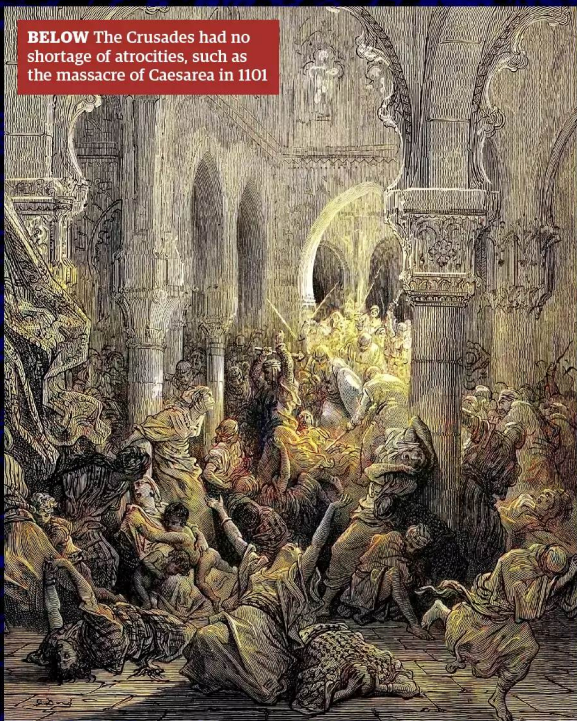
### ***What was the line between criminal and permissible behaviour in wartime for crusading armies?***

In principle, the lines were clear. But practice was extraordinarily disappointing, and the high levels of criminality in the area relate to the basic flaws in human nature that we still see whenever we pick up a newspaper.

In theory armies were disciplined, efficient and focused - they were ▶



**BELOW** The Crusades had no shortage of atrocities, such as the massacre of Caesarea in 1101



expected to buy food rather than steal it, to respect the civilian populations of allies and co-religionists, and so on. In reality, however, all sorts of unpleasant but predictable behaviour took place.

***Could you give us a brief rundown of the kinds of crimes that were being committed during this time?***

Human beings are sadly predictable and unimaginative creatures. The crimes we see in the Crusades are all too familiar, with the obvious exception of technology-driven crimes, such as computer-hacking - though, of course, the knights had their own, more brutal form of 'hacking'.

The demographic torrent that shaped the wars of the Crusades in the Middle East also saw a massive uptick in every kind of criminality. With this number of armed, socially disengaged and often under-employed young men in the same place, and at the same time, the inevitable happened.

Murder was an obvious area of criminality, and we find many instances of homicide. There were a very wide (and unlikely) range of participants, including monks as perpetrators as well as victims, senior members of the clergy, women and all of the main participating groups - crusaders, Turks, Arabs, sub-Saharan Africans and so on.

**“Fraud and theft were prevalent - there was far less to steal, but people were even more keen to steal it”**

But there was plenty of more mundane criminality as well. Fraud and theft were prevalent - there was far less to steal, but people were even more keen to steal it. Burglaries could often lead to murder. Houses were often so flimsy that it was quicker to go through the wall than to try to force the door open. Outlaws were everywhere. When you left your village, you took your life in your hands.

Piracy was rife, and so much so in fact, that it is hard to provide a clear

delineation between a naval captain, a privateer, a slave trader, or an innocent merchant in his ship. In reality, the main distinction was around *opportunity*. If a man had a boat and a chance to steal, he turned to piracy, murder and the acquisition of plunder - including, of course, slaves.

There were even gangsters. We know of organised crime, for instance, among the prisoners of war in Cairo, as captive crusaders gradually insinuated their way into local society. They used their contacts to gradually dominate much of the local market for alcohol, drugs and prostitutes. We often see the crusaders through the prism of Victorian literature such as Sir Walter Scott - but in practice the truth was something more akin to a cross between the Wild West and *The Godfather*.

***Was there an element of perpetrators feeling spiritually justified in their acts or simply distant enough geographically from those who might judge them?***

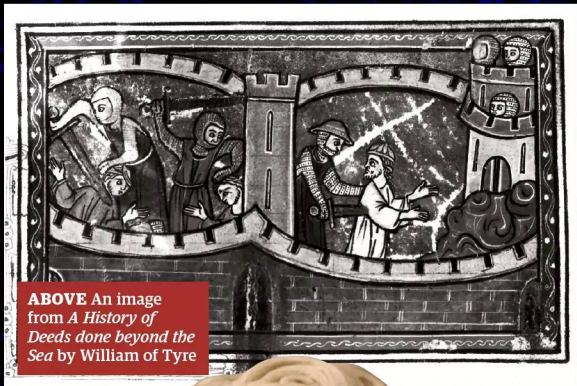
When I started writing the book I assumed that there would be a strong element of spiritual justification behind criminality. I imagined that men (and it usually was men rather than women) felt more comfortable robbing or murdering those with other spiritual beliefs. And of course that was sometimes the case.

But in practice, criminality was more about the instant and tangible rewards of crime, and the prospects of material gain, rather than anything more theologically based. We find Muslims robbing and murdering their co-religionists, and likewise among the Christian communities. Once again that criminality is based on human nature, rather than spirituality or superstition.

Geographical distance was also important, but it was more about social dislocation than the number of miles involved. Men became disinhibited when they were not closely tied to the societies they found themselves in.

***What did those looking to enrich themselves in the Holy Land believe they would find, and did it meet expectations?***  
The idea that money was a motivator for

**ABOVE** An image from *A History of Deeds done beyond the Sea* by William of Tyre



**LEFT** Leaders were not protected from potential attack, such as the murder of Conrad of Montferrat in 1192



**RIGHT** A pearl and enamel encrusted liturgical book, believed to have been looted during the Fourth Crusade

crusaders, or that crusading was some kind of 'get rich quick' scheme, has been widely discredited for almost 50 years now. Most crusaders came because they were conventionally pious - they wanted to defend the Christian Middle East and recover the holy places. You were far more likely to bankrupt yourself in the process of participating in a crusade than to enrich yourself. And much the same was true for their opponents.

But, and this is the crucial point, piety was not enough to stop criminality. Almost everyone, on every side, was a believer. And yet that did not sufficiently inhibit those who saw an opportunity to rob, steal or commit any number of different crimes.

## ***Was there any noticeable increase or decrease in criminal acts as the Crusades continued?***

It is hard to be definitive about such things. Even today, crime statistics are notoriously inaccurate and controversial. In the Middle Ages, however, they were almost entirely absent, so one must look both above and below any event-driven stream of statistics - *above*, in looking at the macro factors which massively increased the number of potentially violent young men in the region, and *below*, in looking to anecdotal evidence of criminality (of which there is a sad abundance).

I personally believe that levels of criminality were high and remained so throughout the period. But it's difficult to be much more precise than that.

## ***What justice, if any, could criminals in the crusader states expect to face?***

It is important to remember that medieval states were very simple and very poor. In most cases, they lacked even the most basic infrastructure with which to administer a measured approach to crime and punishment. There were few police officers, for instance, and very few prisons other than the occasional dungeon. Moreover, in an economy where many people had almost no access to money, there was very little scope for imposing fines on ordinary criminals.

So justice had to be binary. It was either dispensed with a very soft touch

indeed (for example, telling somebody to get out of town and not come back), or in a manner which was so brutal and visible (such as punishment by hanging or mutilation), that it would deter others from following your example.

On top of that, as the crusader states were so continually at war, and were frontier states beyond the edges of Europe, we find that their legal systems were often even more backwards than their equivalents in the West. Trial by combat, for instance, was increasingly rare in Europe but was a standard element of legal recourse in the Latin East. Men had to literally fight for justice.

Someone accused of murder would often have to face personal combat, such as a mounted joust if they were upmarket enough, or fighting on foot with sticks and shields, even to the death, if they were more ordinary folk. Even witnesses could be challenged to personal combat for saying what they believed they had seen.

Life was hard on the crusader frontiers and justice was similarly brutal.

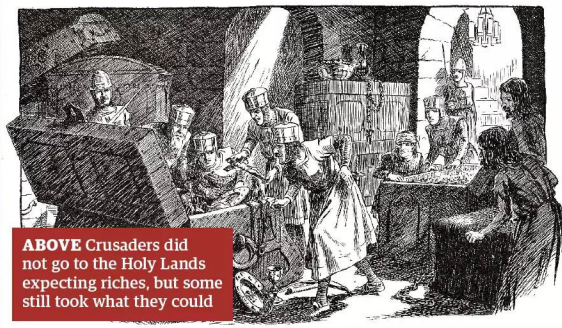
## ***What would you most like readers to take away from reading your new book?***

On a basic level I would very much like people to enjoy themselves with the book. These are cracking stories often shocking, often funny, which look at the antics of some extraordinarily larger-than-life characters.

More importantly, I would also like the reader to think about the macro issues that caused this extended wave of criminality and, rather than casting judgement on the activities of our ancestors, reflect a little about whether we would have done anything different or better.

Most importantly, given that crusader criminality in the broader sense was propelled by climate change and the consequences of uncontrolled mass migration, I would like the reader to think about how our societies are confronting much the same issues. The crusaders and their neighbours at least had the excuse that they were far too under-resourced to affect significant change or to control events.

We and our governments have no such excuses. ○



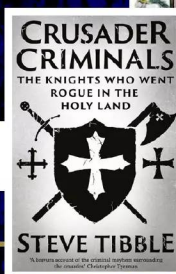
**ABOVE** Crusaders did not go to the Holy Lands expecting riches, but some still took what they could



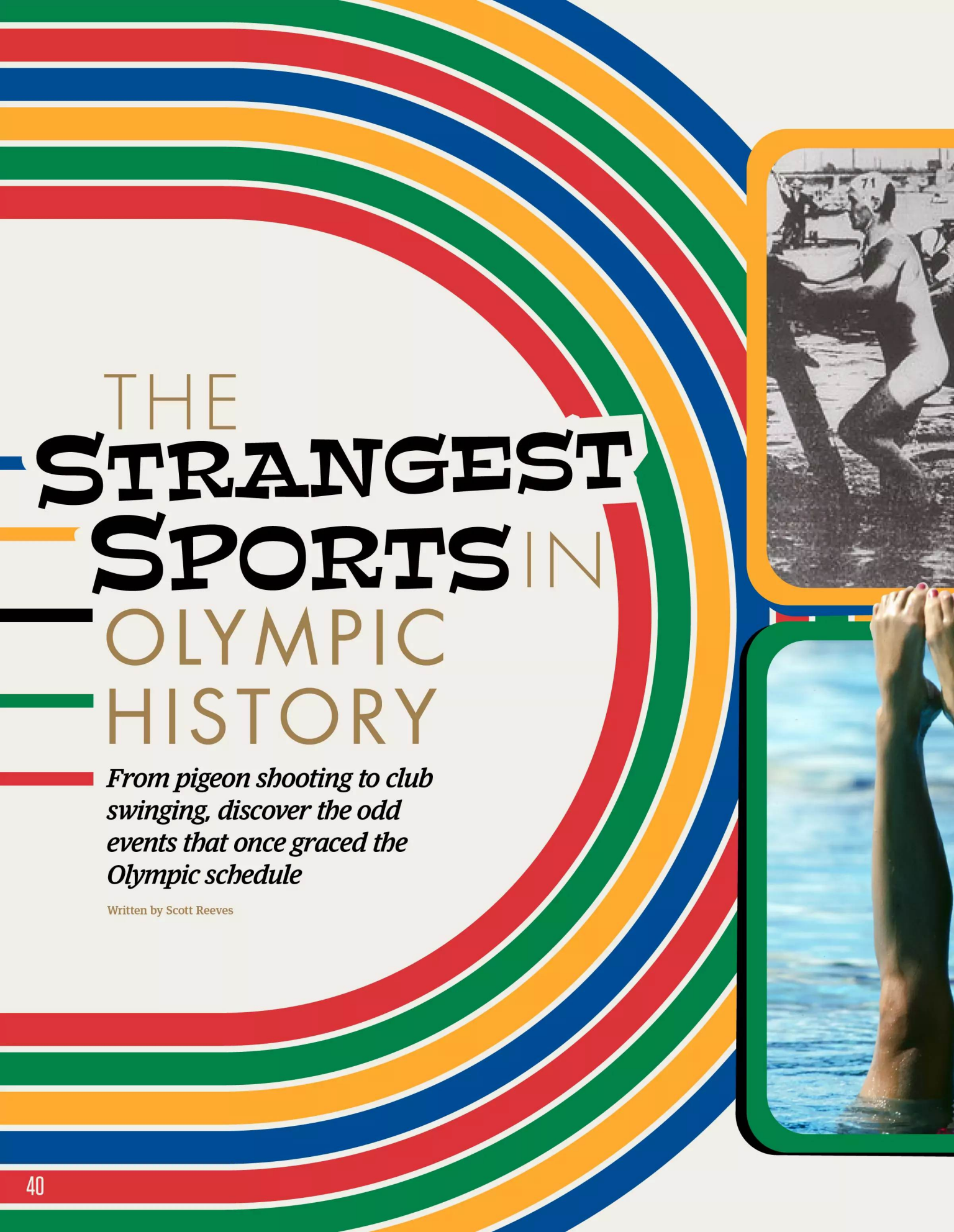
**ABOVE** A 14th-century illumination shows both the religious and violent elements of the Crusades

**Crusader Criminals:**  
The Knights Who Went Rogue in the Holy Land

BY STEVE TIBBLE IS AVAILABLE NOW  
FROM YALE UNIVERSITY PRESS







# THE **STRANGEST** **SPORTS** IN OLYMPIC HISTORY

*From pigeon shooting to club swinging, discover the odd events that once graced the Olympic schedule*

Written by Scott Reeves





## SWIMMING OBSTACLE RACE

1900

This sounds like great fun. Held on the River Seine alongside the other swimming events at the Paris Olympics, swimmers had to complete 200 metres while overcoming three sets of obstacles. First they climbed over a pole, then scrambled over a line of boats, then they had to swim under another row of boats.

12 swimmers took on the challenge. The top two finishers in each of the three four-man heats qualified, and the four fastest losers also progressed to make ten finalists. Most of those who qualified improved their times in the second run as they worked out the best way to tackle the obstacles. Frederick Lane from Australia was the winner; he took a different line from many of his fellow swimmers by clambering over the stern of the boat line after realising it was easier to clamber on the back. Lane's winning time of 2:38.4 was only 13 seconds slower than his gold-medal time in the non-obstacle 200-metre freestyle.

Surely this is one event primed to make a comeback - who doesn't want to see some of today's elite athletes plunging into the water as they mistime a leap on an inflatable obstacle course?

**LEFT** Frederick Lane broke several world records as well as winning the only obstacle race in Olympic history



Image source: wiki/Cargis Smith

## SOLO SYNCHRONISED SWIMMING

1984-1992

Solo synchronised swimming didn't make much of a splash when it first appeared in the Olympic programme at Los Angeles in 1984. It continued for three Olympiads despite detractors pointing out a fundamental problem: if synchronised swimming is a sport in which swimmers perform a coordinated routine, who exactly is a solo swimmer synchronising with? (The answer is that the swimmer's choreography was supposedly synchronised with the music to create a water dance.) Still, nobody could doubt a combination of strength, flexibility and endurance was required to succeed.

Only women were allowed to compete. Tracie Ruiz won on behalf of the United States in 1984, with Canada's Carolyn Waldo coming second; the two medallists swapped steps on the podium at Seoul in 1988. It got a bit messy in 1992. American Kristen Babb-Sprague was awarded first place ahead of Canadian Sylvie Fréchette, but an investigation into odd scoring in the final revealed that one judge had incorrectly awarded Fréchette a score of 8.7 rather than 9.7 on his computer. The Canadian appeal resulted in Fréchette's score being upgraded and both competitors were given a gold medal.

The solo sync was dropped in favour of an eight-person team event in 1996. Male athletes are now eligible to compete in the Olympic sport.

**LEFT** Tracie Ruiz practising in the McDonald's Olympic Swim Stadium at the 1984 Olympics



Image source: wiki/Bulgarian Archives State Agency

## ROPE CLIMBING

1896, 1900-08, 1924, 1932

We might think of weakling schoolchildren struggling to climb a rope with PE teachers shouting at the bottom, but rope climbing was once an Olympic sport. Presumably organisers could not agree on the event's worth since it was added and dropped from the schedules several times until finally departing in 1932.

At the first Olympic Games in 1896, the rope was 14 metres (46 feet) long and only two of five climbers reached the top. Judges chose the winner based on climbing style - competitors had to begin from a seated position and keep their legs horizontal and straight to ensure they climbed with their upper body only. In subsequent Olympics, competitors climbed between seven and ten metres (23 and 33 feet) and were ranked on how long it took them to reach the top - usually just a few seconds.

The event's high point came in 1924 when 70 gymnasts from nine different countries climbed 7.3 metres (24 feet) to the top. The mammoth entry was a result of the rope climb being included in the apparatus of the individual and team all-arounds. Bedrich Supcik of Czechoslovakia took home a gold medal as the fastest climber and the ten points he earned helped him to bronze in the individual all-around.

**ABOVE** The first Olympic rope climb was the highest and only two competitors made it to the top

All Images: © Getty Images unless stated



1908 open class motorboat winner Émile Thubron was born in County Durham but competed under a French flag because his boat was built there.



Image source: wikipedia.org/1908

## MOTOR-BOATING

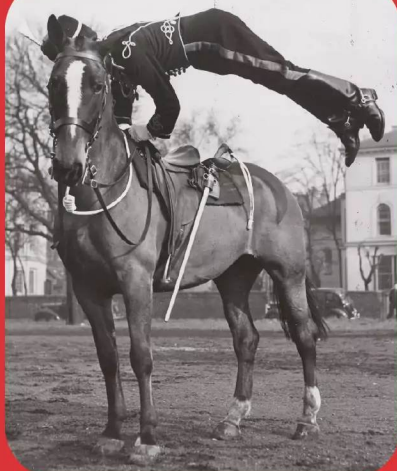
1908

The organisers did not think of the spectators when they came up with this one. Included in the Olympics once (and as a demonstration event at Paris in 1900), sailors had to race 40 nautical miles over a five-lap course in the sea off Southampton. Barely anyone could see the action and those that could were probably not impressed, with average speeds around 19 miles per hour.

