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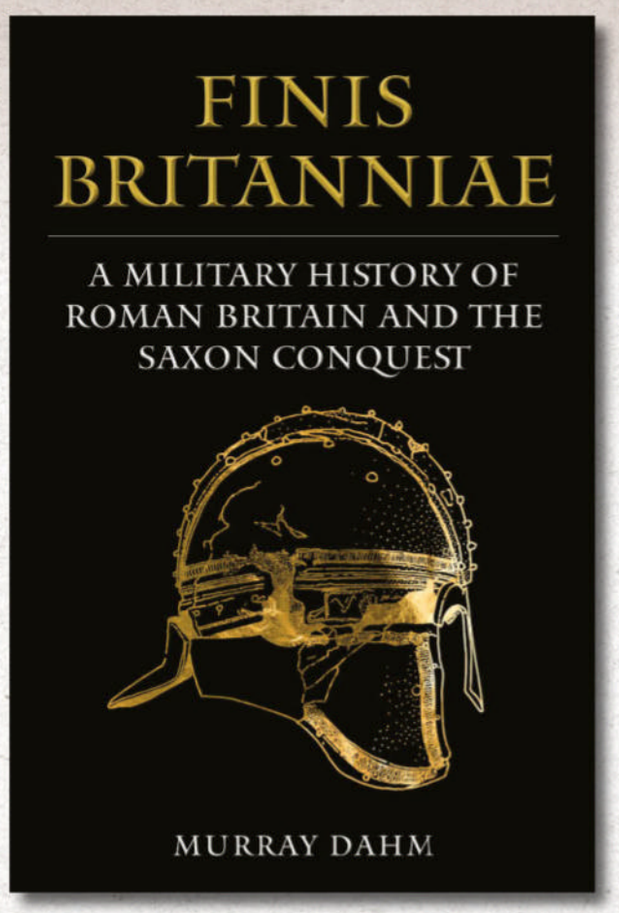

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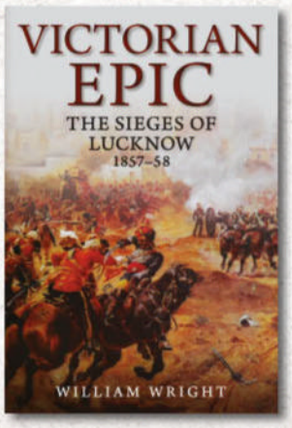

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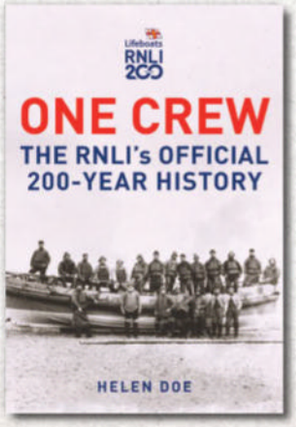

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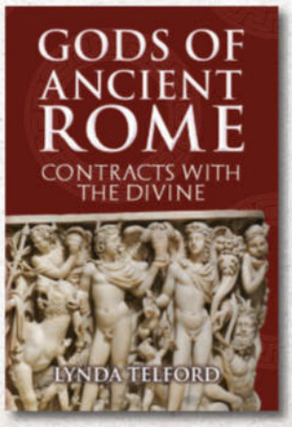

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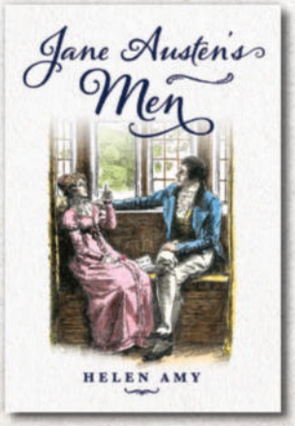

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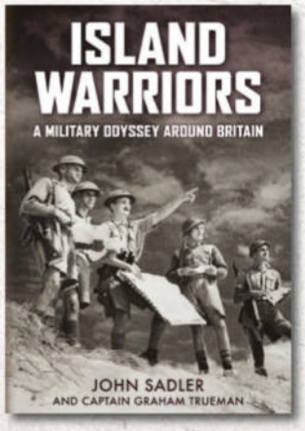

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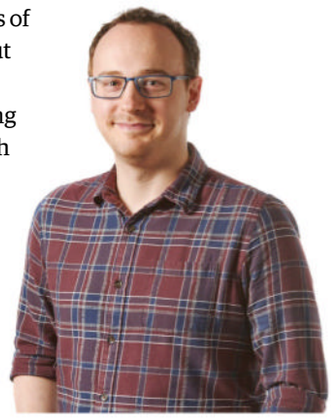
© Getty Images

Leonardo da Vinci pushed the boundaries of art and science in his time

Welcome

When I am studying various figures from history, I'm often hoping to find someone who I can feel good about championing and highlighting. I'm always looking for a hero, I guess. The trouble is, people are messy. We make mistakes, we hold contradictory ideas in our heads at once. As a result, it's challenging to find someone in history who isn't – to use the modern parlance – problematic. But sometimes, digging up those elements of a person and adding them to the balance of our understanding of them can be informative.

Which brings us to the person on our cover this issue, Leonardo da Vinci. The famous polymath, master of art and science, about as true a genius as you could ever wish to find. But for every *Mona Lisa*, there was also a machine of war. And were his anatomical dissections completely legitimate? We wanted to take a closer look at these potentially darker sides to Da Vinci, not to tear him down, but because knowing the fullness of people can be rewarding. We welcome Francesca Fiorani as our guide to the full complexity of this renowned artist. Also this issue we take a look at the ancient leaders of Japan and learn about Irish folklore. Plus some groundbreaking medieval texts, witch trials and LGBTQ+ stories. A little of everything. I hope you enjoy the issue.



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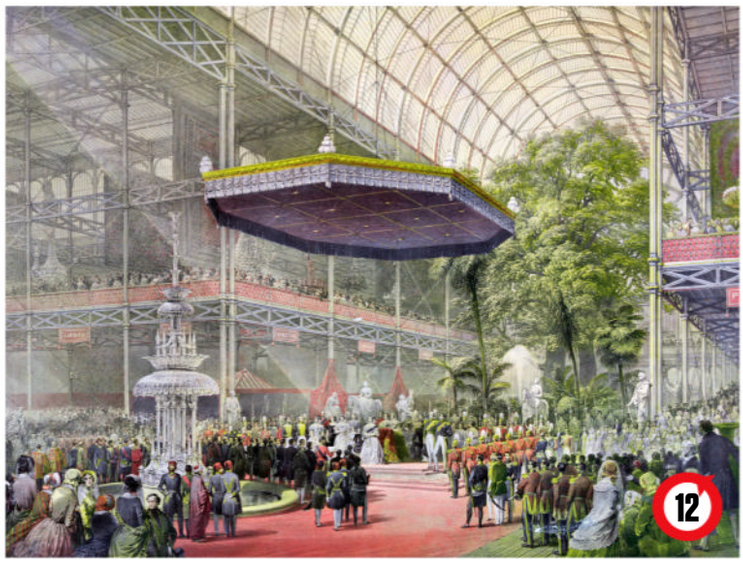