Of the three races completed, two victories went to the crew of the same boat. Gyrinus, winner of the six-metre class and 60-foot class races, was designed by shipbuilder Sir John Isaac Thornycroft. His son, Thomas, was helmsman. More than 40 years later, at the ripe old age of 70, Thomas returned as an Olympic competitor with the British yachting team in Helsinki.

Gyrinus was successful primarily because it could survive the atrocious weather. It was the only boat to finish its two races. The open class also had only one finisher despite being abandoned and restarted the next day. Faced with escalating gales as well as some seasick sailors, the remaining six races were eventually cancelled. Olympic motorboating sank into the depths of history and it wasn't much missed.

**ABOVE** Wolseley-Siddeley, crewed by the fabulously wealthy duke of Westminster, failed to finish the open class race after running aground in bad weather



## EQUESTRIAN VAULTING

1920

Like horse riding? Like gymnastics? Why not combine the two? That's exactly what happened in the 1920 Olympics at Antwerp.

All of the competitors for equestrian vaulting were army officers, and each had to take on four different manoeuvres. First they had to jump onto the horse from a standing position before jumping back off, attempting from both sides. The second was a jump clear over the horse's back. The third manoeuvre was a jump over the horse with a salto (an aerial forward roll), and last was to perform gymnastics while the horse was walking.

The Belgian representatives did well in front of their home crowd at the Olympisch Stadion. Daniel Bouckaert took gold with 30.5 points, Louis Finet earned bronze; they were separated by a Frenchman known only by his surname, Field. The other five competitors from Sweden were no match for their rivals and finished bottom of the rankings but, since only three countries bothered to send entrants, they still got to go home with bronze in the team competition.

Vaulting continues as an equestrian sport, although it now features more choreographed routines with elements of dance incorporated.

**ABOVE** Horse vaulting, pictured here in 1952, had long been associated with the military

A crash between the Soviet and German teams in the tandem sprint in 1956 saw three of the four cyclists sent to hospital and left both teams sharing last place.



Journalist Edgar Aaybe was an emergency replacement for an ill member of the combined Sweden/Denmark tug of war team in 1900 – he went on to win.





## CYCLING TANDEM SPRINT

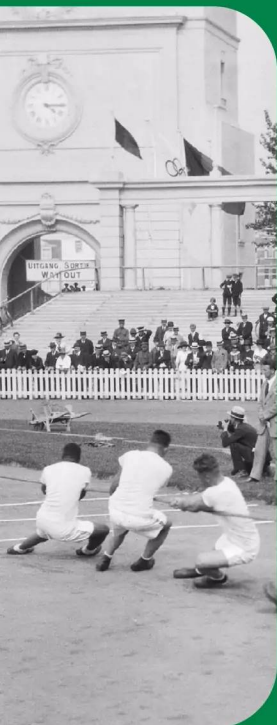
1908, 1920-72

Once a staple of the Olympic cycling programme, the 2,000-metre tandem saw two pairs on the track at the same time in elimination races until the last two standing (or should that be cycling?) took on each other in the gold-medal race. Tandem sprints were high-speed affairs since two cyclists pedalling hard at the same time generate speeds far greater than a single rider can.

Perhaps the tandem's greatest Olympic moment was the victory of an Australian pair, Lionel Cox and Russell Mockridge, who decided to team up at Helsinki in 1952 despite never having ridden together. Using a tandem borrowed from the British team, Cox and Mockridge survived an early scare in their first heat after they eased up on the final straight, allowing their opponents to close the gap and force a photo finish. By the time the final came around, Cox and Mockridge were a well-oiled machine and defeated the South African pair to take a surprise gold.

France and Italy produced the most winning teams with three gold medals each, while the British team was often unlucky with four silvers. Tandem cycling lives on in the Paralympics, where sighted pilots ride with blind or visually impaired competitors.

**LEFT** The tandem sprint produced some close racing but also some spectacular crashes



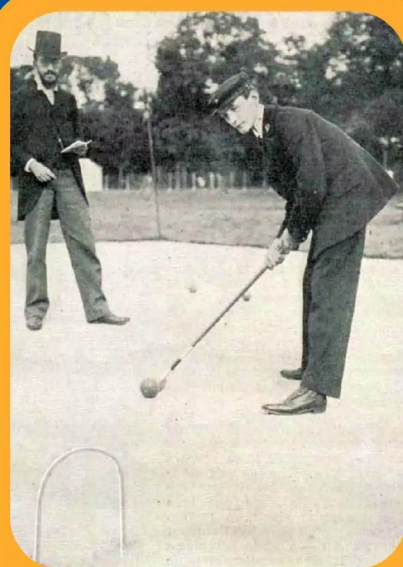
## TUG OF WAR

1900-20

One of the few sports where being overweight is a distinct advantage, tug of war saw teams of five, six or eight pulling a rope with an opposing team doing exactly the same at the other end. Six feet was the threshold for victory; a time limit ensured that stalemates could be decided before the pullers were exhausted. Many athletes needed to save their bodies to compete in other events like hammer throwing and rugby.

The first winners were a combined team of three Danes and three Swedes, but some Olympiads were less international affairs. In 1904, the top four all hailed from the United States, while in 1908 all three medals went to teams from Britain. The 1908 Games saw the tug of war embroiled in controversy when the Liverpool Police Team appeared wearing enormous, weighted boots. The coppers claimed they were merely wearing their regulation police boots and were allowed to compete, but they still failed to defeat their compatriots from the City of London Police Team in the gold-medal tug. Tug of war was dropped after the 1920 Games and burly strongmen found themselves relegated to competing in village fetes and church picnics instead.

**LEFT** Tug of war was dropped from the Olympics after 1920 in a purge that saw 33 events axed



## CROQUET

1900

The mallet-and-ball sport associated with English country gardens actually only appeared in an Olympics across the Channel, at Paris in 1900, and all the competitors were French. It was not a raging success. Gaston Aumoitte and Georges Johnin turned up for the doubles competition to discover that they were the only pair and walked away with the easiest gold medal in Olympic history. Quite what the single spectator who purchased a ticket thought is unknown. His 570-mile journey from Nice was a wasted one.

The following week, ten players turned up for the singles competitions. They included three women, marking the first time that women took part in an Olympic event. Doubles winner Gaston Aumoitte finished first in the singles one-ball, while Chrétien Waydelich took the gold in the two-ball.

Croquet was such a flop that even the official Olympic report described it as a sport with "hardly any pretensions to athleticism", but that did not stop the organisers including roque four years later in St Louis. The new game was a hard-surface version of croquet with a barrier around the playing surface to allow billiard-style rebounds. Just like in 1900, it was an easy way to inflate the host's medal count since only American players took part.

**ABOVE** All three female competitors were eliminated in the singles first rounds, leaving men to play for the title





Image source: wikipedia/Batu JTBF

## LIVE PIGEON SHOOTING

1900

Using clay targets for shooting was still a relatively new idea at the turn of the 20th century, so when the organisers of the 1900 Paris Exposition decided to include an event where shooters tried to hit flying targets, they went old school and actually used live pigeons.

The object was simple: hit as many birds as possible. Competitors had to pay to enter one of two events, the 20-franc Centenary Grand Prix or 200-franc Exposition Grand Prix, and battled to win a cash prize. Miss two birds and they were out. It was a profitable few days for Australian Donald Mackintosh, who triumphed in the Centenary and finished joint third in the Exposition, especially since the top four agreed to share the prize fund equally in the more expensive event.

Nearly 300 birds were killed and the shooting field resembled a feathery bloodbath by the end, an unfortunate look considering that animal rights campaigns were beginning to gain support. The only event in which animals were deliberately harmed did not feature in any subsequent Games and Olympic historians quietly dropped live pigeon shooting from the official medal records.

**ABOVE** The Paris Exposition ran alongside the Olympic Games in 1900, leading to some confusion as to which competitors were Olympians and which were not

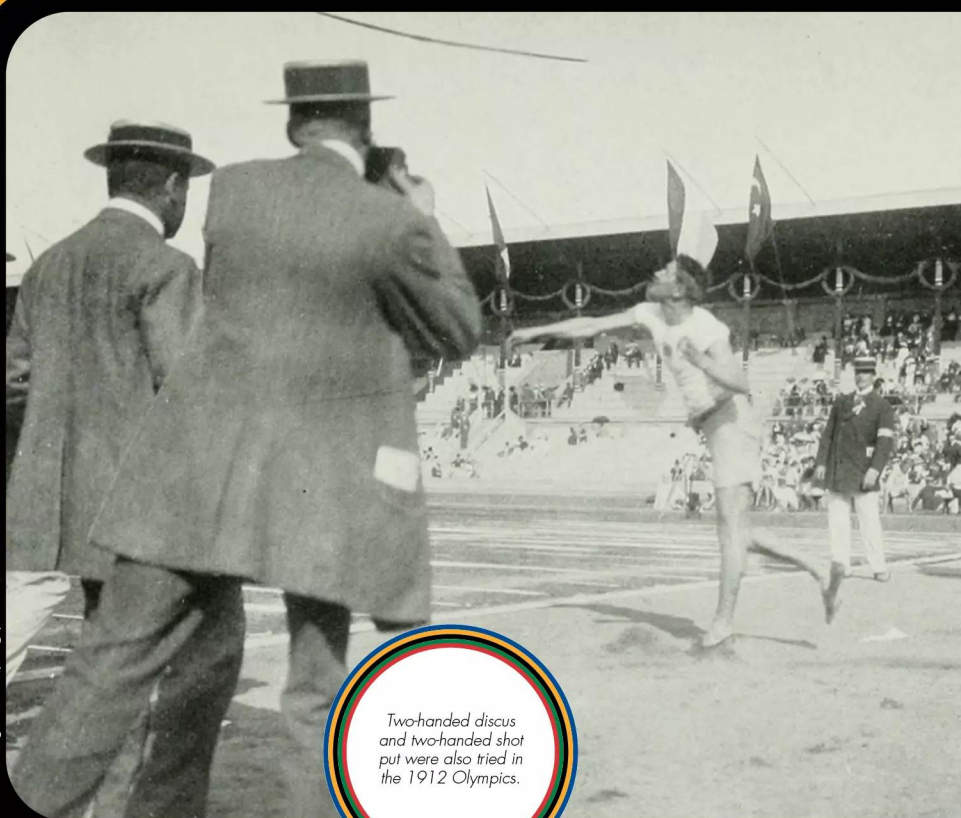


Image source: wikipedia/DocDoma-w

Two-handed discus and two-handed shot put were also tried in the 1912 Olympics.

Demonstration sports over the years have included aeronautic gliding (1936), Australian rules football (1956) and water skiing (1972).



Image source: wikipedia/Morrison



## TWO-HANDED JAVELIN

1912

Throwing the javelin sounds pretty simple, right? It must not have been complicated enough for the Olympic organisers because they tried to liven up the event in its early years. First they tried the freestyle javelin in 1908, allowing athletes to hold the javelin any way they wanted. That idea fell apart when Eric Lemming used a conventional hold anyway when he won gold.

Four years later, the Helsinki organisers tried a two-handed competition. Rather than flinging the javelin with both hands at once, athletes had three attempts with right hand and three attempts with left hand. Presumably the judges stood well back when the athletes threw with their weaker arm. The best distances with each hand were added together to give a cumulative score. The top three were supposed to take three more throws with each hand, but the Finnish throwers who made the final decided to let the results stand as they were.

Julius Saaristo won with a combined distance of 109.42 metres, a mark not that much farther than the current single-throw world record of 98.48. His right-handed 61.00 metres would have won the conventional javelin gold, although on that day he only managed 58.66 to take silver.

**LEFT** Eric Lemming throws a javelin in the 1912 Summer Olympics



## ROLLER HOCKEY

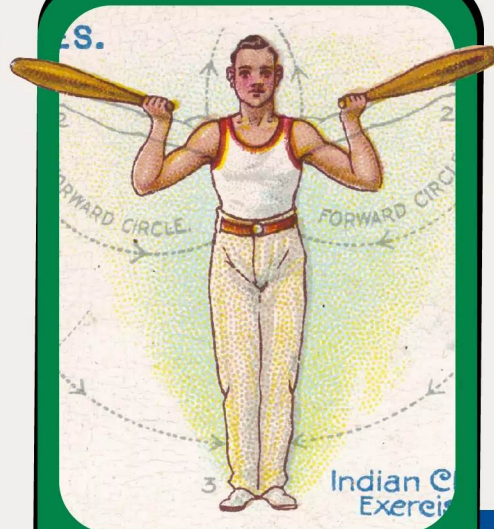
1992

Roller hockey might not fully deserve its place on this list. It was not an official Olympic sport at Barcelona in 1992 but a demonstration sport, designed to raise awareness of a sport popular in the host country. Nevertheless, it was a great fan favourite. Five-man teams played on a wooden rink while wearing roller skates, and the rules were similar to ice hockey although far less violent than its frozen equivalent.

12 teams were split into two groups in a round-robin format. Poor Japan travelled from the other side of the world only to lose all five games with a cumulative score of 95-4. The reigning world champions, Portugal, only managed to make it to the bronze-medal match, where they were beaten by Italy. In the final, hosts Spain – where Catalonia is a hotbed of roller hockey – had to settle for silver after defeat by Argentina.

Roller hockey was one of the last demonstration sports; their inclusion stopped after 1992 as the Olympics grew ever larger and more difficult to organise. Perhaps roller hockey will one day return as an official event. They could even invite fans on the rink at the end of the match for an almighty Seventies-style roller disco.

**LEFT** While no longer an Olympic sport, roller hockey is still played around the world



## CLUB SWINGING

1904, 1932

Americans must really like swinging clubs. This odd gymnastic event appeared in only two Olympics, both in the States – St Louis in 1904 and Los Angeles in 1932 – and both times the podium was an all-American affair.

Competitors whirled two bowling-pin-shaped clubs around their head and body but, unlike juggling, the clubs did not leave the hands. The complicated, choreographed routines were a precursor to modern-day rhythmic gymnastics and judges rewarded technique, speed and stamina.

The first winner was Edward Hennig, who left St Louis with two gold medals after finishing top in the horizontal bar too. After a 28-year gap, the 1932 Games reintroduced club swinging under a new name, Indian clubs. Competing at the height of the Great Depression, unemployed gymnast George Roth recalled sneaking food out of the Olympic Village for his family in East Hollywood. After winning the Indian clubs gold medal, Roth walked out of the Olympic Stadium and hitchhiked home.

The hefty wooden clubs required competitors to have good arm and upper body strength. Perhaps club swinging will be the next fitness fad in exercise classes and gyms around the world. ○

**ABOVE** Indian clubs are still used for training by wrestlers in Iran, where they are known as meels





# QUEER VICTORIANS

Despite the harsh laws and stricter punishments,  
the Victorian era has a rich queer history

Written by Callum McKelvie



**V**ictorian Britain was not a safe time in which to be queer. Until 1861 intercourse between two males was punishable by death and from 1885, the Labouchere Amendment decreed that any sexual act between men would result in a two-year prison sentence. This is to say nothing of the laws and attitudes affecting other queer persons. Yet this does not mean that queer people were driven into hiding and a study of LGBTQ+ Victorians reveals stories of an overwhelming desire to be true to oneself, in the face of prejudice.

## An important note regarding queer history

Of course, as ever when discussing queer history, the age-old warning must be repeated; it is impossible to know how or if any of the individuals chronicled here would have responded to modern terminology. "It's important not to assume that people think and feel the same as we do," explains Matthew Cook, Queer History expert and Professor of History at the University of Oxford. "So we have to think closely about the ways in which people might have understood their desires and relationships. Not only was the word gay not around but the whole notion of a very distinct idea in opposition to a straight identity wasn't either. You might be more likely to consider someone's class than if they were gay or straight." Nonetheless, these stories are still important parts of queer history as they form part of the ongoing journey towards queer liberation.

## Molly houses – the first gay bars?

Since the Buggery Act of 1533, 'sodomy' had been punished under English law by execution. Despite this, by the end of the Georgian era, London had become the home of a large underground queer community. At the centre of this were the so-called 'molly houses' that began in the 18th century and continued to operate well into the Victorian era. There were supposedly 30 molly houses in operation throughout the 18th century which, due to London's then relatively small population, historian Rictor Norton describes as "a bit like having 200 gay clubs in the 1970s."

These illicit establishments served as a place for queer men to meet and have previously been seen as precursors to our modern gay bars. "We've tended to see molly houses as proto gay bars," says Cook, "but there's also an interesting way of thinking about them in terms of gender. The people that were going to the molly houses were cross-dressing and reenacting marriage and birthing rituals etc. That doesn't feel much like a contemporary gay bar."

"By the end of the Georgian era, London had become the home of a large underground queer community"

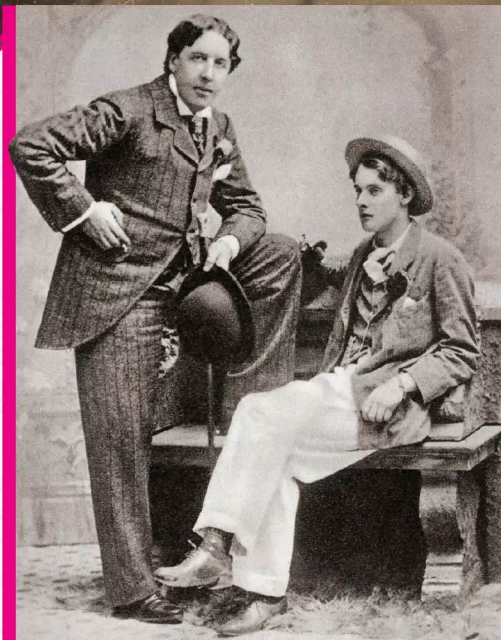
There are numerous stories concerning the subversion of gender in these establishments. The British Newspaper Archive quotes an early 18th-century work by Ned Ward that examines the various contemporary 'clubs' in London, stating that in the Mollies' Club "men referred to each other as sisters and used the female pronoun." It goes on to say that "they created their own kinships and families networks." Rictor Norton suggests those who attended were primarily working class and took on names such as: "Primrose Mary (a butcher), Dip-Candle Mary (a candle merchant) and his boyfriend Aunt May (an upholsterer), Tub Nan, Old Fish ▶



**ABOVE** John Collet's 1780 *A Morning Frolic*, depicting cross-dressing

**LEFT** Queen Victoria's grandmother, Princess Charlotte had shown compassion to the Ladies of Llangollen





**ABOVE** Oscar Wilde with his lover Lord Alfred Douglas, their relationship would result in Wilde's sentencing for gross indecency

**ABOVE RIGHT** Simeon Solomon's 1864 *Sappho and Erinna in a Garden at Mytilene*, one of a number of works that helps dispel the notion that the Victorians were unaware of lesbianism

**BELOW RIGHT** Henry Labouchere, who was responsible for making all acts of supposed 'gross indecency' a criminal offence



Hannah, Susan Guzzle, Aunt England (a soap boiler), and the Duchess of Camomile."

The playing with gender that took place at molly houses has caused historians to rethink their place in queer history. "Historians have increasingly thought about them in terms of gender transitivity as well as sexuality and desire," Cook explains. "I think we could probably talk about molly houses as places where some people who really felt that their gender didn't align with the one they were born with may have gone to explore

"Labouchere suggested that an amendment be added that would criminalise 'any act of gross indecency' by one male person with another"

this. There were probably people in this category, but there were probably others who thought it was just good fun."

Eventually molly houses faded away, but did the culture they permeated fade with them? "There's evidence of something very similar to molly house subcultures extending into the 1860s, 1870s and even early 1880s with drag balls in Manchester and London," Cook tells us. "Though these were slightly different in that they didn't cross over into being brothels in quite the same way. But certainly cross-dressing as part of queer sociability continued to be part of queer social life across the late 19th and 20th century as well."

### James and John – the last two men executed for sodomy

A particularly dark day in British queer history occurred on 27 November 1835 when James Pratt and John Smith became the last men to be executed for sodomy in England. The pair had been arrested in August following the complaint of a neighbour who had been spying on them through the keyhole of a boarding house. Their execution was treated as a public spectacle and crowds were said to have gathered to hiss at the pair as they were led to the scaffold.

Although the death penalty for homosexuality would remain in place for another 26 years, no further executions took place

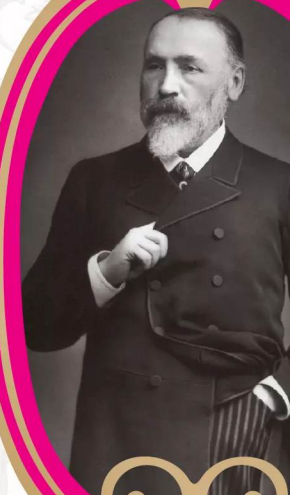
during this time. Although many were sentenced to death, the convicted were reprieved and instead faced punishments varying from 21 years in a penal colony to one year of confinement. In 1861, the Offences Against The Person Act no longer made sodomy a crime punishable by death but instead introduced a minimum prison sentence of ten years. While this could be seen as an exceedingly small step in the right direction, within a few decades a law would be introduced that would further criminalise gay men in Britain.

### 'Gross indecency' – the Labouchere Amendment

Late in the evening on 6 August 1885, a small number of MPs sat in the House of Commons, debating the Criminal Law Amendment Bill. The intention of this bill was to protect young girls from sexual exploitation by raising the age of consent from 13 to 16. However, at the last minute a stocky bearded gentleman suggested an addition to the bill. The speaker was Henry Labouchere, the wealthy proprietor of the journal *Truth*, a theatre owner and a member of the Radical party.

Labouchere suggested that an amendment be added that would criminalise 'any act of gross indecency' by one male person with another. Despite the Amendments' lack of relevance to the act, the Speaker accepted Labouchere's request, but made his own addition. Instead of Labouchere's suggestion that anyone charged under such a law be subjected to one-year imprisonment with hard labour, the speaker extended this to two.

Essentially, while previous laws had only criminalised acts of 'sodomy', the Labouchere Amendment went further. Now, any perceived act of 'gross indecency' (from explicit sexual activity to kissing) was to be criminalised and, if caught, could result in a minimum prison sentence of two years - possibly ▶





## QUEER GOTHIC

*Brush away the cobwebs and peer into the shadows of this subversive literary subgenre*

### INTERVIEWEE



DR ARDEL HAEFELE-THOMAS

The Victorian era saw new developments in Gothic works of literature and the creation of icons of horror, such as the vampire Count Dracula. But at the centre of this were queer themes and creators. We spoke to Dr Ardel Haeefe-Thomas, the author of numerous works about queer Gothic, who helped us learn more about this subversive genre.

*How essential is the Victorian period to the development of Gothic literature?*

There's a distinct shift in the style of the Gothic novels of the 18th century to those of the 19th century. 18th-century Gothic is characterised by weird plots with explanations that are more physical or metaphysical - works such as Horace Walpole's *The Castle of Otranto* or Ann Radcliffe's *The Mysteries of Udolpho*. In the 19th century, the Gothic became much more in-depth and psychologically nuanced. By the end of the century, Gothic began to absorb sexology, psychoanalysis, theories of evolution

and devolution and all sorts of new theories and ideas.

*What is 'queer Gothic'?*

What also happened in the 19th century is that various authors began to use the Gothic as a fantastic tool to explore the issues of the day. The Gothic itself, as a genre, was not respected. It wasn't, for example, the realist novel; it wasn't seen as great literature or high literature. But what you could do in Gothic, because it's not going to be taken as seriously, was be more subversive and more explorative of social and cultural issues of the time. This includes examinations of sexuality and gender that subverted the Victorian views on families and relationships.

*Obviously we need to be wary when placing contemporary labels on historical figures, but who are some Gothic authors who might be considered queer themselves?*

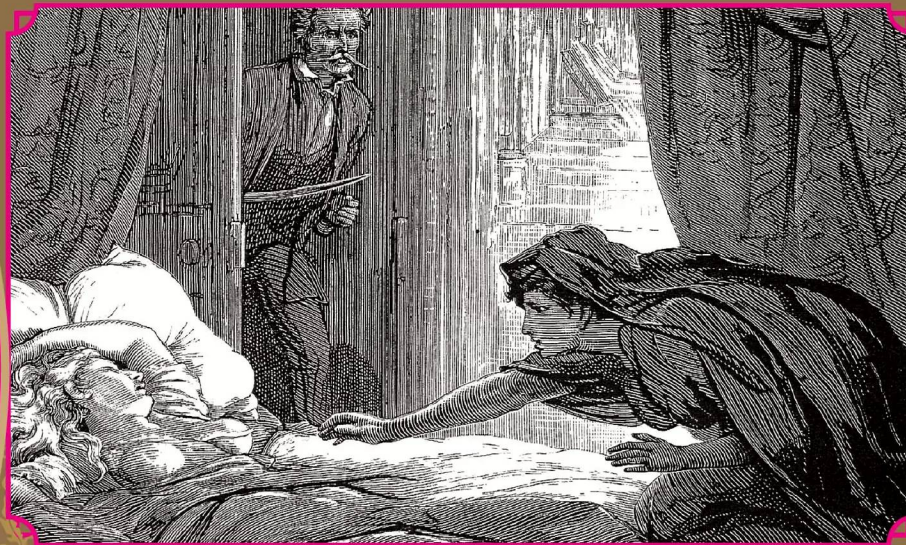
Absolutely, as historians we do need to be careful, but in certain cases we

have lots of evidence. Oscar Wilde for example, who authored *The Picture of Dorian Gray*, yes he was married and had children, but it's well documented he was likely gay and had sexual relations with men. The words queer and trans are both expansive enough that sometimes we can use them to ask "did they operate within a heteronormative structure?", and if they didn't then we could place them under the queer umbrella. So somebody like Vernon Lee, who was assigned female at birth, gave up the birth name of Violet Paget and embraced masculinity. Shortly after Wilde was imprisoned, Lee wrote one of their most decadent and queer pieces called *Prince Alberic and the Snake Lady*, about a forbidden romance and very much in response to what had happened to Wilde.

*What are some good examples of queer Gothic works?*

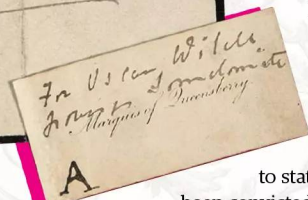
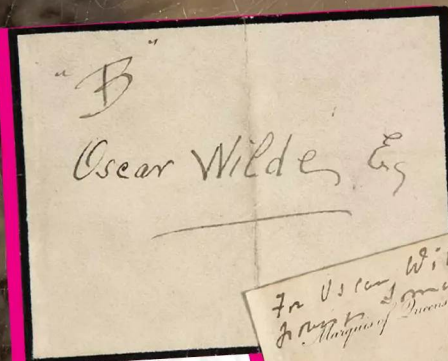
Count Eric Stenbock was part of the decadent movement and utilised the Gothic to explore certain issues. He wrote a short story called *The Other Side: A Breton Legend* and it's ultimately a werewolf tale. But the thing is that when you start to read it, it's barely coded. It's about a little boy who is not like other boys. It's very smart. Even now, when I'm teaching queer Gothic, students who think that other works are a little subtle, don't have that problem with Stenbock. Sheridan le Fanu is another case where we are unsure whether he was queer or not, but in 1872, he wrote the novella *Carmilla*, a vampire story which Bram Stoker said inspired *Dracula*. This is another one that I give to my contemporary students and there's no question as to its queer subtext. You've got this beautiful woman vampire biting young women on the breastplate. In the United States in the 1950s there was an underground lesbian magazine called *The Ladder*, and in their list of the top 50 reads for lesbians they included Le Fanu's *Carmilla*.

*"In the 19th century, the Gothic became much more in-depth and psychologically nuanced"*



**BELOW** Sheridan Le Fanu's novel *Carmilla* centres on a female vampire that preys upon young women





**ABOVE** The calling card left for Wilde by Queensberry, which read "For Oscar Wilde, posing as a sodomite"

**OPPOSITE TOP** An illustration of the Oscar Wilde trial in the *Police News*

**OPPOSITE BOTTOM** Prince Albert Victor, who was rumoured to be involved in the Cleveland Street Scandal

with hard labour. From 1885 onwards 49,000 men were sentenced under the act.

But LGBTQ+ campaigner Peter Tatchell states that "many more men were convicted under other homophobic laws," going on to state that "up to 100,000 may have been convicted in total." Despite the Sexual

Offences Act of 1967, gross indecency convictions continued until the end of the 20th century. The Sexual Offences Act only decriminalised sexual acts between consenting men aged 21 and older, as long as it took place in the home. Other crimes such as 'procuring' would remain illegal.

### Queen Victoria and the lesbians

Eagle-eyed readers may have noticed that all laws mentioned up until now only refer to intercourse between males. This is because sexual activity between women was not explicitly criminalised. A popular legend claims that the 1885 Labouchere Amendment originally intended to outlaw acts of perceived 'gross indecency' between women as well as men. However, Queen Victoria purportedly demanded any references to such activities between women be purged from the bill. The reasoning? She couldn't fathom that lesbians existed.

While it's certainly an amusing story, according to Caroline Derry, writing for the Open University, it is simply not true. It's highly unlikely that Victoria would not have been aware of lesbianism. Queen Charlotte - Victoria's grandmother - had campaigned for her husband King George III to provide financial security for Eleanor Butler and Sarah Ponsonby, commonly known as the Ladies of Llangollen, a couple who lived together in Wales until the mid-19th century.

Furthermore, there was a wider cultural awareness. Contemporary paintings, such as Simeon Solomon's 1864 work *Sappho and Erinna in a Garden at Mytilene*, explored the Victorian's interest in classical culture, much of which contained queer overtones. Solomon's work might have been considered explicit, but it nonetheless proves that there was a general awareness of lesbian romance. It's important to note though that despite not being legally persecuted in the same way, lesbian

relationships were no more acceptable to the Victorians than sexual relations between men.

### The trials of Oscar Wilde

Many men were charged under the Labouchere Amendment, but perhaps the most high-profile victim was sentenced just ten years after the law's introduction. By 1895, Oscar Wilde was one of Britain's most noted personalities. The Irish poet, playwright and author of only one novel - *The Picture of Dorian Gray* - was best known for a string of successful theatrical comedies that poked fun at contemporary high society. That same year had witnessed the premiere performance of *The Importance of Being Earnest*, arguably the most famous of these.

In between the composition of these two major works, Wilde had met Lord Alfred Douglas. Wilde appears to have been immediately infatuated with the handsome 22-year-old youth, inviting Douglas on trips and showering him with gifts. Douglas's father, John Sholto Douglas but better known as the Marquess of Queensberry, was less than pleased with their relationship.

Queensberry demanded that his son cease his association with Wilde, writing to him in 1894: "With my own eyes I saw you in the most loathsome and disgusting relationship, as expressed by your manner and expression." Queensberry continued to hound the pair until on 18 February 1895 he left a handwritten note at Wilde's club which read: "For Oscar Wilde, posing as a sodomite." Wilde chose to deal with the Queensberry problem once and for all and sued his lover's father for libel. The defence fought the

"However, the scandal also reveals the huge void between the experience of working-class gay men and those from the upper classes"

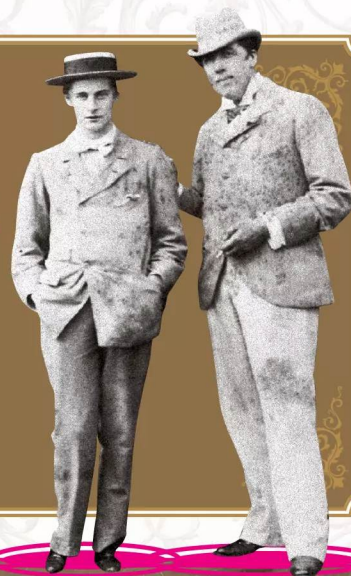
case on the insistence that Queensberry could not possibly be guilty as the offending comment was in fact true. With every aspect of his personal life brutally cross-examined, Wilde forbade the young Douglas from taking the stand and withdrew the case.

On 5 April Wilde was arrested for gross indecency. The subsequent trial caused something of a public scandal as several

## THE BLACKMAILER'S CHARTER

*The Labouchere Amendment gave criminals a free hand to extort gay men who were forced to pay up or face a prison sentence*

Over time the Labouchere Amendment slowly became known by another name - the Blackmailer's Charter. Criminals began to realise that money could be made from exploiting gay men, obtaining evidence of their crimes and using this to extort money. According to Rictor Norton, crimes of this nature had occurred during the Georgian era. Edward Walpole, the brother of Horace Walpole, the author of the 1764 Gothic novel *The Castle of Otranto*, was the victim of a gang of blackmailers and when he refused to meet their demands, they went public with their information and he was indicted though the charge was dropped. Walpole may not have been LGBTQ+, the gang simply stating this as part of the scam. Oscar Wilde was also the victim of extortion, though not by any organised gang. Alfred Douglas once lent a suit of clothes to friend Alfred Wood, which had a number of intimate letters from Wilde in the pocket. Wood then blackmailed Wilde, who paid the sum rather than have the letters go public.





# THE WILDE-V-QUEENSBERRY CASE AND HOW IT ENDED



sex workers who were reputed to have been intimate with Wilde gave evidence. Intimate letters between Douglas and Wilde were also examined though the jury was unable to reach a verdict. After a second trial Wilde was found guilty and sentenced to two years hard labour. Following his release he would go into self-imposed exile in France until his death three years later in 1900.

## The Cleveland Street Scandal

Despite the law, gay clubs continued to operate throughout the 19th century and were occasionally the subject of scandal. In 1889, 'The Cleveland Street Scandal' involved what New Zealand newspaper the *Lyttelton Times* described as "Dukes, the sons of Dukes, Peers, Hebrew financiers, many honourable persons, and several officers of the Imperial Army." The details of the scandal were quickly suppressed, but it appears that a male brothel had been in operation. Managed by Charles Hammond, he recruited telegraph messenger boys from the Post Office and paid them to have sex with members of the upper classes who visited the club.

A vast cover-up was undertaken, with Ernest Parke, a newspaper editor, even being successfully sued for libel by Henry James FitzRoy, the Earl of Euston. Hammond was able to escape to the United States and, according to author CA Asbrey, it was the prime minister himself, Lord Salisbury, who suggested that Hammond should not be extradited. The reason for the cover-up is due to the elite social standing of those involved. Although never officially linked to the scandal, rumours suggested that one of the frequent visitors to the brothel was Prince Albert Victor, second-in-line to the British throne.

The Cleveland Street Scandal helped perpetuate the notion that homosexuality was a crime predominantly committed by the upper-classes, who then 'perverted' the working class. However, the scandal also reveals the huge void between the experience of working-class gay men and those from the upper classes. Whereas working-class men were often given harsh jail sentences, the government was happy to turn a blind eye, or even help them escape, when the same 'offences' were committed by the elites.

## An age of repression

The Victorian era can often be romanticised. We picture Sherlock Holmes, foggy streets and Queen Victoria. However, it was also an era of repression. The British Empire swept across the globe, causing untold damage in its wake. Despite having a female monarch, women were still denied the right to vote. The same is true for the prejudice faced by queer people. While homosexual acts between men were no longer punished by the death penalty, the Labouchere Amendment of 1885 would result in countless arrests before its eventual repeal. Lesbianism, while not criminalised, was socially ostracised and unacceptable, any accounts of lesbian relationships going unrecorded. ○







# THE CU



*From poverty to politics,  
how Eva Perón, the formidable  
First Lady, became the beloved  
people's princess of Argentina*

Written by Emily Staniforth

# LT OF EVITA

**T**here are few women from the mid-20th century whose legacies remain as iconic and tragic today as they were during their heyday. Marilyn Monroe would be the obvious example, as would the movie star turned royal princess Grace Kelly. Like Monroe and Kelly, Argentina's First Lady Eva Perón's fame began when she was an aspiring actress. Blonde, glamorous and beautiful, she certainly made a splash when she married future President of Argentina, Juan Perón, and her life on the political stage gave people much to talk about. She was extremely influential, beloved by her supporters and at times controversial, but what was it about Eva that secured her such an honoured place in the hearts of many Argentinian people?