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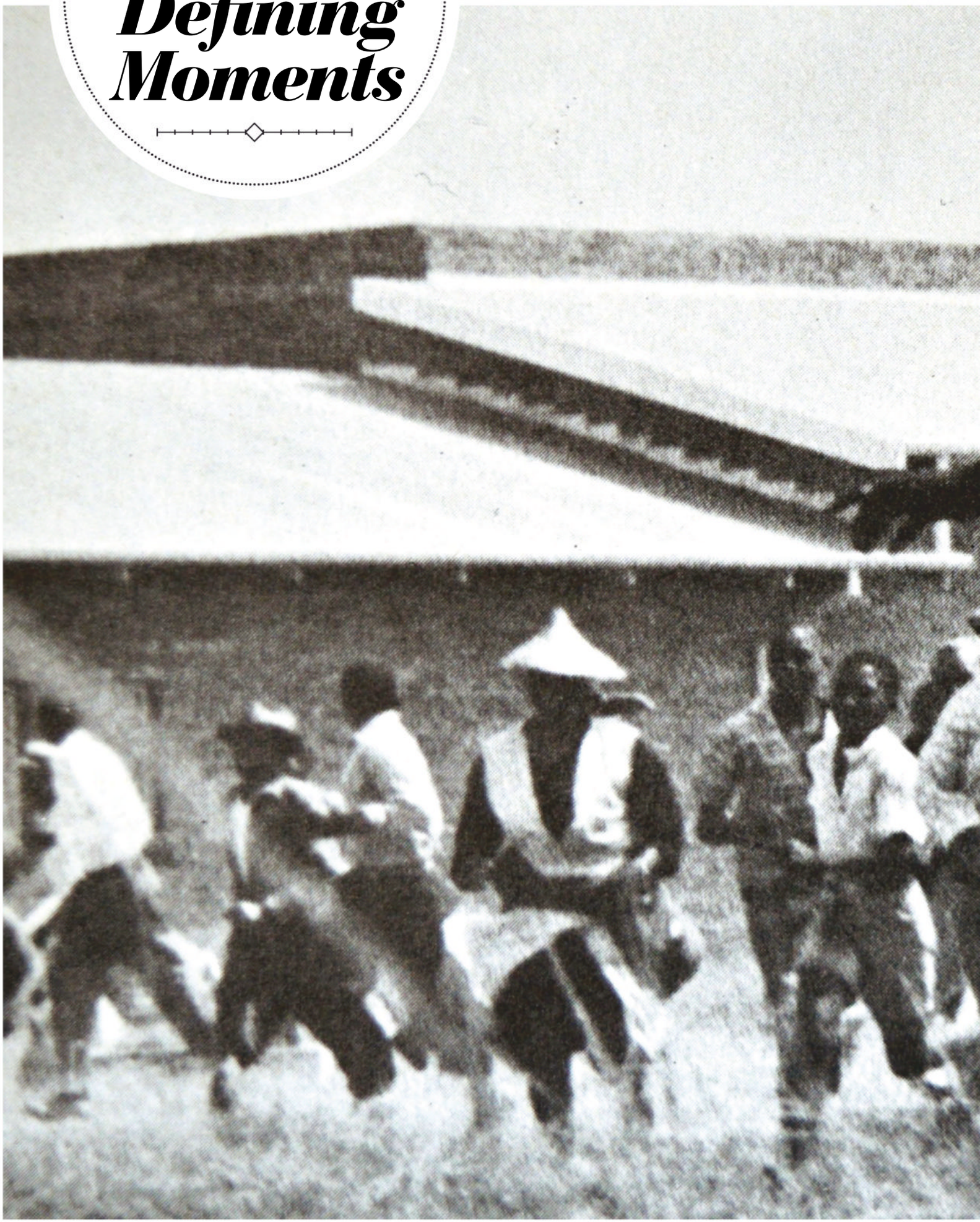
DARK SIDE OF DA VINCI

From killing machines to gruesome dissections, uncover the Renaissance polymath's hidden history

Defining Moments



21 March 1960

SHARPEVILLE MASSACRE

As an estimated 7,000 protestors demonstrated outside the police station in the township of Sharpeville, South Africa against pass laws (internal passport systems used to racially segregate people), police opened fire on the crowds. The demonstrators had started advancing towards the fence at the station when shots began to be fired, resulting in the deaths of 69 people and harming around 180 protestors. The anniversary of the massacre is now commemorated in South Africa with a public holiday in honour of human rights.

© Alamy

9 April 2005

THE WEDDING OF CHARLES AND CAMILLA

Prince Charles, the heir to the British throne, married his second wife, Camilla Parker Bowles, in a civil ceremony at Windsor Guildhall. The wedding was not attended by Charles' parents, Queen Elizabeth II and Philip, Duke of Edinburgh, but they did attend the televised blessing that took place at St. George's Chapel, Windsor Castle and hosted the reception. In 2023, when Charles was crowned King Charles III, Camilla was crowned alongside him as Queen Consort.

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ALL ABOUT VICTORIANS

From fashion and fiction to technology and trade, we chronicle the world-changing period that defined the 19th century

Main image: © Getty Images

Written by Emily Staniforth, Callum McKelvie

Key Events

During the ceremony 82-year-old Lord John Rolle fell down a flight of stairs and Victoria assisted him.

28 JUN 1838 THE CORONATION OF QUEEN VICTORIA

Following the death of William IV, the 18-year-old Victoria ascends to the throne and is crowned a year later. Despite Victoria describing the event as the 'proudest moment of my life' numerous mistakes occur, including the coronation ring being jammed painfully onto the wrong finger.

1851 THE GREAT EXHIBITION

Following a number of smaller exhibitions, Prince Albert, Henry Cole and others stage a vast exhibition dedicated to manufacturing and design from across the world. Some six million people visited the exhibition and it raised a staggering £186,000.

For the Great Exhibition, Crystal Palace was built in Hyde Park, taking 5,000 workers five months.

UNIFORM PENNY POSTAGE INTRODUCED 10 JANUARY 1840

Following recommendations by Rowland Hill in 1837, The Penny Postage Act is introduced allowing for the more affordable sending of letters. It is the world's first postage system.

CRIMEAN WAR BEGINS 5 OCTOBER 1853

Britain joins a coalition comprising France, Turkey and Sardinia against Russian expansion in the territories of the declining Ottoman Empire. Some 650,000 lives are lost.

FIRST TRANSATLANTIC CABLE LAID 1858

Britain and America lay the first transatlantic telegraph cable and Queen Victoria sends the first message across it. However the cable ceases working some short weeks later.

1838 — 1845 — 1851

A CHRISTMAS CAROL PUBLISHED 19 DECEMBER 1843

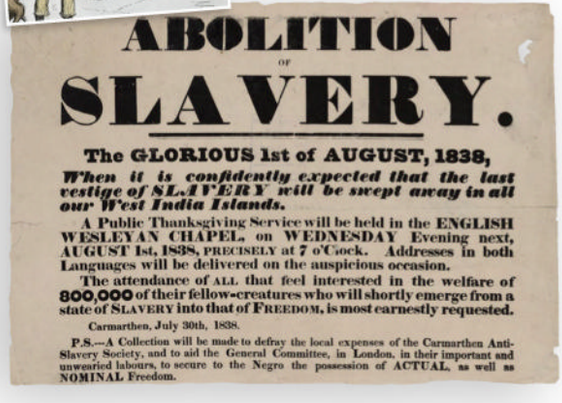
Charles Dickens publishes his classic Christmas ghost story, the first edition having sold out by Christmas Eve. The book becomes a holiday classic, receiving numerous adaptations.

CHARGE OF THE LIGHT BRIGADE 25 OCTOBER 1854

During the Battle of Balaklava in the ongoing Crimean War, British cavalry troops launch a disastrous attack on Russian soldiers resulting in 40 per cent of the brigade being killed or wounded.

BIG BEN CHIMES FOR THE FIRST TIME 11 JULY 1859

After a fire at the palace of Westminster, work is ongoing on the construction of Big Ben. Following the first chimes, it soon develops a fracture and needs repairing.



ABOLITION OF SLAVERY.

The GLORIOUS 1st of AUGUST, 1838,

When it is confidently expected that the last vestige of SLAVERY will be swept away in all our West India Islands.

A Public Thanksgiving Service will be held in the ENGLISH WESLEYAN CHAPEL on WEDNESDAY Evening next, AUGUST 1st, 1838, PRECISELY at 7 o'Cock. Addresses in both Languages will be delivered on the auspicious occasion.

The attendance of ALL that feel interested in the welfare of 800,000 of their fellow-creatures who will shortly emerge from a state of SLAVERY into that of FREEDOM, is most earnestly requested.

Carmarthen, July 30th, 1838.

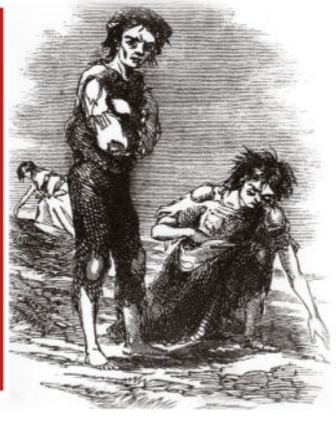
P.S.—A Collection will be made to defray the local expenses of the Carmarthen Anti-Slavery Society, and to aid the General Committee, in London, in their important and unwearied labours, to secure to the Negro the possession of ACTUAL, as well as NOMINAL Freedom.

1 AUG 1838 SLAVERY IS ABOLISHED

In 1834 the Slavery Abolition Act came into effect, freeing 750,000 slaves in the British West Indies. But many of the freed slaves found themselves working as apprentices in a system that saw slavery continue under a different name. On 1 August 1838 this system was abolished.