## EVA'S EARLY LIFE

Eva Perón was born María Eva Duarte in the town of Los Toldos, Argentina on 7 May 1919. The youngest of five children, she was raised in poverty. Her parents, Juan Duarte and Juana Ibarguren, were not married due to the fact that Juan already had a wife with whom he had another family. Before Eva had even reached her first birthday, her father had lost his job and returned to his other family home, abandoning the young Eva, her siblings and their mother. At this time, money became even more scarce for the family and they were forced to move. Juana became a seamstress for the people of their town as she attempted to earn money to feed and clothe her children. They struggled on, trying to make ends meet.

In 1926, Juan Duarte was suddenly killed in a car accident. Eva was only six years old at the time. Some sources indicate that Eva's ►



mother and her children were shunned at Duarte's funeral, as his first wife refused to acknowledge or accept them. However, other records show that the two families managed to forge a friendly relationship with each other. Nevertheless, Duarte's death marked the beginning of increased hardship for Eva's family, as they now struggled even more to get

by. Juana wanted more for her children, and set about trying to create a better life for them.

The family moved to the city of Junín in 1930 where they worked hard to improve their circumstances. The older children found employment while Eva, who was still too young to work, was sent to school. While in education, Eva started to dream of fame when she became obsessed with American movies. She decided that when she was old enough, she would leave Junín to pursue her dream of becoming an actress. And so, when Eva turned 15 years old, she left her family behind, much to the dismay of her mother, and travelled to Argentina's capital Buenos Aires.

Once in Buenos Aires, Eva tried to make a living as an actress, auditioning for radio and theatre. Around this time, she started to bleach her hair, eschewing her old life and creating a new persona: her blonde hair would become an iconic part of her image after she became a key public figure. Eva managed to secure a number of roles during her early career in acting, and performed in a radio series where she voiced influential historical women like Catherine the Great and Queen Elizabeth I. Little did Eva know that one day, she too would become an extremely influential woman whose presence would be secured in history.

## “Opinions were divided about Eva’s suitability for the role”

Though her theatrical roles did not launch her to the great heights of stardom she may once have dreamed of, Eva did manage to make a living from her job, and by the age of 20 she had set up her own theatre company. As a prominent radio actress, Eva was invited to participate in an arts festival raising funds for victims of a huge earthquake that had devastated the Argentinian town of San Juan. It was at this benefit, in Buenos Aires in January 1944, that Eva first met Colonel Juan Perón.

### BECOMING EVITA

When Eva first met Perón, he was the Secretary of Labour for the Argentinian



**TOP** Evita making an election address in 1951 to Perónist supporters

**ABOVE** A pro-Perón mass demonstration showing banners featuring Evita's name and face

**RIGHT** Eva cultivated a glamorous appearance as both an actress and a politician

government and was quickly becoming a rising star on Argentina's political stage. He was 48 years old at the time, while Eva was only 24. Perón was immediately attracted to Eva, and the pair quickly embarked on a relationship together. In her radio broadcasts, Eva started to talk about the work Perón was doing in his governmental role to help the working-class population of Argentina, and as a result his popularity grew. Tipped to be a promising presidential candidate, Perón's opponents began to fear his rise to power and in October 1945 he was arrested in an army coup. Mass demonstrations broke out in the streets, as thousands protested and demanded Perón's release. Bowing to the pressure and in a bid to prevent the crowds from becoming violent, Perón was allowed to go. Eva has long been credited by historians and contemporaries with helping to organise the demonstrations that helped free her partner, though more recent studies of the October crisis have questioned her involvement in the protests.







Either way, the moment was an important one for Eva, as soon after Perón's release the couple married in a registry office.

On 4 June 1946, Juan Perón became Argentina's president after beating the more liberal opposition in the election. Eva had left her radio job and gave up her acting career in order to campaign alongside her husband, and upon his election she became his First Lady. Opinions were divided about Eva's suitability for the role, given her working-class background, but she worked hard to gain the favour of those she could identify with – the descamisados (shirtless ones) who made up much of Perón's working-class supporters. It was this group who first began to refer to Eva by the name *Evita* (meaning "Little Eva"), a moniker that would remain part of her identity as Argentina's most influential woman until the end of her life and beyond.

In 1947, Perón was invited to visit General Franco in Spain. *Evita* controversially decided that she would go in her husband's place, and was, as a result, criticised internationally due to Franco's status as the last leader associated with fascism in Europe. However, her time in Spain allowed *Evita* to display her caring nature, as she publicly handed out money to Spanish children suffering in poverty. It was decided that the First Lady should

visit other European states while she was already away, and so *Evita* embarked on her Rainbow Tour, attending meetings with a number of politicians and dignitaries, including Pope Pius XII and Charles de Gaulle, across several countries. She used the occasion to promote herself, wearing fashionable clothes more similar to those of a movie star than a politician's wife. Though she toned down her wardrobe when she returned from the tour, she had managed to secure her public image as a fashionable, young, beautiful and capable woman. In July 1947, as a result of the impact she had made during the Rainbow Tour, *Evita* was featured on the cover of *TIME* magazine.

### THE EVA PERÓN FOUNDATION

*Evita*'s reputation among her own countrymen continued to grow throughout her husband's first term as President (1946–1952). She began to be highly thought of by the Argentinian working classes because of her philanthropic work to help improve the lives of the poor and homeless. Having come from poverty herself, *Evita* was well-placed to empathise with those who were less fortunate. Upon her husband's election as President, it should have been customary that *Evita*, as the new First Lady, would be offered ▶



**BELOW** A photograph of *Evita* working to help a family in need

## EVITA'S HIDDEN BODY

*Why did it take 24 years for the First Lady's body to finally be laid to rest?*



After her death, *Evita*'s body was embalmed by a highly skilled professional who took a year to ensure the process was completed perfectly. The embalming preserved the First Lady's body so that she did not decay, but instead continued to look like herself sleeping. Arrangements were made to erect a burial monument for *Evita*'s body, but in 1955 Perón's government was overthrown in a military coup. To prevent Perón's supporters from accessing the body and using it to stir up rebellion, the new government decided to keep it concealed. At first, there were attempts to hide it in Argentina, but flowers allegedly kept appearing at the locations it was moved to, signifying that Perónists knew the government's hiding places. As a result, *Evita*'s corpse was transported to Italy in 1957 where it was buried in a cemetery under a fake name.

In 1971, another military coup in Argentina led to the exhumation of *Evita*'s body. It was transported to Spain and placed into the care of her husband, who was residing there with his new wife Isabel. In a strange and grisly turn of events, Perón and Isabel decided not to lay *Evita* to rest, but instead positioned the embalmed body on their dining room table. There, *Evita* remained as a part of the couple's daily lives. In 1973, Perón returned to Argentina and was, once again, elected President. He died the following year and Isabel became Argentina's President. She had *Evita*'s body returned to her home nation, where her coffin was kept beside the casket of Perón. After Isabel was overthrown in 1976, *Evita* was moved for a final time when custody of her corpse was given to her sisters. They laid *Evita* to rest in the highly secure Duarte family crypt in Buenos Aires.



the post of chairperson of the Sociedad de Beneficencia (Society of Beneficence). The Society was a state institution, run by a number of upper-class women, and was primarily responsible for charitable endeavours in Argentina. However, the women who ran the organisation did not find Evita to be suitable for the position, allegedly due to her working-class background, and so she was not given the opportunity to preside over the institution.

Undeterred, Evita made the bold move of doing something different, writing in her memoirs: "I, who had learned from Perón to choose unusual paths, did not wish to follow the old pattern of wife of the President." Whether she truly viewed the situation this way, or whether her words were a means by which to save face was largely irrelevant in the end, as Evita's decision to establish the Eva Perón Foundation in 1948 paid off, proving to be a highly successful endeavour.

Due to the decision to exclude Evita, much of the funding for the Society of Beneficence was reallocated to the new Foundation, which Evita oversaw, as it worked to help those in need through a multitude of projects. Many of their exploits were centred on helping women and children; the sick and the dying. The

**RIGHT** Eva and Juan Perón wave to Argentinian workers who want to re-elect them in 1951

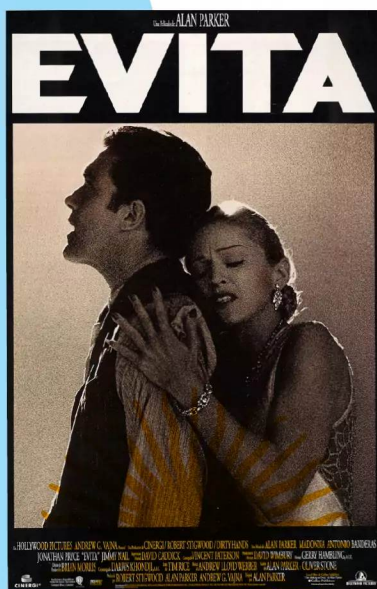


## IN POPULAR CULTURE

### *How the memory of Evita has been preserved and showcased*

Though Evita remains a steadfast figure in Argentina's history and culture, her reputation continues to be remembered by the rest of the world. In 1978, the first production of a musical centred on her life was performed in London's West End, bringing the story of Eva Perón to the attention of the world once again. As described on the website of Andrew Lloyd Webber, who created the award-winning musical: "Evita charts the young and ambitious Eva Perón's meteoric rise to sainthood." Garnering fans worldwide, the "rock opera" brings Evita's rags-to-riches story to life, while questioning the decisions she made, the position she took and her status in life and death. Of course, the show takes some creative liberties, but it was hugely successful in bringing wider attention to Evita's legacy. In 1996, *Evita* the musical was adapted into a movie starring Madonna and Antonio Banderas, once again firmly reminding the world of Eva's continued presence in popular culture.

In Argentina itself, a plethora of statues and images still stand as a testament to Evita's enduring popularity, and sites associated with her, such as the Duarte family tomb where her body lies, are visited by those who wish to learn more about her. There is also an Evita museum in Buenos Aires, opened in 2002 to mark the 50th anniversary of her death.



Foundation established schools for nurses and built 21 new hospitals throughout the country to provide better and safer medical care. They also funded scholarships and built new schools, houses and orphanages, as well as introducing services for single mothers. Employing around 14,000 workers at its height, the Foundation became a vast and important institution in Argentina. Evita herself was known to take part in their charitable work, visiting people who were ill or living in poverty. All this philanthropy cultivated a saintly public image for Evita, especially with regards to the working classes who idolised her as a saviour and heroine.

### **EVITA FOR PRESIDENT**

During her time as First Lady, Evita's popularity continued to grow among women and the working classes. In September 1947, a law that allowed women the right to vote in Argentina was passed, due, in part, to the campaigning Evita had been doing to promote the importance of women's suffrage. She was also elected as the President of the Perónista Women's Party, an all-female political party established in 1949. The party enacted and aided the implementation of social policies in neighbourhoods across the country, and





## “All this philanthropy cultivated a saintly public image for Evita”

were responsible for the election of women to official legislative positions from 1951.

Given her popularity and experience in politics, although she had never held a role in government, Evita decided to stand as the candidate for her husband's vice-president in the elections of 1951. Hoping to be re-elected, Perón likely saw the public's adoration for his wife, and her charm and skill, as appealing qualities that would bolster his own position. Huge crowds rallied in August 1951 to support the candidacies of the Peróns, but their hope for Evita to become one of their political leaders ended in disappointment when she withdrew from the vice-presidential race in the same month, due to the onset of health issues and opposition from upper-class Argentinians.

### FAILING HEALTH

In around 1951, Evita was diagnosed with late stage cervical cancer after suffering from bouts of severe abdominal pain and fainting episodes for a number of years prior. The diagnosis was, however, kept

secret from Evita herself as it was common practice during the 1950s to keep cancer patients in the dark about their illness. Though Evita did not know the cause and severity of her condition, her husband did. In a bid to keep the First Lady's illness a secret from both her and the general public, doctors who treated Evita were discreet. There are, therefore, many conflicting reports regarding when Evita was first diagnosed with cancer, and what procedures she underwent in attempts to prolong her life. Perón employed a surgeon to perform a hysterectomy on his wife, though this sadly did not cure her, and it is also now believed that Evita underwent a lobotomy some time after her diagnosis. The surgical procedure on her brain was intended to relieve some of the pain and anxiety the First Lady was experiencing, but also to prevent some of the more erratic behaviour she had been displaying. From her sick bed, she had allegedly ordered weapons to arm the working classes against their “enemies”, and had made impassioned statements against these foes in her final

public speech. It is unclear whether the lobotomy worked in calming Evita.

In the election of 1951, Evita voted for the first time when her ballot paper was brought to her in her hospital bed. By this time, her health was deteriorating quickly and she had almost entirely withdrawn from public life. Her husband won the election and was inaugurated for his second presidential term on 4 June 1952. At the celebrations, Evita was by her husband's side, though she was barely able to stand and was in considerable pain. She weighed under 6 stone at the time. This appearance was to be the last time the beloved Evita was seen alive by her adoring people. On 26 July 1952, at 8.25pm, Eva Perón died. She was 33 years old.

### AFTER DEATH

Upon the moment of her death, Argentina went into mourning. On her final birthday, she had been granted the title Spiritual Leader of the Nation in recognition of the impact she had made on the country, and it was clear her loss was felt by many. Thousands of people mourned on the streets, and official business was suspended for several days following her passing. It is estimated the state funeral held for her was attended by approximately 3 million people.

Despite the controversy that accompanied the presidency of Juan Perón, and the criticisms of Evita during her lifetime, her influence on Argentina's history cannot be denied. She was hugely popular, becoming an icon to those who adored and looked up to her. Even today, reminders of Evita and her influence can still be found dotted throughout Argentina. No doubt, her death at such a tragically young age contributed to the reverence and respect in which she has been held - there have even been attempts by her fans to have her canonised in the Catholic Church. Her legacy is one that is still very much ingrained in Argentinian culture. ○

**TOP** After her death, Evita's embalmed body was displayed. Here, a nurse from the Eva Perón Foundation renews her oath of loyalty to Evita

**ABOVE** Hundreds of thousands of people participate in a torch memorial for Evita in Buenos Aires on the first anniversary of her death





# 20



# *Amazing* ANCIENT BURIALS

**Uncover the most lavish and grisly  
graves from around the world**

Written by Owen Jarus

**H**uman burials are some of the most poignant and famous archaeological remains that survive from the ancient world. People were buried in a variety of ways, from being entombed within massive pyramids to simply getting dumped in a bog. In some cases, people feared that the dead would come back to life and cause harm – leading to their bodies being decapitated or driven through with a stake. Here we'll look at some of the most remarkable examples from around the world and reveal what we can learn from them.



### ROYAL TOMBS AT UR *Iraq*

Dating back around 4,500 years, the royal tombs at Ur consist of around 16 tombs that belong to royals or other elite members of society. They were buried with elaborate goods such as headdresses, necklaces, earrings and cylinder seals. One spectacular find was a lyre decorated with a depiction of a bull's head. Near the royal burials were a large number of people buried with much simpler goods - some of whom may have been human sacrifices for the royalty.

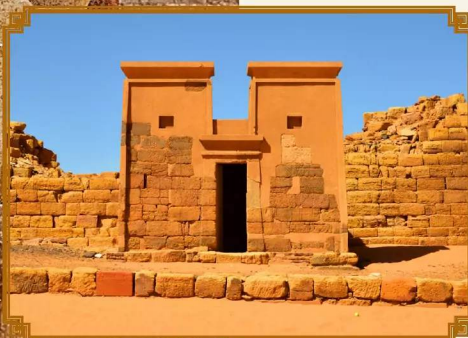
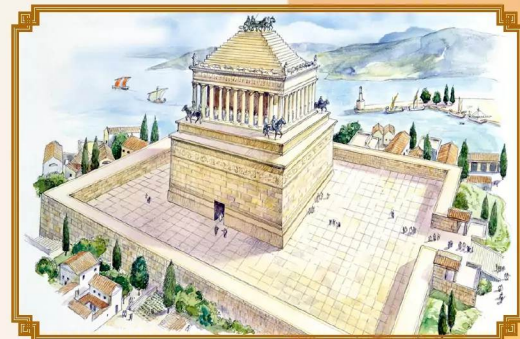


### ROYAL TOMBS OF HUACA RAJADA *Peru*

The site of Huaca Rajada (also known as Sipan), in northern Peru, contains a series of tombs that are believed to hold the rulers of the Moche, a people who thrived in the region from roughly 100 to 700 CE. While some of the tombs have been looted, the relics found within included human sacrifices, elaborate masks, shields and pottery vessels containing food offerings. These burials were located beneath ancient pyramids that may have risen around 35 metres (115 feet) in height. The site was excavated between 1987 and 1990.

### MAUSOLEUM AT HALICARNASSUS *Turkey*

The Mausoleum at Halicarnassus, in Turkey, was a wonder of the ancient world that is lost today. It held the burial of Mausolus, a satrap of Caria in western Anatolia who died in 353 BCE. The word 'mausoleum' comes from the name of Mausolus. While neither the body of Mausolus nor the building survive, ancient accounts provide some information, with the ancient writer Pliny saying it was 43 metres (140 feet) tall and had a pyramid-shaped base with 36 columns at the top.



### PYRAMID OF AMANISHAKHETO *Sudan*

Queen Amanishakheto was a ruler of the Kingdom of Kush who reigned more than 2,000 years ago. Kush was located in what is now southern Egypt and Sudan and its capital, at the time she ruled, was located at Meroe. During her reign, attempts by the Roman army to invade Kush were repelled and ultimately a peace agreement was reached between Rome and Meroe. After her death she was buried inside a pyramid with jewellery made of gold. The pyramid was destroyed in the 19th century but some of the jewellery remains.





## SAINT PETER'S TOMB

*Vatican City*

St. Peter's tomb is located beneath the altar of St. Peter's Basilica in Vatican City, close to an area where the saint is believed to have been crucified during the 1st century. Graves with human remains are located inside the tomb, including one set of bones that some believe may have belonged to St. Peter himself. It is thought the earliest church at the site may have been constructed during the reign of Constantine I, who converted to Christianity and legalised the religion.



## AMPHIPOLIS TOMB

*Greece*

Dating back to the 4th century BCE, the Amphipolis tomb (also known as the Kasta tomb) is located in the Macedonia region of Greece and is elaborately decorated. It has sphinxes guarding the door, female statues and mosaics showing scenes from Greek mythology. While remains from at least five people have been found in the tomb, it's not clear who they were or who the tomb was built for. The tomb dates to around the time of Alexander the Great and it's possible that the owner was a family member or friend of his.

## 'VAMPIRE' GRAVES

*Bulgaria*

In 2014, archaeologists excavating the site of Perperikon, in Bulgaria, discovered a grave containing the remains of a person who had an iron rod placed through their heart area. Archaeologist Nikolai Ovcharov told *The Telegraph* that the burial dated to the early 13th century, and that the placing of a rod through the heart was done to protect against the dead person becoming a vampire. Similar burials have been found in other parts of Bulgaria.



## TOMB OF PSUSENNES I

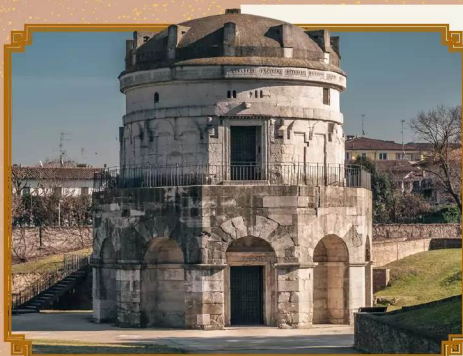
*Egypt*

Psusennes I was a pharaoh who ruled during the 21st dynasty of Egypt around 3,100 years ago. In 1940, his tomb was unearthed in the ancient city of Tanis. The innermost coffin in his sarcophagus was made out of silver, leading to some modern authors calling Psusennes I the 'silver pharaoh'. Rich grave goods including necklaces and bracelets made of precious metals and gems were also found in the tomb. Despite these incredible finds the tomb didn't grab the attention of the wider public, partly because World War II was ongoing when it was discovered.

## SUTTON HOO

*England*

The Sutton Hoo burial in southeast Britain holds the remains of a 27-metre (88.6-foot) long ship with a burial chamber that contains 263 artefacts. No human remains have been found, but soil analysis indicates that there was once a body inside that has since completely decomposed. The most famous artefact is an iron helmet with animal motifs stamped on it. It's uncertain who was buried there but a leading candidate is Raedwald, who ruled a kingdom in East Anglia during the early 7th century CE - coins found in the ship date to that time.



## MAUSOLEUM OF THEODORIC

*Italy*

Built for Theodoric the Great (reign c. 471 to 526 CE), who was king of the Ostrogoths, the mausoleum of Theodoric (sometimes also spelt 'Theoderic') is a circular structure located in Ravenna, Italy. The two-story structure is about 15 metres (49 feet) in height, 11 metres (36 feet) in diameter, built out of at least 230 tons of stone and capped with a domed roof. After the Byzantine Empire defeated the Ostrogoths in 540, they removed Theodoric's remains and converted the mausoleum into a church.



### TOLLUND MAN *Denmark*

Found in a bog in Denmark in 1950, 'Tollund Man' lived around 2,400 years ago and died from being suffocated by a rope tied around his neck. The bog kept his body in a remarkable state of preservation, so archaeologists have been able to determine that he was between 30 and 40 years old at time of death. How he ended up this way is a matter of debate: murder, suicide, human sacrifice or execution as a criminal have all been proposed as possibilities.



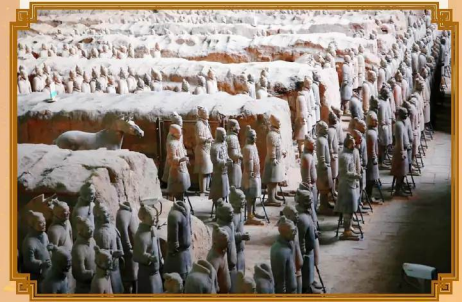
### CASTEL SANT'ANGELO *Italy*

The Castel Sant'Angelo in Rome is a mausoleum built by the Roman emperor Hadrian (reign 117 to 138 CE) that held urns containing the cremated remains of the emperor, his wife and a number of his successors. The cylindrical building is just under 50 metres (164 feet) tall and was later converted to a fortress that was sometimes used by the Pope. It also saw use as a military barracks and prison, and today it houses a museum.



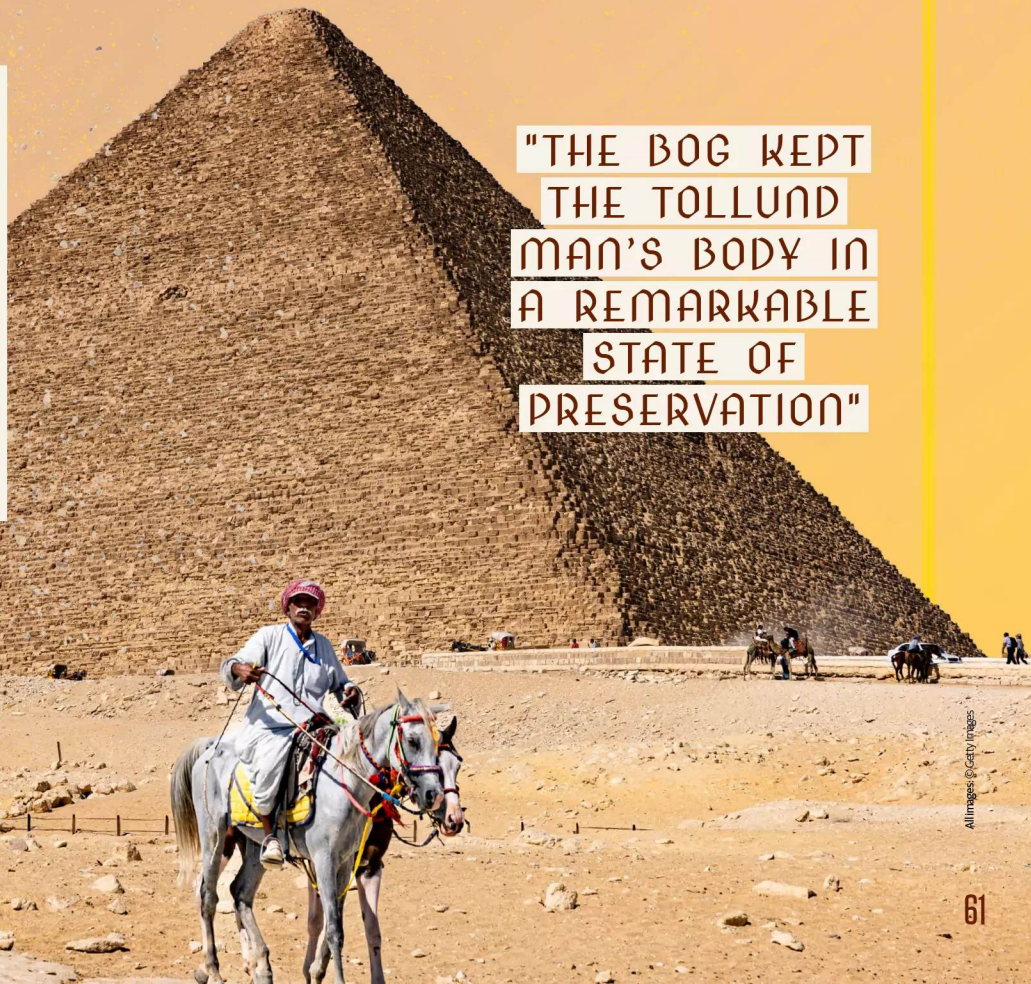
### TOMB OF QIN SHI HUANG *China*

In 221 BCE the Qin dynasty, led by emperor Qin Shi Huang, unified China for the first time. An elaborate tomb beneath a pyramid was constructed for the first emperor. While archaeologists have not excavated the place where the emperor's body is located, they have excavated some of the nearby areas - including those that hold the Terracotta Army, which consists of thousands of life-sized statues of soldiers, horses and chariots, armed with weapons.



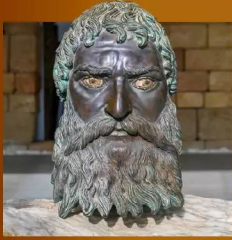
### THE GREAT PYRAMID *Egypt*

The pharaoh Khufu (reign c. 2551 to 2528 BCE) had the Great Pyramid, the only surviving wonder of the ancient world, built at Giza. It rose about 147 metres (481 feet) high and is the tallest pyramid ever built. Khufu would have been buried inside the pyramid, but today all that remains is part of a granite sarcophagus. The sarcophagus remains are located inside what is now called the 'king's chamber', which can be reached after climbing up the pyramid.



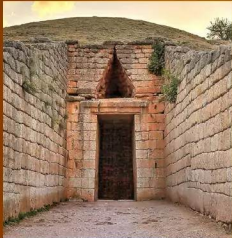
"THE BOG KEPT  
THE TOLLUND  
MAN'S BODY IN  
A REMARKABLE  
STATE OF  
PRESERVATION"





## TOMB OF SEUTHES III *Bulgaria*

Sauthes III was a king of Odrysia, a kingdom located in Thrace, during the 4th century BCE. When he died, he was buried in what is now central Bulgaria. His tomb housed a variety of rich grave goods including a gold crown, golden cup, weapons, shield, a bronze helmet and a bronze head that may depict the king himself. The tomb is located under a mound that is 20 metres (66 feet) tall and 90 metres (295 feet) in diameter, UNESCO notes.



## TOMB OF AGAMEMNON *Greece*

The treasury of Atreus, also known as the tomb of Agamemnon, is a beehive-shaped tomb in Greece that dates back around 3,300 years. Atreus and Agamemnon were both kings in ancient Greek legends and some early scholars speculated that the tomb may have been related to one of them. Today, we know that this tomb belongs to what we now call the Mycenaean civilisation, and that they built similar tombs in other parts of Greece; the tomb is unlikely to have been for either legendary character.

## TOMB OF JESUS *Jerusalem*

The Church of the Holy Sepulchre in Jerusalem houses a tomb which, according to tradition, held the body of Jesus before his resurrection. Helena, the mother of the Roman emperor Constantine, is said to have visited the spot and identified a rock tomb as that belonging to Jesus. The tomb itself is closed and covered by a shrine, but in 2016 it was opened to allow for conservation work to take place, allowing scientists to take a brief look inside the tomb.



## ÖTZI THE ICEMAN *Ötztal Alps*

Dating back more than 5,300 years, the frozen and well-preserved remains of a man, nicknamed 'Ötzi' by researchers, were found in South Tyrol, close to Italy's Austrian border, in 1991. Studies reveal that he was about 1.6 metres (5 foot 3 inches) tall, around 45 years old at the time of his death, and was killed after being hit with an arrow. He also had a deep cut in his right hand, possibly sustained while attempting to stop an attack.

## ÇATALHÖYÜK *Turkey*

The site of Çatalhöyük in Turkey dates back more than 9,000 years. There were no streets and the buildings were so close together that people would enter them through ladders on the roofs. Archaeologists also found that people were buried underneath the floors of the houses, with some houses having up to 30 burials underneath them. In 2011 a study found that the people buried underneath the houses were often not biologically related, suggesting that ties of kinship were not a big factor in determining where bodies were buried.



## LADY OF AMPATO *Peru*

The 'Lady of Ampato', also known as the 'Inca Ice Maiden' and 'Juanita', was discovered in 1995 on Ampato, a volcano in southern Peru. She had suffered a severe blow to the back of her head, indicating that she was killed - likely a human sacrifice as part of a ritual. Studies of her remains found that she was wearing a ceremonial tunic and headpiece, had no signs of malnutrition and was around 15 years old when she was killed. In 2023, a reconstruction of what she looked like was created. ○



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**Greatest Battles**

# BATTLE OF GRANICUS

RIVER GRANICUS, TURKEY, 334 BCE

Written by Murray Dahm

In spring 334 BCE, the 22-year-old Macedonian king, Alexander III, invaded the vast Achaemenid Persian Empire with a small yet elite army of some 30,000-43,000 veteran infantry and 5,000 cavalry. This invasion was the culmination of almost a century of pressure for a Greek commander to punish Persia for its own invasion of Greece during the 5th century BCE. Alexander had commanded his father's cavalry at Chaeronea so was already a veteran at 18. He was not yet 'the Great', but his conduct during the invasion more than earned him the title, and kings and commanders ever since have sought to emulate him.

With his relatively small force, Alexander intended to conquer the immense Persian Empire. According to our sources, the Persians could muster more than a million men against Alexander's tiny force. Most modern authors are highly sceptical about such numbers, but there is little doubt Alexander was vastly outnumbered and marching entirely in





A highly ahistorical but fantastically detailed 17th-century imagining of the Battle of Granicus, by French artist Charles Le Brun

enemy territory. His first test would occur on the banks of the River Granicus, known today as the Biga Çayı in Çanakkale Province, northwestern Turkey. This river is the most likely location, although there are other candidates too, such as the Dimetoka, a tributary of the Biga Çayı.

Alexander crossed the Hellespont into Persia in the spring of 334 BCE. Macedonian phalangites made up the core of his army, organised into six divisions of 1,536 men and each armed with a long sarissa spear 4.5-7.3m (15-24ft) long. They would line up 16 ranks deep and advance, presenting thousands of deadly blades towards the enemy. This well-drilled formation provided flexibility - in addition to being a potent attacking threat, the phalanx could also become an immovable anvil against which Alexander could strike with his cavalry forces as the hammer, the enemy trapped in between.

This finely tuned phalanx system was bolstered by a combination of other units such as the

hypaspists (guard infantry), his own mercenary Greek hoplites and specialised lightly armed troops (Agrianian and Thracian peltasts who were mostly armed with javelins, Cretan archers and others). These units helped protect the vulnerable flanks of the phalanx. Leading the elite cavalry arm made up of Macedon's young nobles, the 1,800 Companions, was Alexander himself. In addition, he had cavalry contingents from Thessaly and other parts of Greece amounting to a further 3,200 men.

Alexander's arrival was, however, no surprise to the Persian governors (satraps) of western Anatolia. The satraps wasted no time in preparing to meet Alexander in battle. We are given the names of 14 commanders among the Persians, ranging from the satraps immediately affected or threatened, to wealthy Persian landowners, as well as the Greek mercenary commander Memnon of Rhodes. Alexander moved quickly and headed towards the Persian mustering point.

According to the historian Arrian (usually regarded as our best surviving source for Alexander), Memnon counselled his employers to avoid facing the new Macedonian king in open battle because his army included a greater force of infantry. This probably meant heavy infantry, because the Persians certainly had many more infantry but they were lightly armoured and predominately used the bow and (shorter) spear.

Memnon advocated the employment of a scorched-earth policy ahead of Alexander's troops, burning crops to deny the invaders' supplies. Memnon's advice was ignored, however, and the Persian commanders sided with Arsites, satrap of Hellespontine Phrygia, in whose territory Alexander's force was present.

Alexander was marching along the northern coast of Anatolia and advancing towards the Granicus River. Arrian tells us that the Persian army was made up of 20,000 cavalry and almost the same ►



number of foreign mercenaries, although others give them between 100,000 and 600,000 infantry too. The Persians advanced from Zeleia and took up a defensive position on the far side of the Granicus.

Reconstructing the Battle of Granicus is complicated by the fact that the surviving narratives (Arrian and the historian Diodorus Siculus especially) offer very different versions of the battle. Although he is often derided as the least trustworthy of our sources of Alexander, Diodorus' account of the battle actually makes the most sense. What follows therefore combines Diodorus' account with those of Arrian and our other sources such as the biographer Plutarch.

In the accounts of both Arrian and Plutarch, Alexander began the Battle of Granicus rashly, charging across the river at the Persians. According to Arrian, Alexander's general, Parmenion, argued it was too late in the day to begin a battle and advised that they should make camp and attack in the morning. In Arrian's version, Alexander ignored this advice and immediately launched his attack. In his account of the battle, Plutarch argues that Alexander's attack was even more rash. There is no mention of a vanguard (as there is in Arrian), only Alexander charging into the river (with his Companions) and persisting until he had forced a crossing.

In each of these scenarios, Alexander was throwing away the strengths and meticulous drill of his army. As such, this picture is extremely unlikely and, rather, a more romantic and dashing (if entirely reckless and impetuous) image of the young king. Both Plutarch and Arrian were using the account of Aristobulus as a source, and this may explain the emphasis in their accounts. Aristobulus

accompanied Alexander on campaign, although he is never mentioned as a commander or participant in any battles.

While it is true that in all his battles Alexander placed himself in danger and was at the forefront of the Macedonian forces, his charges were not reckless or impetuous. They were considered and well-planned to create and then exploit a weakness or gap in the Persian line. What is more, they were part of a known battle plan.

The solid reliability of the Macedonian military machine was built on the dependability of the phalanx in both attack and defence. Alexander is highly unlikely to have engaged in a battle at the Granicus, his first against the Persians, where those aspects of the phalanx, its known strengths, were not to be used because the phalangites' formation was necessarily disrupted or not brought to bear.