1845 IRISH POTATO FAMINE BEGINS

A disease affecting potato crops sweeps across Ireland, resulting in a deadly famine. Despite this, exports to Britain continue while the Irish population suffers. By the famine's end in 1852, roughly one million had died of starvation.



22 JAN 1901 QUEEN VICTORIA DIES

At the age of 81, the then-longest serving British monarch passed away of a stroke. In her final moments she requested that her Pomeranian pet dog, Turi, be brought to her and was said to have whispered "Bertie" – her name for Prince Albert.

ON THE ORIGIN OF SPECIES PUBLISHED 24 NOVEMBER 1859

Charles Darwin publishes *On the Origin of Species* which details his theories of evolution and natural selection. Many with religious beliefs find the work controversial.

FIRST ANGLO-ZULU WAR 1879

The British Empire develops an interest in Zululand and demands that civilians work in diamond mines in Africa. This ultimatum is refused and war breaks out.

THE OSCAR WILDE TRIAL BEGINS 3 APRIL 1895

Oscar Wilde's first trial begins when he takes Lord Queensberry to court for libel. However, Wilde loses the case and is subsequently tried for gross indecency.

1863 — 1888 — 1901

THE DEATH OF PRINCE ALBERT 14 DECEMBER 1861

Prince Albert passes away after a bout of typhoid fever. The heartbroken Victoria would wear black for the rest of her life as a symbol of her mourning.

EMMELINE PANKHURST FOUNDS THE WOMEN'S FRANCHISE LEAGUE 1889

The famous suffragette Emmeline Pankhurst, along with her husband Richard, found the Women's Franchise League to pursue women's right to vote in local elections.

DRACULA PUBLISHED 1897

Irish author Bram Stoker publishes the definitive vampire novel, drawing on European legends and folklore. While the book was a moderate success, the 1920s Broadway adaptation increased its notoriety.

10 JAN 1863 LONDON UNDERGROUND OPENS

In order to ease congestion on London's streets, several companies begin the development of an underground rail system. The Metropolitan Railway opens the first, running from Paddington to Farringdon. Over the years the tube system continues to develop, becoming an integral part of London public transport and iconography.

9 NOV 1888 THE MURDER OF MARY JANE KELLY

The murder of Mary Jane Kelly represents the last victim of the notorious London serial killer, Jack the Ripper, following the murders of Mary Ann Nichols, Annie Chapman, Elizabeth Stride, and Catherine Eddowes. The infamous murderer held Whitechapel in the grip of terror, but his identity was never discovered.

Jack the Ripper earned his name from a letter addressed 'Dear Boss' and signed Jack the Ripper.

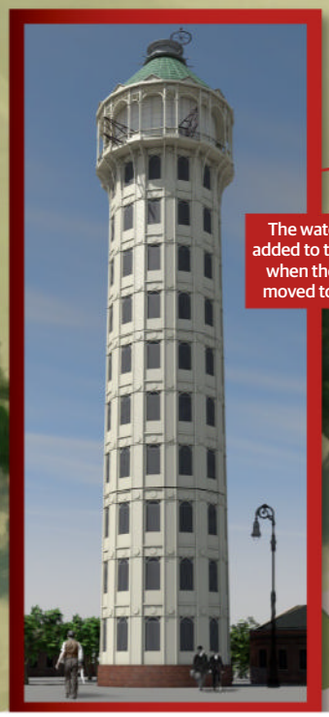
THE CRYSTAL PALACE

London, UK
1851 – 1936

One of the most iconic and groundbreaking buildings of the Victorian era was undoubtedly the Crystal Palace. Erected in 1851 in Hyde Park, London, the impressive structure was designed by architect Joseph Paxton to house the Great Exhibition. The design of the Crystal Palace as one huge glass construction was based on the greenhouses that Paxton had previously designed and built for the Duke of Devonshire at Chatsworth House, Derbyshire. When Paxton's designs were officially accepted by the building committee of the Royal Commission on 15 July 1850, the construction of the Crystal Palace was set in motion.

The Great Exhibition of the Works of Industry of All Nations (to give the event its full name) was intended to be an international event to display items from around the world in four categories: Raw Materials, Machinery and Mechanical Inventions, Manufactures and Sculpture and Fine Art. When the Exhibition was opened at the Crystal Palace on 1 May 1851, it became a hugely successful and popular venture that inspired a series of similar exhibitions across the globe, which would come to be known as the World's Fairs. Items on display during the six months of the exhibition's tenure included the Koh-i-Noor diamond, an early version of the fax machine and an 80-blade penknife.

Over six million people visited the Great Exhibition at the Crystal Palace, including famous and influential figures like Charles Darwin, Charlotte Brontë, Karl Marx and Charles Dickens. Upon the Exhibition's closure, the Crystal Palace was moved to Sydenham Hill after public uproar at the prospect of the building being demolished. The Crystal Palace, though in a different location, continued to symbolise Victorian innovation and greatness until it was destroyed by a fire on 30 November 1936. The memory of the Crystal Palace remains synonymous with the Victorian Age and is firmly entrenched in British history.



The water towers were added to the Crystal Palace when the structure was moved to Sydenham Hill

WATER TOWERS

Two huge and impressive water towers were constructed after the Crystal Palace was moved from Hyde Park to Sydenham. These towers, which framed the building, were designed by the renowned engineer Isambard Kingdom Brunel, who had also proposed a design for the original Great Exhibition building alongside Paxton. The towers, which were used for a time by John Logie Baird to perform his experiments in television, survived the fire that destroyed the Crystal Palace, but were demolished during World War II.

SIZE

Measuring 563 metres (1,848 feet) long and 124 metres (408 feet) wide, the size of the Crystal Palace was undoubtedly impressive. The total area of the building covered 18 acres and the exhibition display tables occupied about 13km (eight miles).

JOSEPH PAXTON

Prior to designing the Crystal Palace, architect and gardener Joseph Paxton had made his name designing glasshouses for the gardens of the Duke of Devonshire. When he submitted his design sketches and calculations to the building committee, inspired by the glasshouses he was associated with, 245 designs had already been turned down. Paxton's innovative and striking design, which could feasibly be built in a short time frame, was eventually accepted.

THE GREAT EXHIBITION

Inspired by the flurry of national exhibitions across Europe, the Great Exhibition was first proposed by Henry Cole, a member of the Society for the Encouragement of Arts. Prince Albert, President of the Society, enthusiastically supported the idea and planning began. On 1 May 1851, the Exhibition opened with 20,000 onlookers in attendance as well as Queen Victoria and Albert. It remained open to the public until 11 October 1851.

PREFABRICATED DESIGN

One of the factors of Paxton's design that made it desirable to the building committee was that it was able to be assembled quickly and was low in cost. This was largely due to the prefabrication of the building's materials. 5,000 workers assembled 84,000 square metres of glass and 1,000 iron columns to erect the Crystal Palace in just five months.

A depiction of the entrance to the Crystal Palace as it looked when located at Sydenham

CANVAS SHADES

Maintaining the temperature in a completely transparent glass building like the Crystal Palace posed a problem for Paxton. However, he installed canvas shades on the roof of the building that enabled the amount of sunlight that could light and heat the structure to be managed. The shades could also be sprayed with water to create an evaporative cooling system.

AT SYDENHAM

The Crystal Palace had become so beloved that when the Great Exhibition closed less than six months after it had first opened its doors, the desire of the public was for the building to remain standing in Hyde Park. As a result, a group of businessmen purchased the building and moved it to Sydenham Hill, southeast London. It was re-erected, and with a few additions to the original building by Paxton, the Crystal Palace became a centre for education and exhibition.

BRINGING NATURE INSIDE

To incorporate the natural aspects of Hyde Park into the design of the Crystal Palace, the building was constructed around some of the magnificent elm trees that stood in the park. By bringing nature inside, an unexpected problem arose as sparrows nesting in the trees also became enclosed in the building, creating a mess as they defecated on the floors. The Duke of Wellington apparently suggested a solution to Queen Victoria – the introduction of sparrowhawks to hunt the sparrows.

THE BUILDING COMMITTEE

When it was decided to organise the Great Exhibition, a Royal Commission was assembled to organise the event. The Commission's building committee was established to arrange the building of the Exhibition's venue, and its members included some of the finest Victorian architects and engineers. Isambard Kingdom Brunel, Charles Barry, William Cubitt and Robert Stephenson were among those who oversaw the competition to design the building, and were responsible for selecting Paxton's designs.