That leaves us with Diodorus' account. In contrast to Arrian and Plutarch, Diodorus offers much that is different but represents a more cohesive story of the battle. It is also worth remembering that he was writing some 200 years before both Arrian and Plutarch, so his may be a better picture - although he was still writing almost 300 years after the events he describes. Diodorus' account of the battle is also the longest that survives and bolsters the case for more attention being shown to his version of events. According to Diodorus, when Alexander reached the Granicus, the Persians were deployed on the high ground on the opposite bank. There is no reference to the advice of Parmenion or the other objections to battle; Diodorus simply states that Alexander and his forces crossed the river at dawn, before the Persians could challenge the

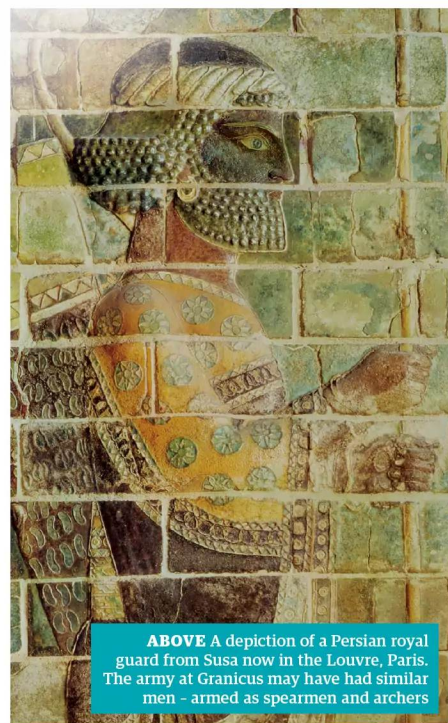
advance. Alexander must, therefore, have camped for the night - just as Parmenion in Arrian's account suggested he should.

Arrian and Plutarch's accounts have the battle taking place late in the day, Diodorus' at dawn. Diodorus states that the Persians deployed their cavalry in front of the Macedonian infantry, and we are given a detailed deployment of the Persian cavalry left to right and then the Macedonian (not recorded in as much detail elsewhere). These deployments have been depicted on the accompanying map. According to Diodorus, the Persian infantry (as in Arrian) were posted behind the cavalry and did not advance, the 10,000 cavalry being deemed sufficient to defeat Alexander's forces. The fact that the Persians deployed their cavalry in front tells us that they had not faced a phalanx or been told of its strengths, one which was designed to deal with enemy cavalry, especially if they attacked head on. In Plutarch, the Persian infantry were intermingled with the cavalry along the riverbank to oppose the Macedonians.

There are, nonetheless, aspects of Arrian's and Plutarch's accounts that can be used in conjunction with Diodorus'. Diodorus, for instance, does not include the vanguard attack mentioned in Arrian. In fact, if we use Arrian's details but place them in a battle fought the following morning, when Diodorus places it, many of the problems are mitigated. According to Arrian, the first to enter the river were the *prodromoi* (horse guards) and the Paeonians, commanded by Amyntas, along with one division of infantry and Socrates' squadron of Companion cavalry commanded by Ptolemy, son of Philip. Amyntas' and Socrates' attack was



**ABOVE** Another ahistorical depiction of the battle, by Dutch artist Cornelis Troost



**ABOVE** A depiction of a Persian royal guard from Susa now in the Louvre, Paris. The army at Granicus may have had similar men - armed as spearmen and archers





**ABOVE** Alexander came to the throne of Macedon in 336 BCE and immediately made preparations to continue his father's plans to invade the Persian Empire



**ABOVE** A relief of Persian infantry from Persepolis - their comparative lack of armour and protection is obvious, in part explaining the disproportionate casualty figures



**ABOVE** The better armour and helmets of the Macedonians made them less susceptible to injuries than their Persian counterparts

conducted by cavalry supported by 1,500 infantry - either the hypaspists or the rightmost division of the phalanx (that of Perdikkas). Alexander then led his right wing of cavalry across the river. The Persians were waiting across the river, their cavalry in front, and Alexander's predominantly cavalry force immediately came under sustained missile fire from the Persian cavalry stationed on the far bank, much of it in the form of javelins. According to Arrian, the entire Macedonian line advanced across the river obliquely from the right. This took place while the initial Macedonian cavalry attack was engaged with the Persian cavalry. By advancing his army in this way, Alexander ensured that his troops offered enough of a threat to the Persians on the opposite riverbank that they could not all move to attack Alexander's cavalry as he emerged from the river, lest they leave the path open for the remaining Macedonian forces to cross or come under attack themselves from the unengaged Macedonian troops.

Alexander's cavalry sought to push their way out of the river, but the Persian cavalry attempted to push them back and keep the Macedonians in the water. The men of the Macedonian vanguard came off worst in their initial encounter and fell back on Alexander as he advanced. Alexander, therefore, led the Macedonian right wing combined with these remnants of the vanguard attack and charged directly towards the Persian commanders. Alexander's men, using cornel-wood lances (called the *xyston*) against the short javelins of the Persians, were eventually able to get the best of this encounter and push the Persians back from the riverbank.

The Persian cavalry were pushed back by the Macedonian cavalry who had, by now, been joined by lightly armed troops (the Agrianians and peltasts). In Arrian's account, the Persian cavalry broke and fled and Alexander now turned his attention towards the mercenary infantry, numbering almost 20,000, who stood firm where they had first been drawn up.

According to Diodorus, Alexander's attack was against fewer cavalry. Alexander brought his phalanx

and cavalry down on them, massacring all except 2,000, who were taken prisoner. These prisoners included a body of Athenians, who were kept captive for some time in a bid to keep Athens' allegiance.

In Plutarch, having crossed the river, the Macedonian phalanx engaged the Persian infantry forces, who soon fled the battlefield, but the Greek mercenaries stood their ground and accounted for most of the losses suffered by the Macedonian phalanx. The desperate mercenaries asked for quarter, but this was refused. In Arrian, the Macedonian phalanx was only brought against the Greek mercenaries; the rest of the Persian cavalry had already fled. Arrian's account would mean most of Alexander's phalanx was squandered, unable

## "ALEXANDER'S CHARGES WERE WELL-PLANNED TO CREATE THEN EXPLOIT A GAP IN THE PERSIAN LINE"

to attack and therefore the battle (as described) was mainly a cavalry one. Diodorus tells us that with the Persian cavalry commanders slain, the Persian cavalry fled the scene, leaving the opposing infantry forces to do battle. The Persian infantry, deeply affected by the rout of their cavalry counterparts, soon fled likewise.

Another reason to favour the account of Diodorus is that his seems to better explain the incredibly low casualty numbers recorded. Even Plutarch and Arrian record these, but their accounts of the battle would make higher casualties seem far more likely. Arrian tells us that the Macedonians lost 25 Companion cavalry in the first charge, and 60 more cavalry and approximately 30 infantry later. Plutarch quotes Aristobulus as saying there were only 34 Macedonian dead, nine of whom were infantrymen (the remaining 25 accords with Arrian's number of the Companions who fell). Justin, another source who is sometimes useful,

tells us that only nine infantry and 120 cavalry fell on the Macedonian side; his numbers agree partially with the other sources. Diodorus does not specify the Macedonian casualty numbers.

It is hard to reconcile the low Macedonian casualty numbers recorded by Arrian and Plutarch with the ferocity of the hail of missiles into which both authors have Alexander charge. By contrast, Persian casualties across all sources are noted as having been very high. Arrian records that 1,000 Persian cavalry and almost 18,000 infantry perished (2,000 infantry taken prisoner). Plutarch reports 2,500 Persian cavalry and 20,000 infantry killed.

Plutarch has more infantry casualties almost than Arrian has infantry present at the battle. Diodorus records 2,000 Persian cavalry and 10,000 infantry dead, along with 20,000 prisoners. The low numbers of Macedonian casualties do not accord with the hard fighting mentioned by Arrian and Plutarch, but they do seem to fit with Diodorus' account of Alexander crossing the Granicus at dawn before the Persians could deploy and fighting the battle on the Persian side of the river. Diodorus' relatively low figure of 10,000 Persian infantry casualties does, however, make sense if the Persian infantry fled soon after being engaged by the Macedonians. The numbers of Persian casualties in all Alexander's battles are always unbelievably high, no doubt to awe readers with Alexander's overwhelming victories.

At the Battle of Granicus, the way Arrian and Plutarch describe it, Alexander was abandoning nearly all that was proven to work in the Macedonian military machine developed by Philip and Alexander. They have the young king trying to achieve a victory with the hammer of his cavalry alone. That is a highly unlikely scenario. Alexander simply did not have enough cavalry with which to affect such tactics. His 13 squadrons (Plutarch's figure) would only amount to about 2,500 men (with 200 men per cavalry squadron), yet he was charging 10,000 or 20,000 Persian cavalry.

Alexander only had 4,000-5,000 cavalry in total and even if he was charging only the leftmost ▶



# Battle of the Granicus

## 334 BCE

■ Macedonian  
■ Achaemenid Empire

LAKE

### 01 Macedonian forces

The Macedonian army crosses the Granicus early in the day before the Persians can fully deploy. The Macedonians draw up their line (right to left): the Companion Cavalry (A); archers and Agrarian javelin-men (B); the lancer cavalry (sarissophoroi because they were armed with sarissae) and Paeonian cavalry (C); Socrates' squadron of Companion cavalry (D); the hypaspists (E); the six phalanx taxeis of Perdikkas (F), Coenus (G), Amyntas son of Andromenes (H), Philip (I), Meleager (J) and Craterus (K); Thracian peltasts (L); Allied cavalry (M); and, on the extreme left wing, the Thessalian cavalry under Parmenion (N).

### 02 Persian forces

Opposite them, the Persians draw up their 10,000 cavalry in front of their infantry (O), who number approximately 100,000 men and among whom are the 20,000 Greek mercenaries. The Persian cavalry are drawn up (left to right): Memnon of Rhodes (P), 1,000; Arsames (Q), 1,000; Arsites with 1,000 Paphlagonians (R); Spithridates, with 1,000 Hyrcanians (S); 1,000 cavalry from other nations (T); 2,000 Bactrians (U); 2,000 cavalry under Rheomithres (V); and 1,000 Median cavalry (W).

### 03 Battle commences

Alexander orders Amyntas, son of Arrhabaeus, forward with Socrates' squadron of Companion cavalry, the Paeonian cavalry and one division of infantry (that of Perdikkas) before leading the remaining right-wing cavalry in an oblique charge. This charge is met by volleys of Persian missile shots. Meanwhile the troops on the Persian right wing charge into Parmenion's cavalry on the Macedonian left wing.



## GRANICUS RIVER

### 07 Bloody endgame

Only the Greek mercenaries remain. They withdraw to a small hill, but are surrounded by the returning Macedonian cavalry, who destroy them, leaving only 2,000 prisoners.

### 06 Persian panic

Under pressure from the Macedonian advance, the main lines of Persian infantry break and flee, while Parmenion's cavalry continues to advance on the Macedonian left flank.

**LEFT** Alexander began his conquest eastwards with the Battle of Granicus

**RIGHT** A vast number of Persian infantry faced off against the Greek-Macedonian army

### 05 Infantry engages

The Macedonian phalanx advances obliquely and the phalangites engage with the larger body of Persian infantry, who have advanced to intermingle with their cavalry but who can only engage with the units on the Macedonian right.

### 04 Persian cavalry withdraws

The Persians meet Alexander's charge with volleys of missile fire (both javelins and arrows). Only through sheer determination is Alexander able to push his charge through. The Macedonian cavalry then engage the Persian cavalry and force them to withdraw.

Persian units, he was still outnumbered. If we accept Alexander's cavalry charge in Diodorus' account against a force of only 10,000 cavalry, we restore the norms of the proven Macedonian tactics. If this was done with infantry support as described by Arrian, the norms of Alexander's subsequent battles are shown to have been used at Granicus too. Diodorus states that even though Alexander's personal conduct at the Battle of Granicus earned him the palm for bravery, the Thessalian cavalry on the Macedonian left wing earned a great reputation for valour.

The scale of the victory is made more probable if Alexander's entire army was indeed brought to bear on a numerically superior force. Plutarch does not mention the numbers of Persian infantry but records that 20,000 were killed. Arrian mentions that the Persians only had foreign mercenaries and that they numbered slightly less than 20,000. It would seem highly unlikely, however, that the Persians would decide to engage the Macedonians if they were outnumbered in infantry.

Plutarch's mingling seems the best solution, especially if the attack was made when they were unprepared. We should reject Arrian's number of less than 20,000 Persian infantry. Likewise, Justin's figure of 600,000 infantry seems too many. Diodorus' 100,000 is within the proportions by which the Persians outnumbered the Macedonians at the later battles of Issus and Gaugamela. Even if we cannot accept the number, we should be confident that the Persians outnumbered the Macedonians in both infantry and cavalry. The overwhelming Persian infantry would have meant that the satraps outnumbered Alexander and were therefore confident of victory. They would, no doubt, have expected such a large army to put up a much better resistance to Alexander's infantry, which numbered, at most, 43,000 foot soldiers of all types. ○







# CHERNOBYL HAD NOT BEEN CONTAINED?

Already the world's worst nuclear catastrophe, just how much more deadly could it have been?

Interview by David Williamson

## INTERVIEW WITH



### ANDREW LEATHERBARROW

Leatherbarrow is the author of *Chernobyl 01:23:40; The Incredible True Story of the World's Worst Nuclear Disaster*. His latest book is *Melting Sun: The History of Nuclear Power in Japan and the Disaster at Fukushima Daiichi*.

Few accidents in history occupy the kind of legendary, pop-culture status as the devastating Chernobyl nuclear disaster in 1986. With thousands killed or injured - by acute radiation syndrome among the first responders, and then later via cancer and other health problems among the wider populace - it's hard to imagine how it could have been worse. Chernobyl housed four of the largest nuclear reactors ever built, each with over twice the fuel load of a typical Western design, which allowed it to disgorge a phenomenal volume of radioactive materials. But if we bend reality, ignore the 'how' and skip to the 'what,' it's interesting to see if events might have been different.

#### ***What catastrophic failings would lead to the Chernobyl disaster being worse than it was?***

There are a couple of things that could have made it worse. Chernobyl's Unit 4 reactor building held an enormous tank of cooling water directly beneath the reactor vessel. In reality, plant workers worried that the melting reactor core could slump down into this tank and trigger an enormous steam explosion, far more powerful than the initial blast. They made a desperate bid to both drain the tank and smother the burning reactor fire by using military helicopters to drop bags of sand, lead, and fission-dampening boron. Most of these missed the target, but if more struck home, they could have further dislodged the already damaged lower 'lid' of the reactor, allowing molten fuel to pour out and potentially into the undrained water tank. The resulting

explosion wouldn't have vaporised half of Europe, as some thought, but it would have caused significant further damage to the already battered reactor building. The reinforced concrete structure would probably contain much of the blast, but it may have compromised the Unit 3 reactor housed inside the same building, and caused additional fires in the turbine hall, which linked each reactor building. If operators lost the ability to cool the decay heat of Unit 3, it could have potentially melted down and released more radioactive materials.

#### ***How would the Soviet Union's view of the world have influenced how it dealt with the catastrophe?***

The Soviet political elite were always obsessed with appearances and presenting themselves as the best at everything, even

back in the days of Lenin and Stalin. They were unwilling to admit any mistakes, wishing to be seen as equals to their capitalist peers, and the Chernobyl disaster was no different.

Local police and KGB agents quickly isolated the entire area, preventing ordinary people - and rumours - from entering or leaving. The Western public only learned of what happened because winds carried airborne radioactive particles north-west, where they drifted over Belarus, Poland, Lithuania, Latvia, and Estonia before being detected at a Swedish nuclear facility.

With an event as extreme as this, if it had been worse, the political response wouldn't have changed; there would still be the classic denials and downplaying typical of previous incidents. Gorbachev ►



**RIGHT** The explosion in Reactor 4 released deadly radioactive material directly into the atmosphere

© Alamy

Main image source: © Getty Images







## THE PAST

FEBRUARY 1986

### OVERLY OPTIMISTIC

Around 96 kilometres (60 miles) north of the Ukrainian capital of Kiev and close to the Belarus border, the Chernobyl nuclear power complex has a much larger capacity than its Western counterparts. With reactors 3 and 4 completed and commissioned by 1983, it becomes fully functional. Such is the pride and confidence of the authorities in the complex that in February 1986, Vitali Sklyarov, Ukraine's minister of power and electrification, states that the odds of a meltdown at Chernobyl are "one in 10,000 years."

25/26 APRIL 1986

### FAILING THE TEST

On 25 April preparations are made to run a test of an emergency cooling system in a scenario involving complete loss of power.

Beginning just after 1.23am on 26 April, in less than a minute the buildup of steam in Reactor 4 causes an explosion powerful enough to rip a 1,000 ton lid off volatile fuel elements, releasing radiation into the air. Debris falls onto Reactor 3's roof and several fires break out. First responder firefighters attending have no experience of radiation and wear no protective equipment. Reactor 3 is shut down at 5am and Reactors 1 and 2 about 24 hours later.

27 APRIL – 26 MAY 1986

### TOO LITTLE TOO LATE

On 27 April, emergency response teams arrive and evacuations are instigated within a ten-kilometre (six-mile) radius of the complex. On 28 April, the Soviet Union admits an accident has occurred but gives little detail. Radioactive material from Chernobyl is detected at a Swedish nuclear plant and the world is aware that something catastrophic may have happened. Incredibly, May Day parades still take place in Kiev despite the huge amounts of radiation escaping from the plant. On 14 May, Soviet leader Mikhail Gorbachev speaks of the accident on national television. He mobilises thousands of military reservists to help with the clean-up operation. Many will die from radiation-related illness.

still enjoyed widespread approval, so there was no weakness on his part.

To see obvious changes, we must alter the wind direction, thereby changing where the radiation goes. If it blew east, deep into the USSR, the inclination towards secrecy would remain unchallenged for far longer because those particles would have to circle half the globe before being detected by a non-Soviet power. A devastating radiation release in Chelyabinsk in 1957 was kept secret for decades, and the politburo would attempt this again. After all, they went ahead with the May 1986 festivities in Kyiv days after the accident, pretending that nothing serious had happened a mere 100 kilometres (62 miles) away.

*If things had been worse, what would the impact have been on things such as the region, the environment, the population, numbers of dead and long-term sickness?*

It's impossible to estimate health numbers in a worse accident, given that the statistics for the accident we did get are so contentious. In general, the world scientific community has found that the estimates made for Chernobyl in the late 1980s turned out to be quite conservative, and they no longer believe as many people contracted cancer from radiation as was initially expected.