MONKEY CLOSETS

Plumber George Jennings showcased the first public flushing toilets, called "monkey closets", as part of the Great Exhibition. Located inside the Crystal Palace's Retiring Rooms, the toilets were fully working and visitors could pay a penny to use them. This is, allegedly, where the term "to spend a penny" came from. When the Crystal Palace was relocated to Sydenham, the toilets were kept open and from this point on, public flushing toilets began to be opened across London.

Illustration by Adrian Mann

QUEEN VICTORIA'S CORONATION ROBES

London, UK
28 June 1838

IMPERIAL STATE CROWN

A new crown was made for the coronation of Queen Victoria as St Edward's Crown, used in British coronations since Charles II's, was deemed to be too big and heavy for Victoria's smaller head. The Imperial State Crown was made for the occasion and was decorated with several important jewels. The crown was later damaged but served as the basis for the Imperial State Crown still in existence today.

THE SOVEREIGN'S SCEPTRE

Like the orb, the Sovereign's Sceptre with Cross was created for the coronation of Charles II in 1661. Made from gold, the sceptre represents the temporal power of the monarch. The design of the sceptre was updated in 1910 by George V when he added the Cullinan I diamond, the largest uncut diamond ever discovered, to the top.

THE PROUDEST DAY

After her coronation at Westminster Abbey, Victoria reminisced about the occasion and made several sketchings of herself wearing her coronation robes. On the day of her coronation, she wrote in her diary that she would "ever remember this day as the proudest of my life" but that "the Crown hurt me a good deal".

WHITE DRESS

Underneath the elaborate golden and crimson robes, Victoria wore a more simple white satin dress. Little is known about this aspect of the Queen's coronation outfit, but it is possible that she wore an entirely white dress to symbolise her purity as a young unmarried woman of 19 years old.

ORB

The coronation orb has been used in the crowning of all British monarchs since it was designed for the coronation of King Charles II in the 17th century. It is made from gold and decorated with a number of precious jewels including diamonds, amethysts, pearls and sapphires. In the coronation ceremony, the orb represents the power given to the monarch by God.

THE WRONG FINGER

One of the most memorable moments from Queen Victoria's coronation occurred when the archbishop had to force the coronation ring onto Victoria's finger. The ring had been made to fit her little finger rather than her ring finger, due to a misunderstanding on the part of the royal goldsmiths who made the ring, and so it ended up being a painful experience for the new monarch.

DALMATICA

The dalmatica is the name for the splendid golden cloak worn by Victoria during the coronation ceremony. It was embroidered with motifs of roses, thistles and shamrocks to represent the nations of England, Scotland and Ireland respectively. The supertunica, which formed part of the dalmatica, survives today and is kept in the Royal Collection Trust.

Illustration by Kevin McGivern

Historical Treasures

JOHN BROWN LOCKET

A golden locket, purportedly given by Queen Victoria to her personal attendant — was their relationship all that it seemed?

Britain, 19th century

For over 30 years, John Brown was Queen Victoria's most important servant. He first came to the attention of the Queen when her and Prince Albert began renting the Balmoral estate, where Brown worked as a pony herder. The pair immediately became enamoured of Brown and he was given the position of personal servant to the Queen. However, following Prince Albert's death in 1861, historians have speculated as to whether the pair began a relationship far more intimate and scandalous.

Brown was transferred (along with the Queen's pony) to Osbourne in order that she remain exercising and healthy during her period of mourning. Brown's duties were many, functioning as the Queen's personal bodyguard as well as her servant. He once apprehended a man who approached her with a pistol, holding him until the police arrived.

Brown was known for being terse, speaking to the Queen in a manner in which it would not usually have been acceptable for a servant to do so – even occasionally referring to her as "woman". Rumours spread about their relationship and one even purported that she had secretly bore his child. While it seems unlikely that such a tryst did occur between them, Victoria clearly held very strong feelings for her most faithful of servants.

In 2004, a rarely seen example of the Queen's feelings for John Brown was discovered by a PhD student in the form of a letter. Bendor Grosvenor wrote of his finding in *History Today*, which he had discovered while researching in the archives of Lord Cranbrook. The letter was from Victoria to Cranbrook on the event of Brown's death and demonstrated the companionship and overwhelmingly strong affection she had for her former servant. "The Queen feels that life for the second time is become most trying and sad to bear deprived of all she so needs... the blow has fallen too heavily not to be very heavily felt."

This relatively simple gold locket contains a lock of both Victoria and Albert's hair, along with photographs of the royal couple. Though it has not corroborated, the locket is suspected to have been given to John Brown by Queen Victoria as a token of her gratitude for his service and friendship.

A MINIATURE GIFT

According to Charlotte Gere's *Victorian Jewellery Design* (1972), Victoria regularly gave such miniatures of herself and Albert to close friends as gifts. The locket is now in the collections of the Museum of London.

SILVER SCREEN ROMANCE

In 1997 Victoria and Brown's relationship became the subject of a film, *Mrs Brown*, which starred Judi Dench and Billy Connolly as Queen Victoria and John Brown respectively. Dench received the Golden Globe and BAFTA awards for best actress for her role as Victoria and was nominated for an Academy Award.

A GIFT OF HAIR

During the 19th century, it was not uncommon for a locket of hair from a family member to be kept as a sentimental artefact. The practice was purportedly an invention of Prince Albert, brought from Germany. The hair of deceased loved ones was also woven into jewellery, known as mourning jewellery.

ANOTHER LOCK OF HAIR?

Upon her own death on 22 January 1901, Queen Victoria instructed that several items were to be placed in her coffin alongside her. As well as items belonging to Prince Albert, a number related to John Brown and included a lock of his hair.

ABOVE Queen Victoria, photographed with John Brown

VICTORIAN AUTHORS

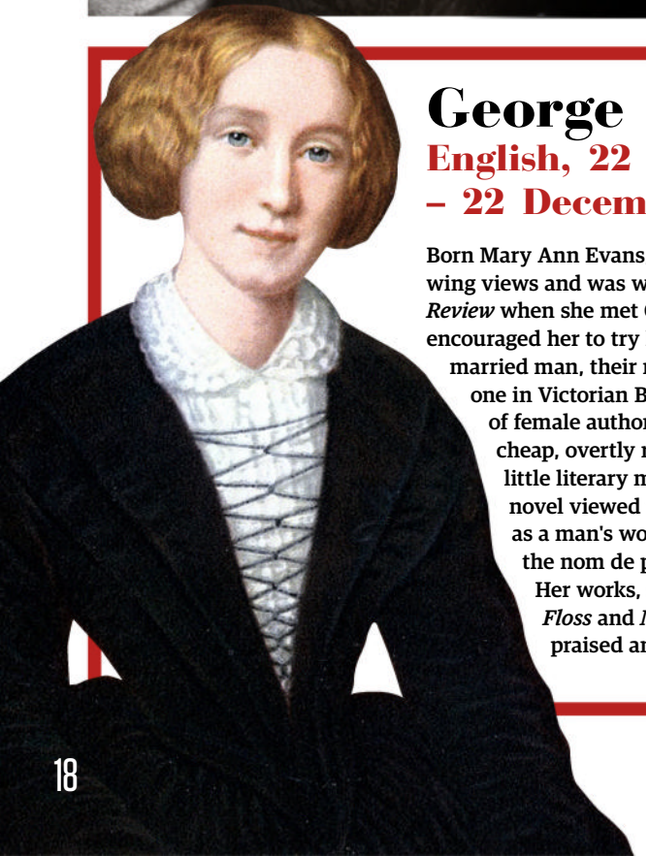
From the adventures of Sherlock Holmes to the autobiography of a slave, the Victorian era is full of visionary authors

Charles Dickens

English, 7 February 1812 – 9 June 1870

Charles Dickens wrote 15 novels in total, among which are some of the best-known works in the English language, including *Oliver Twist*, *Great Expectations* and *A Christmas Carol*. However, unlike some of his contemporaries, Dickens focused his writing on exposing the social evils of his day, primarily that of poverty and exploitation. Dickens had spent his youth in poverty and so knew personally the hardship felt by Britain's working class. Yet despite this, his works were serialised and popular among all the classes. Queen Victoria was also said to have been an admirer, meeting Dickens shortly before his death.

When travelling with fellow author Wilkie Collins in Italy, the pair entered a moustache growing competition together.



George Eliot

English, 22 November 1819 – 22 December 1880

Born Mary Ann Evans, George Eliot held strong left-wing views and was writing for *The Westminster Review* when she met George Lewes, who encouraged her to try her hand at fiction writing. A married man, their relationship was a scandalous one in Victorian Britain. Eliot felt that the work of female authors was usually dismissed as cheap, overtly romantic and considered of little literary merit. Desiring to have her novel viewed with the same significance as a man's would be, she adopted the nom de plume of George Eliot. Her works, such as *The Mill on the Floss* and *Middlemarch*, were widely praised and remain popular to this day.

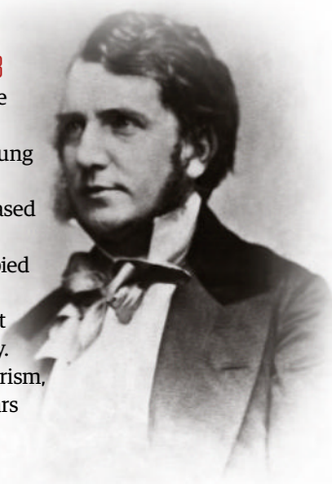
MARY PRINCE

BERMUDIAN, C. 1 OCTOBER 1788 – C. 1833

Born into slavery, Mary Prince created something of a storm when she authored *The History of Mary Prince, A West Indian Slave, Related by Herself* in 1831. In 1828, when she moved to London with her owner, Mary left and began the fight for her freedom. Although slavery was still commonplace in Britain's colonies, in 1807 the buying and selling of slaves had been forbidden in Britain. After meeting abolitionist Thomas Pringle, Mary authored her story as part of her campaign for freedom.

SHERIDAN LE FANU

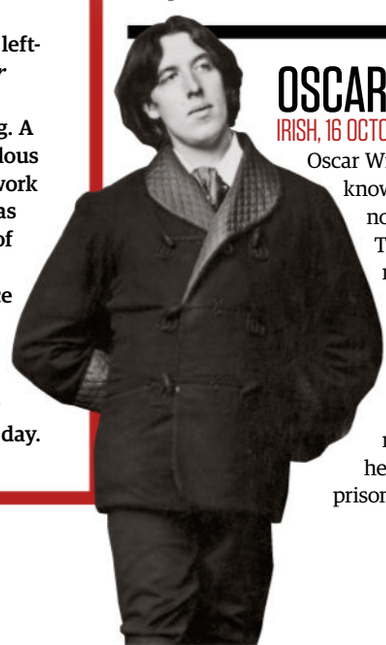
IRISH, 28 AUGUST 1814 – 7 FEBRUARY 1873



Born in Dublin, Ireland, Sheridan Le Fanu was originally destined for a career as a lawyer. However, the young man found himself drawn to more literary pursuits and instead purchased several newspapers, becoming a successful journalist. He also occupied his time by writing supernatural and Gothic tales, and it is these that have become his best-known legacy. *Carmilla*, a disturbing tale of vampirism, was published in 1872, some 25 years before Bram Stoker's more famous vampiric creation, *Dracula*.

OSCAR WILDE

IRISH, 16 OCTOBER 1854 – 30 NOVEMBER 1900



Oscar Wilde was a popular playwright known for his wit, but wrote only one novel: *The Picture of Dorian Gray*. The book tells the story of a young man who sells his soul in return for eternal youth. In 1895, Wilde became the subject of a trial surrounding his homosexual liaisons with a number of men. Cruelly humiliated in what is regarded as the first celebrity trial, he was sentenced to two years in prison and upon release left for France.

Rudyard Kipling

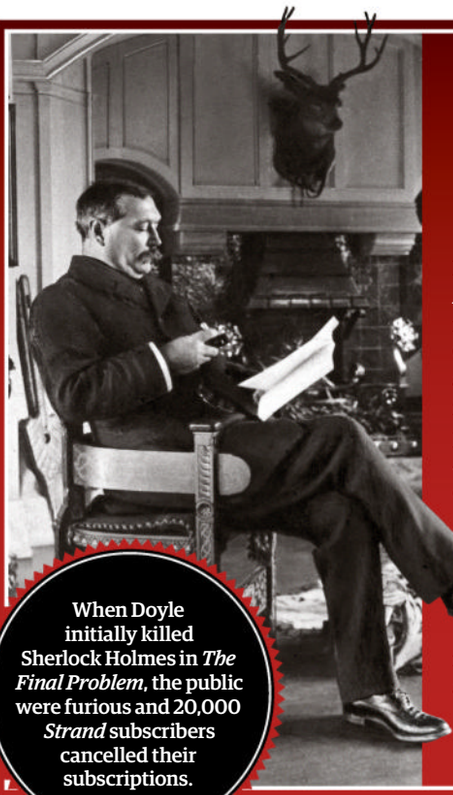
British, 30 December 1865 – 18 January 1936

The author of *The Jungle Book* and *Gunga Din*, Rudyard Kipling is in some ways the quintessential Victorian writer. Despite a large portion of his work being published following Queen Victoria's demise, his stories are as much a product of the period as any other. Born in British India, Kipling's work celebrates what he perceived as the virtues of imperialism. His poem, *The White Man's Burden*, champions the American annexation of the Philippines. Celebrated during his time, his collections of poetry, short stories and various novels were extremely popular. In 1907 he received the Nobel Prize for Literature.

WILKIE COLLINS

ENGLISH, 8 JANUARY 1824 – 23 SEPTEMBER 1889

During the Victorian era, Wilkie Collins was known for his mystery and sensational fiction, including *The Woman in White* (1860) and *The Moonstone* (1868). This latter work (along with others such as Poe's 1841 *The Murders in the Rue Morgue*) is considered an early example of western detective fiction. Collins was also a successful playwright, adapting his novels for the stage. It was through the stage he met close friend Charles Dickens, both acting in a mutual friend's production.



When Doyle initially killed Sherlock Holmes in *The Final Problem*, the public were furious and 20,000 *Strand* subscribers cancelled their subscriptions.

Sir Arthur Conan Doyle

British, 22 May 1859 - 7 July 1930

In 1887 Sir Arthur Conan Doyle authored *A Study in Scarlet*, the first novel featuring the detective Sherlock Holmes. Conan Doyle would further explore the adventures of his most famous character in four novels and 56 short stories, many published in the pages of the popular *Strand* magazine. The tales saw the detective face such horrors as *The Hound of the Baskervilles* (1902) and grapple with confounding mysteries including *The Adventure of the Speckled Band* (1892). However, Conan Doyle's literary output was not limited purely to detective fiction and he also authored adventures such as *The Lost World* (1912) and horror stories including *Lot No. 249* (1892).

So popular was *Lady Audley's Secret* that nine editions were published in the first year.

Mary Elizabeth Braddon

English, 4 October 1835 – 4 February 1915

During her lifetime Mary Elizabeth Braddon was an extremely prolific author, writing over 90 novels and 150 short stories. Her 1862 work, *Lady Audley's Secret*, was one of the most popular 'sensation novels', a type of story which (as their name suggests) involved 'sensational' elements of melodrama, such as infidelity, murder and malevolent villains. Braddon herself had an illicit relationship with the publisher John Maxwell. Maxwell was married, but his wife suffered from a mental illness and was confined to a hospital. It was not until her death that the pair could be open about their relationship.

RHODA BROUGHTON

WELSH, 29 NOVEMBER 1840 – 5 JUNE 1920

Rhoda Broughton was a Welsh novelist and the niece of Irish author Sheridan Le Fanu. It was Le Fanu who serialised her first novel in the Dublin University Press — which he edited at the time. These early books saw Broughton criticised as scandalous and improper, one review even stating that "it is a shame for women so to write". Although her later novels have received subsequent praise, it was a reputation she struggled to shake for the rest of her life.

Q&A

DYING IN VICTORIAN BRITAIN

Judith Flanders explains some of the rituals and rites performed by and important to the Victorians

How did people in the Victorian era care for the dying?

Obviously, there were as many ways of caring for the dying in the 19th century as there are today. The main difference, perhaps, was that for the great bulk of the population, dying happened at home. Hospitals restricted their care to a small number of diseases, and were not considered good places to be, so if you had money, you were looked after at home by your family and by servants; if you didn't have money, you couldn't afford the hospitals, and so you too were looked after at home by your family. Dying could also be a very prolonged process. If you had, say, tuberculosis, you might well be bedridden for months, possibly years. You knew you weren't going to be cured, everyone around you knew you weren't going to be cured, and so you just waited for that final day.

In what ways were Victorian deaths public affairs?