However, there's plenty of leeway for speculation because only around three to five per cent of Unit 4's reactor fuel was ejected from the core. What if we make it ten per cent, or 15, or 50? The USSR undertook extensive measures to clean the local environment around Chernobyl, but increasing the intensity by this much will disrupt that.

At this level, using soldiers and bulldozers to decontaminate the area will probably be out of the question for vast swathes of northern Ukraine and southern Belarus, meaning more would have to be done from the air. Hundreds of pilots flew back from the Afghan War to drop coagulating compounds around the worst-hit areas, but the numbers required for a worse scenario would dwarf those and potentially put a strain on the Soviet VVS [the Soviet air force] presence in the Middle East. Airframes would fast become contaminated beyond further use, and the military could be forced to dispose of thousands of helicopters within months.

It would also be impossible to enclose the stricken reactor building the way they did in 1986. Some new method would have to be devised, which could take years.

One positive change would be the faster evacuation of local civilians. Faced with

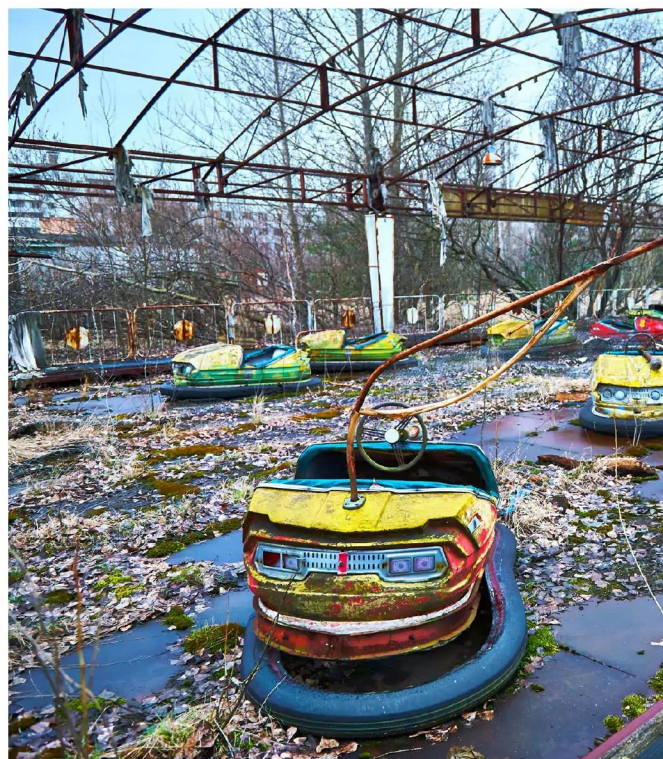
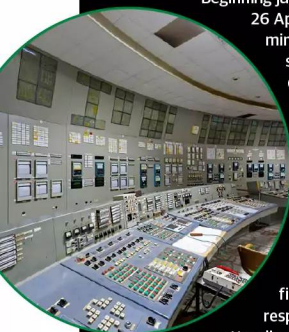
such extreme levels of radiation and a dearth of personnel qualified to use the limited supply of dosimeters for mapping radiation dispersal, the authorities would have to move far more than the 135,000 civilians who were actually moved.

It may be decided to evacuate the urban centres closest to the dispersal path, although nowadays this option is thought to often cause more problems than it solves. People imagine radiation is more harmful than it actually is, so it can be better to stay put. If governments (Soviet and otherwise) did evacuate, the numbers could reach into the millions if the wind blew south over nearby Kyiv, creating a refugee crisis for which the USSR was ill-prepared. With nowhere to go, most people would end up in camps, at least in the short-medium term, where their mental health would rapidly deteriorate, as happened at Fukushima in 2011.

*How much land could have been impacted, and what would the global social and economic implications be?*

The weather is the main limiting factor. If the accident had occurred in the rainy season, radioactive particles would come down with the rain without spreading too far. Unfortunately, it occurred in spring amidst glorious dry weather, and

**BELOW** Residents had to leave where they lived, never to return





hence spread far and wide. With clear skies and strong winds, the accident had the potential to contaminate most of Europe. Millions of square kilometres of agricultural land would have had to be sterilised.

If the winds blew south and east from day one, radioactive particles would more heavily contaminate most of Ukraine and Georgia, the USSR's main source of corn and wheat. Ukraine's fertile lands were critical to the USSR, which experienced food shortages throughout its existence and whose population had a diet heavily dependent on bread. Worse, milk drunk from grazing animals was the main source of human contamination in the months following April 1986. If the disaster was worse, it would prompt banning the consumption of milk and meat in affected areas, which, combined with the loss of grains and vegetables, could have spiralled into a famine. This would last for several years at a minimum, though lessening each year. This is the only area where Gorbachev might have swallowed his pride and asked for Western aid.

Refugees would probably have fled into Europe in numbers impossible to contain. Such a mass migration could have fractured the Soviet Union earlier than what happened in reality.



**“The Soviet political elite were always obsessed with appearances and presenting themselves as the best at everything”**

## *What extra action for containment could the world powers take?*

Probably none that they didn't take anyway. The Cold War may have been thawing, but it was still frosty in 1986. Affected governments could intensify decontamination efforts, but beyond diplomatic pressure they'd be powerless to force the USSR to do anything, lest they risk military escalation.

## *What would the future of nuclear power look like after such a disaster?*

Excitement for nuclear power had already nose-dived since the optimism of the 1950s. Orders for new reactors in the US slowed to a trickle after the Three Mile Island accident frightened half the population of Pennsylvania in 1979, and Chernobyl all but closed the taps. The move to cleaner and greener renewable energy was still many years away.

It's possible that a significantly worse accident could have galvanised popular opposition to nuclear energy and ended its use, but given the vast differences between the USSR and the West – politically, culturally, and scientifically; differences that were emphasised at the time to argue against this exact outcome – it seems almost impossible. More European powers may have converted back to coal sooner, but the US would continue to place its faith in oil and coal. ○

**BELOW** The first responder firefighters were woefully ill-equipped and unprepared



## THE POSSIBILITY

1986-91

### EMPTY BREAD BASKET

Had much more radioactive material leaked, and very different weather conditions been in place, the possibility of a far wider – and more densely populated – region being directly affected would see the fertile state of Ukraine reduced to a barren wasteland. Crops would fail, livestock and their produce contaminated, and the Soviet people, who rely so heavily on Ukraine to keep it fed, left in desperation as to how they will survive the catastrophe. With such a huge blow to the internal economy the big question would be whether the ice curtain of the Cold War would thaw sufficiently for the USSR to ask for international aid.

1986-87

### A TRAGIC TIDE

The scale and speed of response would be a lesson learned; not only to the danger from the reactor, but also evacuation of the population. Potentially thousands of lives could be saved from the death sentence of radiation sickness if more were evacuated. But such a huge displacement of people would bring its own problems. Where would they go, and how far? Political borders are of no interest to those desperate to survive, but with hundreds of thousands, if not millions, of radiation refugees migrating into other parts of Russia and Europe, political decisions for their welfare would have to be made.



1986 ONWARDS

### DIG... DIG... DIG

Championed as a clean and efficient source of energy, the harnessing of nuclear power has been endorsed by nations around the world. But following such a tragic disaster, the silent nuclear threat becomes all too apparent, and confidence drops like a stone. The threat of global warming and the use of clean renewable energy are, in the 1980s, almost inaudible whispers compared to the roars of the oil and coal industries. Nuclear power is a gamble for politicians, a roll of the dice that can end in thousands of deaths. Fossil fuels win; more coal is dug, more oil drilled. Any thoughts of the threat to the planet are for the future, for someone else.





Photograph: Snowden

*Through History*

# ROYAL PORTRAIT PHOTOGRAPHY

A new exhibition showcases images of the British royal family through a century of photographs



Throughout history, royalty have consolidated their power and displayed their status through portraiture. With the advent of photography in the 19th century, a new way of capturing the royal image was born and slowly began to replace painting and sculpture as a way to harness the likeness of the monarch. In a new exhibition at Buckingham Palace, the intriguing relationship between the British royal family and those employed to photograph them is being explored through a series of magnificent portraits.

Royal Portraits: A Century of Photography is the first exhibition to open in the newly renamed King's Gallery, and displays 150 works from 40 photographers, from Cecil Beaton to Annie Leibovitz. Charting the evolution of photography of the British royals from the 1920s to present day, Royal Portraits explores how photography has been used as an important tool by the royal family to honour tradition and project grandeur, while also capturing more intimate moments. From the engagement photograph of Elizabeth Bowes-Lyon and Prince Albert (later King George VI), taken in 1923, right up to the official coronation portrait of King Charles III from 2023, the exhibition displays some of the most iconic images of the royal family from the past century. 



## MODERN AESTHETICS

◀ This photograph of Queen Elizabeth II was taken in the year she succeeded her father as monarch in 1952. It was taken by Dorothy Wilding, one of a number of female photographers to have been commissioned by the royal family, who liked to experiment with a bold and modern aesthetic.

## THE QUEEN MOTHER

▶ This image of Queen Elizabeth (the mother of Queen Elizabeth II) is one of Cecil Beaton's most famous royal portraits. Taken in the gardens of Buckingham Palace, it shows a relaxed Queen dressed in her "White Wardrobe" by Norman Hartnell.

## A PICTURE OF INTIMACY

◀ Princess Margaret married photographer Antony Armstrong-Jones in 1960 and, as a result, he was created the Earl of Snowdon. This photo of Margaret, taken by her husband in 1967, shows a more personal portrait of the Princess by someone who knew her intimately.

## THE ROYAL CHILDREN

▶ Capturing a young Prince Charles (now King Charles III) and Princess Anne, this photograph of Queen Elizabeth II's eldest children was taken by Antony Armstrong-Jones in 1956. Armstrong-Jones' unpretentious style had appealed to the royal family long before his marriage to Princess Margaret.





© Royal Collection Enterprises Limited 2024 | Royal Collection Trust



## PRINCESS MARGARET

▶ Princess Margaret is pictured wearing a dress decorated with butterflies in this first individual portrait by Cecil Beaton. It was taken in 1949, for Margaret's 19th birthday, and exudes elegance as the light shines from the sequins and pearls.

## PROOFS

▶ This selection of proofs are from a 1939 sitting of Queen Elizabeth for Cecil Beaton. Beaton and the Queen enjoyed a working relationship for several years, with Beaton photographing her for much of her life. His last commission from the Queen was in 1970.



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## PRINCESS ELIZABETH

▲ Taken in 1942, this photograph by Cecil Beaton shows the 16-year-old Princess Elizabeth, wearing a uniform during World War II. Beaton, a favourite photographer of the Princess' mother, would later photograph Elizabeth at her coronation in 1953.



Photograph: Antony Armstrong-Jones

## ELIZABETH AND PHILIP

▶ This proof of a photograph of Queen Elizabeth II and her husband Prince Philip in 1958 provides a fascinating insight into the photography process, including handwritten instructions scribbled below the image. The photo was taken by renowned photographer Antony Armstrong-Jones.

## Royal Portraits: A Century of Photography

is open at The King's  
Gallery, Buckingham  
Palace until 6  
October 2024.





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# REVIEWS

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



## COPA 71

Shining a spotlight on a lost milestone for women's football

**Cert:** PG **Director:** Rachel Ramsay, James Erskine **Released:** Out now **Service:** BBC iPlayer/On Demand

**T**oday, women's football is one of the fastest-growing sports in the world, with international matches drawing massive crowds and some of its star players becoming household names. But the story of women's football has been a turbulent one. In many nations, Britain included, women were banned from using association football-affiliated facilities, and it took until 1991 for FIFA to hold its first sanctioned Women's World Cup in China.

But it wasn't the first, really. That was the Martini & Rossi Cup in 1970, hosted by Italy, which saw seven nations participate, followed by the 1971 Campeonato de Fútbol Femenil, as the Mexican football association hoped to build on the success of the men's World Cup they had hosted the previous year. *Copa 71* focuses on this tournament, with six teams participating: Mexico, Argentina, England, Denmark, France and Italy.

Getting the balance right in a documentary is a real challenge. Presenting a good mix of talking heads, first-hand accounts, wider context and primary footage (if possible) can be difficult.

The great triumph of *Copa 71* is that it manages to make the most out of what must have been limited resources. We have several players from all of the participating countries recalling their memories right next to the photos and video of their experiences in Mexico; we have real expertise in football history and governance in David Goldblatt and Marion Reimers providing essential context; and we have the games themselves. All of this is cut together with some dynamic transitions and pop music from the era, giving the story some real dynamism. We would like to have heard from fans who attended if possible, and we imagine no one from the associations who rejected and opposed this tournament were willing to speak, which would also have been interesting to hear.

What *Copa 71* posits is that the Mexican Women's World Cup had the potential to be a watershed moment for football and women's sport in particular. We're well past the era when anyone can honestly question the popularity of women's football, but the fact that 110,000

people attended the final of this tournament in 1971 remains remarkable. It is still the largest attendance for any women's football match, although it's not officially recognised since it was not a FIFA-approved event. That this opportunity was squandered is a real indictment.

Ultimately, the story is a bittersweet one. Many of these women were greeted with derision and ridicule on their return from the tournament, while others were simply ignored. Some would never play football again, others managed to put together careers, but were forced to play out on the edges of the sport. But 50 years later, women's football is packing out massive stadiums once again and these players are finally getting some measure of recognition for what they achieved.

If nothing else, it's a nice reminder that these sports belong to the people who play them and watch them, not to the people in the boardrooms trying to control them. **JG**





Reviews by

Jonathan Gordon, Callum McKelvie, Emily Staniforth

# THE CIA: AN IMPERIAL HISTORY

A meticulously considered new take on the history of the United States' controversial intelligence agency

**Author:** Hugh Wilford **Publisher:** Basic Books

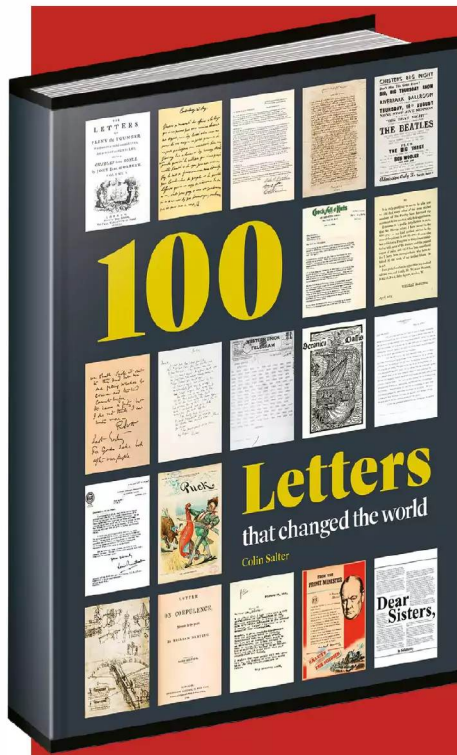
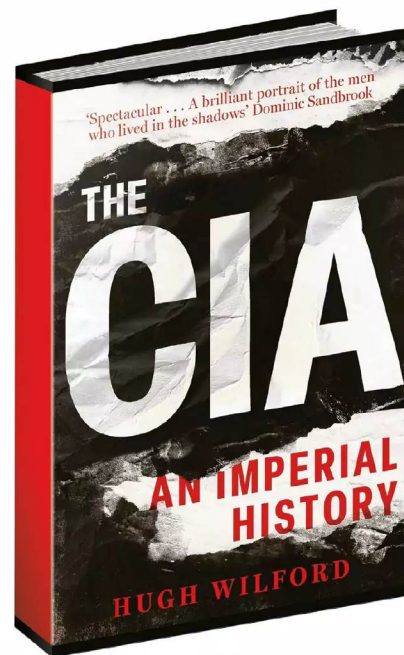
**Price:** £25 **Released:** Out now

For a highly secretive intelligence service, there have been an awful lot of 'histories of the CIA' written over the years. From Tim Weiner's 2007 *Legacy of Ashes* (which the organisation themselves criticised, claiming Weiner's "bias overwhelms his scholarship"), to Nicholas Reynolds' comparatively recent *Need to Know*. Now, intelligence expert Hugh Wilford has added another volume to the ever-growing library, but with a unique imperial twist.

Wilford's central hypothesis is that, while he admits the truth in the often-believed notion that war was the driving force behind the CIA's creation, its DNA can also be traced back to the actions of 19th-century imperialists. His argument is a compelling one. He draws on everything from Rudyard Kipling's celebrated, if problematic, novel *Kim* (which casts a long shadow over the book)

to TE Lawrence. He discusses how many of the CIA's earliest operatives came from backgrounds where they were educated on the righteousness of empires, before going on to explore the United States' hand in various 'regime changes' and even delving into the war on terror.

It's difficult to say whether espionage aficionados will find any new information in *The CIA: An Imperial History*, but that's not really the point. It's Wilford's take on his subject matter that is so refreshing. His recontextualising of the topic within an imperial frame is meticulously thought out, and written with pace and scope. Far from a plodding academic tome, this is an absorbing book that should appeal to spy fans and 20th-century history lovers alike **CM**



# 100 LETTERS THAT CHANGED THE WORLD

A quick guide to some of the most influential correspondence in history

**Author:** Colin Salter **Publisher:** Batsford **Price:** £20 **Released:** Out now

When tracking the grand, sweeping events of history, an important element can be lost; it's just about people. And people can be moved and swayed by all sorts of things, particularly personal relationships. With that in mind, Colin Salter's celebration of the humble letter is an insightful examination of the power of communication.

From the ancient Spartans writing to Philip II of Macedon, to Greta Thunberg reading a letter to Indian prime minister Narendra Modi, this book covers a lot of history. We have personal letters, official letters and open letters, all of which had some kind of impact on the events of the past and on our present. Find out how the English barons

looked to impress their power following the Magna Carta, or how Abraham Lincoln tried to bring an impetuous general into line during the Civil War.