Deaths were public in two ways. With people being looked after at home, dying, too, took place at home. Child mortality was terrifyingly high: the great majority of children grew up in households where one or more of their siblings died before their fifth birthday. In fact, more children died than old people, making death ever-present. And then after death, funeral processions could also be public affairs. A prosperous middle-class funeral included two 'mutes' – men who stood outside the front door holding staffs swathed with black fabric – until the coffin came out. The horses were decorated with black plumed feathers, and if the money could be spared, a 'featherman' walked in front carrying a tray with more black feathers, with the carriages of the mourners lined up behind as they were watched by passers-by in the street.

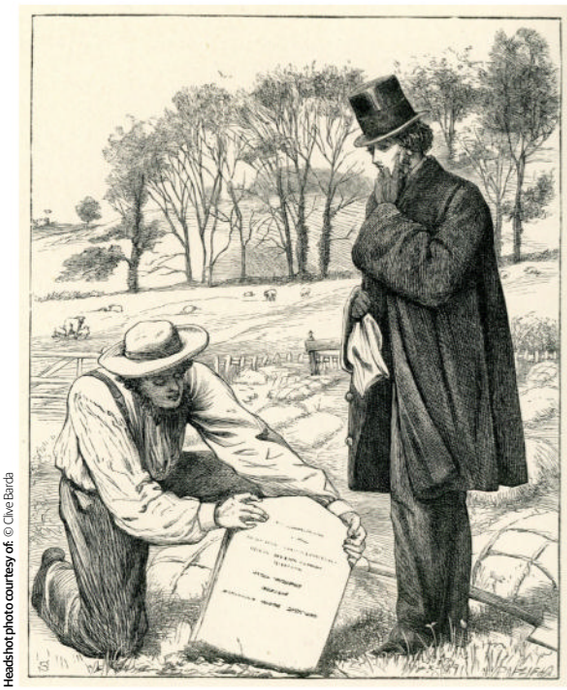
What were death tokens and what omens did Victorians look out for that foretold death?

Death tokens were omens, and were generally considered to be the superstitions of uneducated, country people – although many more probably half-believed them too. They varied from region to region, and decade to decade, but almost anything could portend death. If a cradle was set to rocking before a baby was laid in it for the first

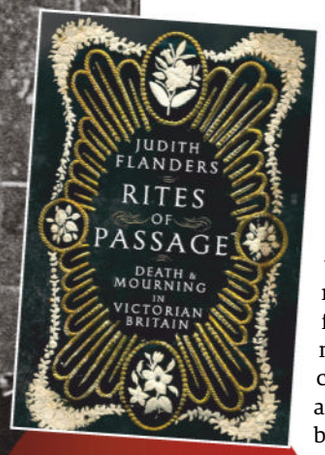
Judith Flanders is a historian, journalist and author who has written several books on life in Victorian Britain including *The Victorian City: Everyday Life in Dickens' London* (Atlantic Books, 2013).

BELOW-LEFT
A Father's Lament by F Smallfield shows the predicament of many Victorian parents who lost a child

BELOW
It was expected that Victorian women would dress in black while mourning, though not to the extent that Queen Victoria did when her husband died



Headshot photo courtesy of: © Clive Barda



RITES OF PASSAGE: DEATH AND MOURNING IN VICTORIAN BRITAIN (PICADOR, 2024) BY JUDITH FLANDERS IS AVAILABLE TO BUY NOW.

time, it would not rock for long as death would follow. If a dressmaker used a black pin when making a wedding dress, the bride was doomed. All sorts of animal sightings foretold death: a deathwatch beetle, a bird tapping at a window, a cock crowing before midnight – even an owl hooting, which let's face it, is what owls do. Then there were beliefs about dying itself: if the dying person lay on a bed stuffed with pigeon feathers, they would linger – and so if family members were distant and trying to get back before the death to say goodbye, beds were sometimes deliberately stuffed with pigeon feathers, to keep the invalid alive until the visitor arrived.

How important were funerals in the Victorian mourning process?

Funerals were, of course, important, just as they are today to ceremonialise grief and help mourners come to terms with their loss. The difference for the Victorians, particularly those in the first half of the 19th century, was their elaborate nature. There was special funeral-wear for the mourners – not just black clothes, but made from a special fabric, with black gloves, and black armbands for the men, and great enveloping black cloaks for all. There were the attendants, there was the procession. The funerals of the great could be astonishing. The funeral of the Duke of Wellington had more than 10,000 men in the procession, and the carriage carrying his coffin was so heavy that a regiment of soldiers had to walk behind with ropes tied around their waists, the men acting as a brake when the carriage went downhill on its way to St Paul's Cathedral.

The lengthy mourning period of Queen Victoria is infamous, but were the mourning rituals she observed after the death of Prince Albert indicative of the wider mourning rites of the era?

No. One of the most important things to remember about Queen Victoria and her endless, ostentatious mourning, is she was extremely unusual. Yes, widows wore black, most of them for a year, or even two; some forever after. But they didn't, as Victoria did *30 years after the death of her husband*, demand that those around her not wear mauve dresses, because mauve was close to pink, and pink was too cheerful. Nor did they refuse to go back to work for years after a death. For the brute truth was, few women who worked could afford the luxury of woe that Victoria welcomed. This is not a retrospective, 21st-century view. A decade after Albert's death, her doctor referred to her continued grieving as 'a form of madness', and Mrs Oliphant, a popular novelist, who herself had to go back to work after the death of not only her husband but all her children as well, wrote of the queen: 'A woman is surely a poor creature if with a large, happy affectionate family of children around her she can't take heart to do her duty whether she likes it or not. We have to do it, with very little solace, and I don't see that there is anybody particularly sorry for us.'

ABOVE
The grand funeral procession of Queen Victoria, 1901

VICTORIAN LONDON MUSEUMS

Explore Britain's Victorian past, from the home of the world's greatest detective to an ornate disused sewage station

1 SHERLOCK HOLMES MUSEUM
221B BAKER ST, LONDON, NW1 6XE

Located at 221B Baker Street, the address of the fictional detective, the Sherlock Holmes Museum now serves as a memorial to the supreme sleuth. Opening in 1990, the museum meticulously recreates Sherlock Holmes' apartment and rooms, filling them with a wealth of Victorian knick-knacks, curios and items from his various adventures.

There can also be found wax statues portraying some of the most famous characters from the Doyle stories, including of course Holmes and Watson but also others such as Inspector Lestrade and the villainous Professor Moriarty. The Museum's shop houses what it claims to be the largest collection of Sherlock Holmes merchandise in the world.

Visiting Sherlockians would also do well to drop by the pub named after the detective on Northumberland Street. Upstairs can be found another replica of the 221B Baker Street flat with an interesting history of its own, originally having been designed for the Festival of Britain in 1951.

Open Monday to Sunday, 9:30am-6pm, last entry 5.30pm. Adult tickets £16. Children & concessions discounts available.

The exterior of the Sherlock Holmes Museum located at the world famous 221B Baker Street


The exquisite replica of Sherlock Holmes' famous flat inside the museum

2 CHARLES DICKENS MUSEUM
48 DOUGHTY STREET, LONDON, WC1N 2LX

The exterior of the Charles Dickens Museum at 48 Doughty Street, where he wrote *Oliver Twist*

Located at 48 Doughty Street, the house where Dickens authored a number of his earlier works (including *Oliver Twist*), the Charles Dickens Museum contains a veritable treasure trove of artefacts related to the life of the famous author. The building was Dickens' London home and he lived there from 1837 to 1839. According to English Heritage, Dickens would have paid the not insubstantial sum (for the time) of £80 a year in rent.

The museum opened in 1925 and is also the site of a blue plaque in the author's honour. Alongside their permanent exhibits the museum hosts frequently changing exhibitions. Currently they are showcasing items exploring the friendship between Dickens and fellow author Wilkie Collins. Events such as guided evening tours and virtual talks are held on a regular basis.


A copy of *A Christmas Carol* among the museum's collections

Items within the museum's collections include the original cover illustration for Dickens' unfinished novel *The Mystery of Edwin Drood* (composed by Wilkie Collins' brother Charles), an incomplete draft of *Tom Tiddler's Ground*, and even Charles Dickens' own personal commode.

Open Wednesday to Sunday 10am-5pm, last entry 4pm. Adult tickets cost £12.50 with discounts available for children and concessions.

The cornerstone laid by Queen Victoria in 1899

The beautiful John Madejski gardens located at the V&A

3 THE VICTORIA AND ALBERT MUSEUM

CROMWELL RD, LONDON, SW7 2RL

Do not be fooled by the name, as this is not a museum dedicated to the life of the royal couple and was originally known as The South Kensington Museum, being renamed in 1899. However, the V&A stands as a memorial to Prince Albert's love of innovation and art and is home to one of the finest collections in the world.

Yet the museum itself should also be of interest to the travelling amateur historian. Construction began in 1854 but the museum has its roots in the Great Exhibition of 1851, which began the Victorian tradition of World's Fairs quickly spreading across Europe and America. The Exhibition celebrated industry and the museum was intended to do the same, designed as a monument to the arts. The first iteration of the V&A was the Museum of Manufactures in 1852, originally located in Marlborough House.

As the collection expanded, it quickly outgrew Marlborough House and so a new museum was constructed. In 1899 it was renamed The Victoria & Albert Museum, with Victoria herself laying the cornerstone as part of a special ceremony. Over successive years the museum's collections have continued to expand and contain such highlights as a 1793 mechanical organ in the shape of a tiger once owned by Tipu Sultan, and an evening coat that was designed by Elsa Schiaparelli and Jean Cocteau in 1937.

Open daily 10am-5.45pm, 10am-10pm on Fridays. Entry is free though some exhibitions may charge.

The exterior of the Ragged School Museum

The museum's replica of a Victorian classroom

4 THE RAGGED SCHOOL

46-50 COPPERFIELD RD, LONDON, E3 4RR

In the era prior to the Elementary Education Act of 1891, free primary education was not commonplace and poor children had to rely on ragged schools, special philanthropic institutions designed for children in poverty. The Ragged School Museum is housed at the site of the Barnardo's Copperfield Road Free School, which opened in 1877 and was once the largest of these institutions. The school was the creation of renowned philanthropist Dr Thomas John Barnardo. Two separate schools were housed on the site, one for young boys and the other for young girls. As well as education, the establishment also offered free school meals.

The Ragged School Museum opened in 1990 and is dedicated to preserving the history of these institutions. Within its walls can be found a recreation of a Victorian photograph, allowing visitors to step inside a poor family's household, and a replica Victorian school room. In the latter the museum regularly hosts authentic 'Victorian' school lessons for the brave pupil.

Open Wednesday to Sunday 10am-5pm. Tickets are £5.00 for adults with discounts available for children and concessions.

5 CROSSNESS PUMPING STATION

BAZALGETTE WAY, ABBEY WOOD, LONDON, SE2 9AQ

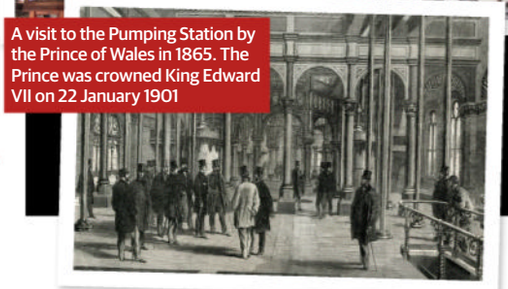
In 1858 Victorian London was assaulted by a nauseous smell emanating from the River Thames. For centuries the city had relied on the great river for its waste disposal - yes *that* kind of waste. However, during the Industrial Revolution the city's population expanded exponentially and in the summer of 1858, thanks in large part to the overwhelmingly high temperatures the city experienced that year, the Thames retaliated by giving off an almighty stench. Something had to be done.

The result was a brand-new sewage system, an intricate network of tunnels deep below the city, for which Crossness Pumping Station was designed to remove solid sewage and contaminated water into a reservoir. Whereas one might expect such an establishment to be thoroughly stomach-turning, the creation of architect Charles Henry Driver is sublime in the extreme.

In the decades after, Crossness was left to fall into disrepair, but in the 1980s the Crossness Engines Trust was founded with the intention of restoring the disused pumping station to its former glory. Incredibly, much of the work so far has been carried out by volunteers. In 2016, thanks to a grant from the National Lottery Fund, the Trust was able to build an entire exhibition devoted to the Great Stink that led to the creation of London's sewage system.

Tours cost £18, check www.crossness.org.uk for dates and booking details.

The fabulous interior of Crossness Pumping Station following its restoration



A visit to the Pumping Station by the Prince of Wales in 1865. The Prince was crowned King Edward VII on 22 January 1901

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DARK SIDE OF DA VINCI

From killing machines to gruesome dissections, uncover the Renaissance polymath's hidden history

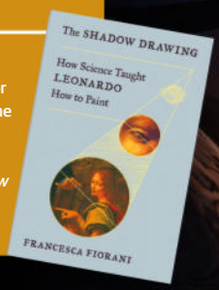
Written by Francesca Fiorani

EXPERT BIO

©Simona Filippi

FRANCESCA FIORANI

Francesca Fiorani is Commonwealth Professor of Art History at the University of Virginia. She is also the author of *The Marvel of Maps: Art, cartography and politics in Renaissance Italy* (Yale University Press, 2005) and *The Shadow Drawing: How science taught Leonardo how to paint* (Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2020).



Leonardo da Vinci is remembered as a 'dual genius', the great artist who gave us the *Mona Lisa* and the great inventor who conceived machines that would not exist for some time, from the parachute to flying contraptions. But did you know that Leonardo was deeply interested in science not apart from his art, but because of it? Insatiably curious, he delved into many sciences – anatomy, hydraulics, geology, botany, mechanics, astronomy – but the one that mattered to him the most was optics, the science that teaches about darkish, smoky, and blurred shadows. He thought that those darkish shadows were key to understanding the human mind.

Illustration by Kevin McGivern

ENTER THE POLYMATH

Leonardo da Vinci was born on 15 April 1452, in Vinci, a small village about 20 miles from Florence. His father, Ser Piero, a notary, had conceived him out of wedlock with Caterina, a household servant. Leonardo's grandfather proudly recorded the arrival of his first grandson in the family memory book: "There was born to me a grandson, the son of Ser Piero my son." But in other, more fundamental ways, the boy was not part of the family. According to the laws of the time, illegitimate children were deprived of inheritance rights. They did not even have the right to attend university, let alone enrol in the guild of notaries. Because of the circumstances of his birth, the boy had to be directed towards a different career.

We know nothing about Leonardo's childhood, but based on what we know about the upbringing of children in this period, we can surmise that he spent a couple of years with his mother in Vinci and then moved to Florence, where his father lived with his wife, whom he married after Leonardo's birth. Leonardo learned how to read and write in a neighbourhood grammar school and attended an abacus school that taught commercial mathematics: double-entry bookkeeping, algebra, and the use of numerals of Indian and Middle Eastern origin, all skills merchants needed for their profession. It's unclear how much authority Leonardo's teachers held over him, however, as the boy refused to write in normal script running from left to right, preferring instead to write in reverse, from right to left, and in mirror writing. For some time it was thought that Leonardo wrote this way to keep his thoughts secret, but the reality is that he was also left-handed, and like many left-handed people he found it easier to write in reverse.

"Like many left-handed people he found it easier to write in reverse"

Before Leonardo turned 15, he was sent to train as an artist, an occupation that many would have regarded as disgraceful for the son of a notary, but one that ultimately brought great fame.

BELOW Verrocchio built this golden globe using burning mirrors to weld its parts when Leonardo was an apprentice in his workshop

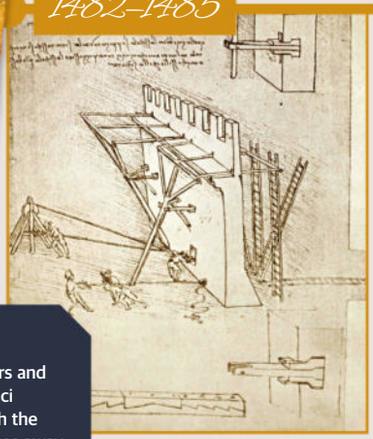
ABOVE-LEFT Leonardo's studies and calculations on burning mirrors with his memorandum on their use for the welds executed in 1469 on the copper orb of Florence cathedral

LEFT Leonardo learned the power of wrinkles to convey life's experiences from his master Verrocchio, as in this portrait of Saint Jerome, in which wrinkles testify to the man's austere life

Invention Timeline

Some key creations from Da Vinci's workshop

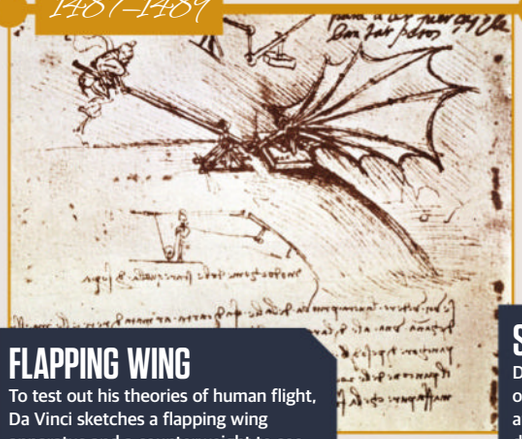
1482–1485



WALL DEFENCE

Through a series of levers and beams, Leonardo da Vinci devises a system to push the ladders of opposing forces away from defensive walls.