It's a fascinating collection, with a couple of pages dedicated to each letter, often with the letter itself present (partially in the case of longer missives). Much like Salter's other books in this style (*100 Books...*, *100 Symbols*, and *100 Posters*) there's a snappy energy to this fine coffee table collection that makes it a fun and easy read. For snapshots into the personal side of history from the pens of those who helped shape it, you couldn't ask for much more. **JG**





## HISTORY WAR RECOMMENDS...



### The Rise and Fall of the Soviet Union

The birth of the USSR did not herald the dawn of a communist utopia, the stated goal of Lenin and his followers. Instead, it ushered in a new age of secrecy, suspicion and widespread technological advancement. Discover life inside the USSR in this new book.

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### The First Cold War

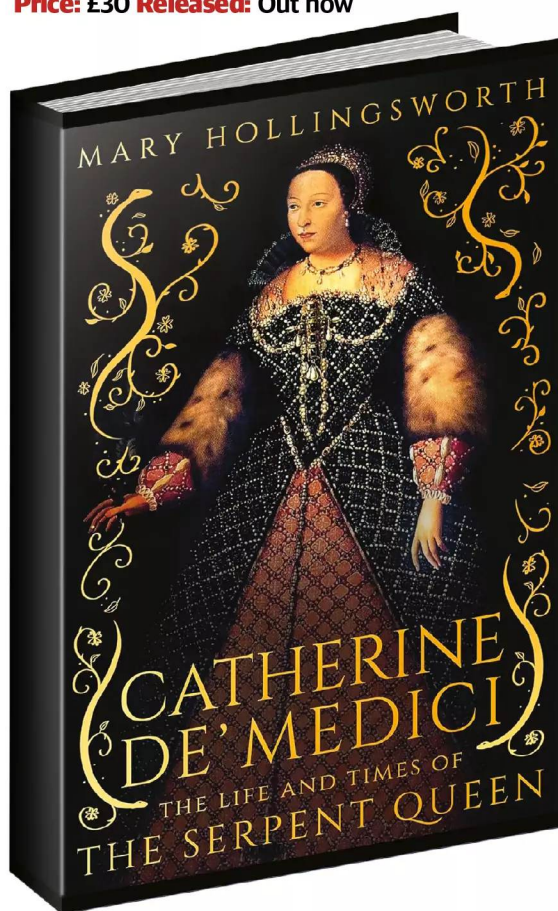
Author Barbara Emerson Price £35 Publisher Hurst Publishers

The 'Great Game' was the 19th century rivalry between Britain and Russia for influence in Central Asia, from Turkey to Tibet and Persia to Afghanistan. As Barbara Emerson explains in her skillfully documented book, it was a crucial moment in what she has defined as the First Cold War. By the time this saga came to an end in the early 20th century, a series of independent states and monarchies had become British and Russian protectorates.

# CATHERINE DE' MEDICI: THE LIFE AND TIMES OF THE SERPENT QUEEN

An illuminating biography that challenges traditional assumptions about the famous monarch

**Author:** Mary Hollingsworth  
**Publisher:** Apollo, Head of Zeus  
**Price:** £30 **Released:** Out now



"It is fascinating to realise how much of her life has remained in the shadows"

Catherine de' Medici has long been remembered by history as the ruthless Florentine Queen of France, who perpetrated a horrific act of violence and faced her enemies with vigour and ferocity. As a result of this, she has been christened the Serpent Queen. But was she really as callous as we have been led to believe? In historian Mary Hollingsworth's new biography of Catherine, she paints a more nuanced picture of the queen. Using neglected primary sources, and Hollingsworth's vast knowledge of Medici history, this book is an enlightening account of Catherine's life and achievements, and an analysis of the circumstances that led to the queen's negative reputation.

After reading *Catherine de' Medici: The Life and Times of the Serpent Queen*, it is fascinating to realise how much of the regent's life and personality has remained in the shadows. It becomes abundantly clear that Catherine was a highly capable and intelligent woman, not just as queen and regent for her sons, but also as an intellectual. Her passion for the arts runs through much of this biography, particularly her interests in architectural endeavours. What makes this book such a fascinating read, though, is that Hollingsworth has managed to pepper her study with glimpses of the real woman behind the legend. For example, we discover that Catherine "laughed a lot, enjoyed good food and chose to wear beautiful clothes."

Of course, the one thing that has marred Catherine's legacy more than anything else has to be the bloody events of the St Bartholomew's Day massacre, perpetrated on the night of 23 August

1572 into the following morning, where an estimated 10,000 French Huguenots (Calvinist Protestants) were slaughtered in a series of violent attacks by Catholics. At the time, Catherine's son Charles IX was on the throne, but Catherine remained a large presence at the French court. With France in the depths of the Wars of Religion (1562-1598), Charles ordered the murders of a number of prominent Huguenot leaders, a decision that led the violence to spread, though many sources have traditionally placed the burden of the decision at Catherine's doorstep. However, as Hollingsworth points out, there is a distinct lack of sources from the king's council meetings in the lead-up to the massacre and there are a plethora of reasons for why Catherine's detractors may have assigned blame to her. Hollingsworth's fresh perspective and detailed examination of the evidence of Catherine's involvement certainly gives the reader food for thought.

When Catherine died in 1589, her son Henry III was still on the throne. However, he was assassinated just months after his mother's death and the crown passed to Henry of Navarre, abruptly ending the Valois dynasty Catherine had worked so hard to preserve. However, her impact is recognised by Hollingsworth who points out that the success of the next king may not have been possible without Catherine's dedication to preserve the monarchy: "That the crown rose from the ashes of the civil wars with its authority and power intact, was largely due to her." A fascinating, thought-provoking study, this book is a must-read. **ES**





# HISTORY HOLLYWOOD

## Fact versus fiction on the silver screen



## OPERATION MINCEMEAT

**Director:** John Madden **Starring:** Colin Firth, Matthew Macfadyen, Kelly Macdonald **Country:** UK **Year:** 2021

The “true story” of a WWII deception operation, but does it deceive its audience as well?

**VERDICT:** A largely accurate film, but it takes several significant deviations in an attempt to increase the dramatic tension.

**01** Based on the book by Ben Macintyre, the film tells of a WWII deception operation that sought to convince the Germans of an Allied invasion of Greece, instead of Sicily. This was achieved by planting fake documents upon a corpse, and actually occurred.

**02** Two architects of the plan Ewen Montagu (Firth) and Charles Cholmondeley (Macfadyen) fight for the affections of secretary Jean Leslie (Macdonald) in the film. While it's certainly possible there were feelings, it is not known whether any affairs happened.

**03** Johnny Flynn plays future James Bond author Ian Fleming. Operation Mincemeat has its origins in a list of 54 deception schemes known as 'the trout memo', believed to have been authored by Ian Fleming and so it's likely he conceived the plan.

**04** Montagu's younger brother Ivor is suspected to be a Russian spy. According to *Time*, Ivor is suspected to have had little or no known impact upon the operation and there was no indication that Cholmondeley was tasked with spying on Montagu.

**05** The operation proves to be a success. Macintyre writes that military losses during the Sicily invasion were indeed fewer than expected. A Panzer division was also moved from France and equipment taken from Sicily in readiness for an invasion of Greece.



All images © Arny



### Did you know?

The name 'chimichurri' may have come from the British invasions of the River Plate in 1806. According to the BBC, British POWs asked for condiments by stating 'give me the curry', later becoming 'chimichurri'.

### Ingredients

- 6 Argentinian chorizo
- Baguettes sliced to fit or bread buns
- 1 large tomato, chopped
- 1 red onion, chopped

### For the chimichurri

- Bunch of coriander, finely chopped
- Bunch of parsley, finely chopped
- 1 tsp dried oregano
- 2-4 garlic cloves - crushed (depending on preference)
- 1 red chilli (deseeded)
- 5 tbsp olive oil
- 2 tbsp red or white wine vinegar
- Pinch of salt

# CHORIPÁN WITH CHIMICHURRI

TRADITIONAL ARGENTINIAN STREET FOOD, SERVED WITH THE COUNTRY'S STAPLE SAUCE, ARGENTINA, 18<sup>TH</sup> – 20<sup>TH</sup> CENTURY

Argentinian cuisine is known for its love of barbecued meat. The gauchos, a form of native cowboy, began the tradition of cooking meat over open fires in the 18th century. Choripán originated sometime later in the 20th century, through the influx of Italian and Spanish immigrants to the country who brought with them various sausage-making customs. Chimichurri's origins, on the other hand, are far more complex. The most popular tale regarding the history of the sauce states that Irish immigrant James McCurry invented it as an alternative to Worcestershire sauce. Choripán, with its chimichurri accompaniment, is now a staple of Argentinian football matches, often sold within stadiums. ○

## METHOD

### TO MAKE THE CHIMICHURRI:

- 01 Mix the chilli, coriander, parsley, oregano and garlic together in a bowl.
- 02 Add the oil and vinegar and mix thoroughly. Add a pinch of salt.
- 03 Place in the refrigerator for one hour prior to serving.

### TO MAKE THE CHORIPÁN:

- 01 Preheat a barbecue grill or, alternatively, heat a grill pan on a medium heat.
- 02 Place the chorizo on the grill and cook for ten minutes, or until browned and cooked through.

- 03 Transfer the chorizo to a plate and open down the middle, but do not cut into separate pieces.
- 04 While doing this, place the open baguettes interior side down on the grill and very lightly toast. Place on a separate plate when done.
- 05 Place the chorizo on the grill, open side down until the inside is nicely charred but not burnt.
- 06 Put the chorizo in the bread, add the chimichurri first and then the tomato and onion. Eat while hot.

NEXT MONTH

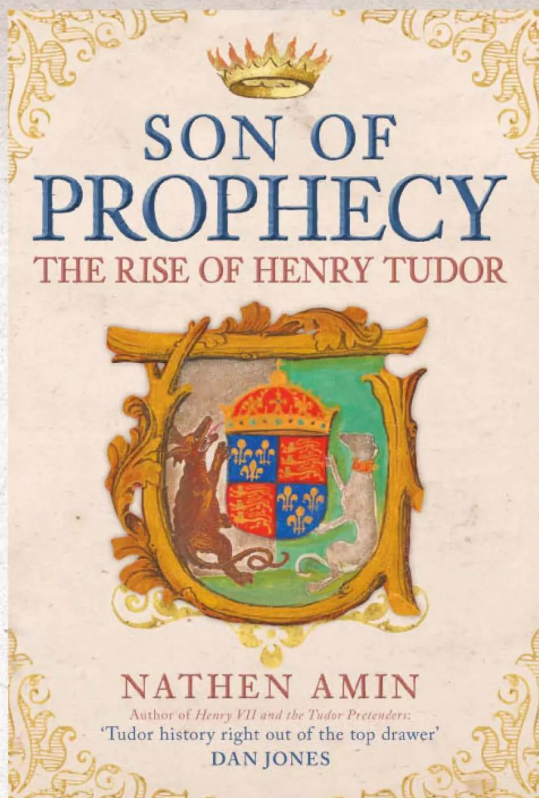
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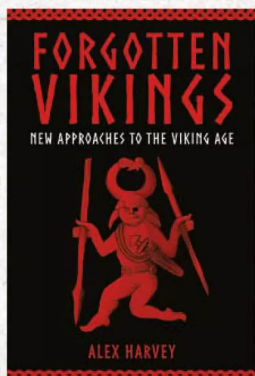


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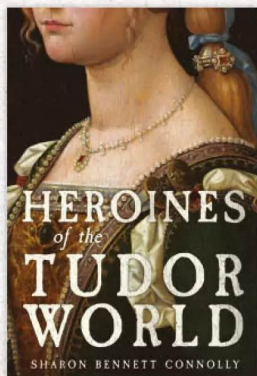
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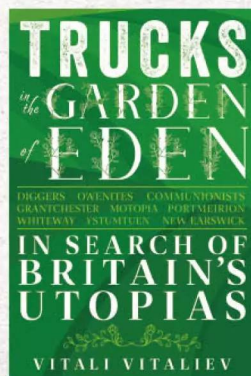
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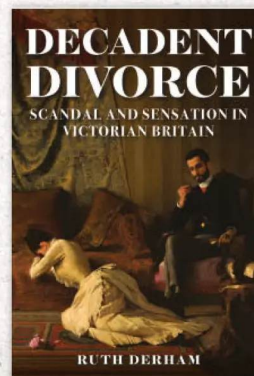
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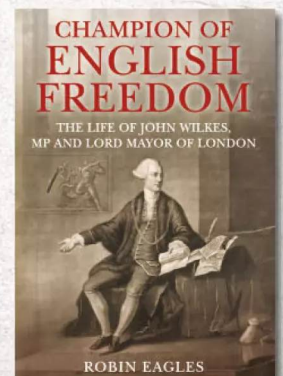
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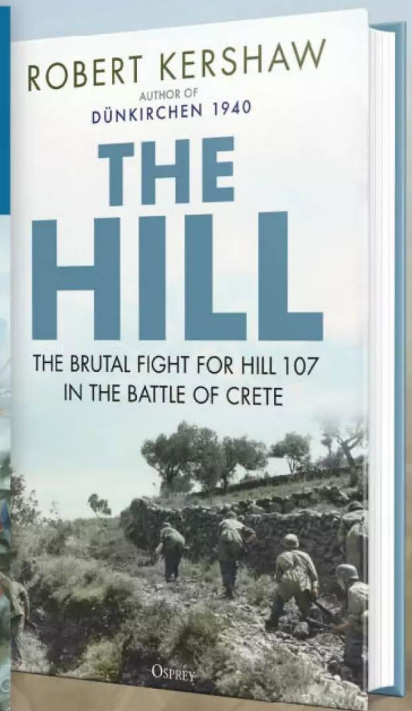
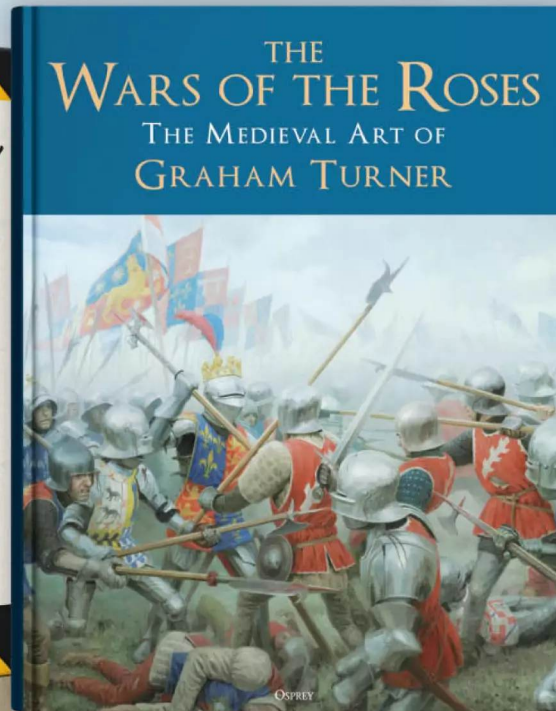
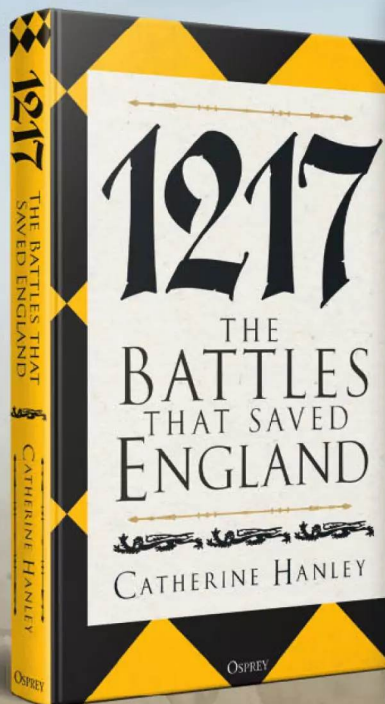


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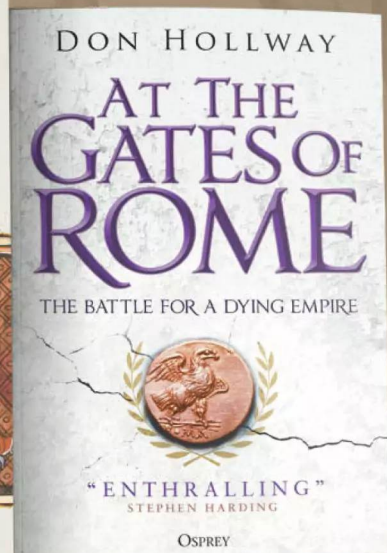
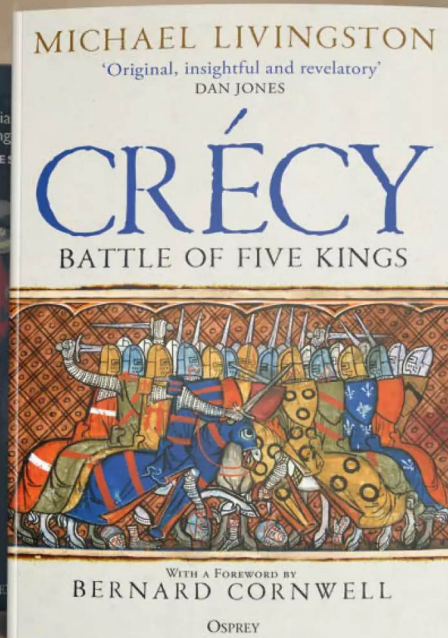
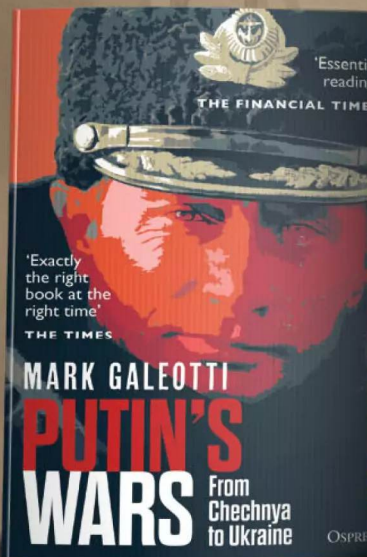


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