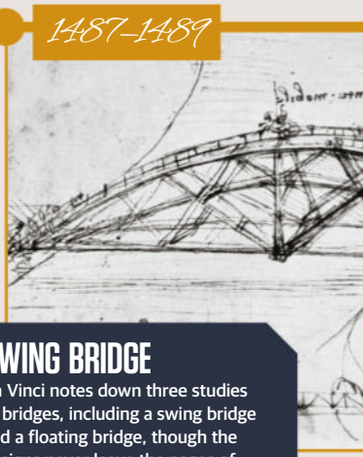
1487–1489



FLAPPING WING

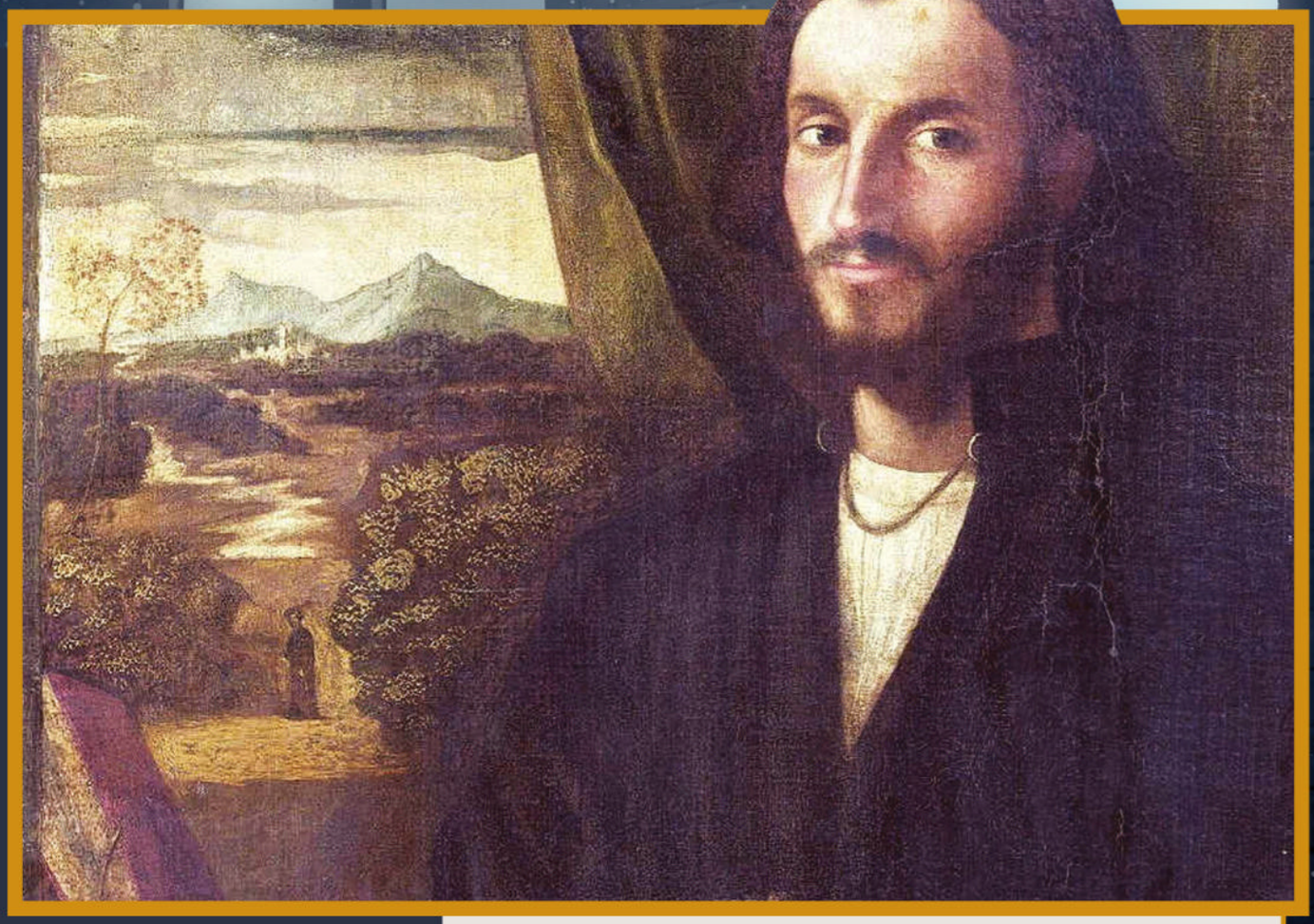
To test out his theories of human flight, Da Vinci sketches a flapping wing apparatus and a counterweight to see how moving the wing could lift weight.

1487–1489



SWING BRIDGE

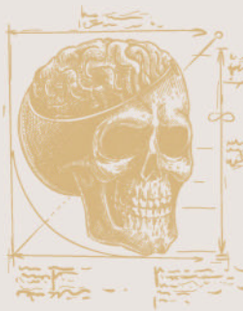
Da Vinci notes down three studies of bridges, including a swing bridge and a floating bridge, though the designs never leave the pages of his notebook.



IN THE WORKSHOP

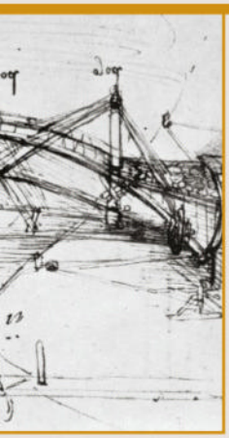
He learned basic artistic skills: drawing, perspective, mixing pigments, preparing panels, colouring, glazing. But because he trained in the workshop of an exceptional master, Andrea del Verrocchio, who himself was an experimental artist, he also learned a lot about science, especially optics. Verrocchio loved music and literature, wrote verse, and sketched superbly – he would smudge black chalk drawings with his fingers to create a darkish, smoky effect, a technique known as sfumato that Leonardo would perfect.

ABOVE A portrait of Leonardo da Vinci as a young man



Verrocchio was famous for the emotions and expressions that he imbued in his figures. He understood that the subtlest change of heart or mind involuntarily triggered an alteration in the body and face, even how clothing folds, and that what made these minute shifts visible were the shadows cast. Optics was the science that taught him how to capture the areas where light met shadow, where penumbras occurred and there was often some light, but not enough for clarity, creating a fuzzier overall picture. Optics was what Verrocchio wanted Leonardo to study and then employ.

But in Verrocchio's workshop Leonardo had another dramatic introduction to optics. He witnessed (and perhaps assisted with) an artistic achievement that seemed to others magic, but that he knew was the result of deep knowledge of optics. This involved the painstaking experiments for the golden orb that sits atop the dome of the Cathedral of Santa Maria del Fiore in Florence. The challenge of this apparently simple work was that the orb had to be welded in situ, at the height of 140 feet, with wood scaffolding all around. The enterprise was pure madness, but it succeeded because of the welding ▶

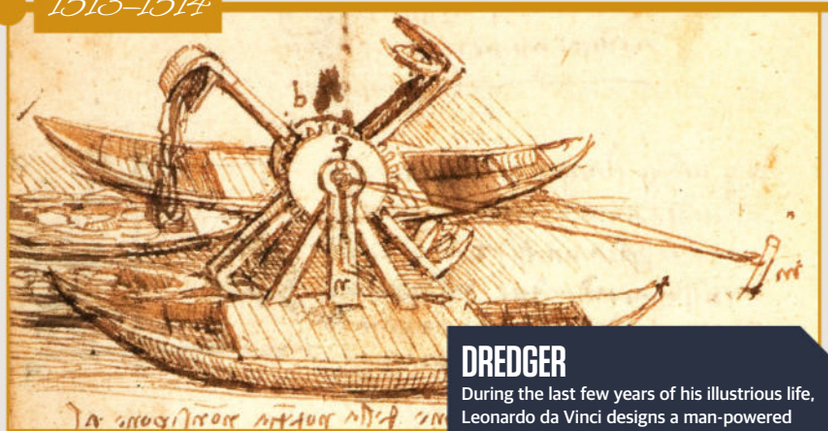


1504

BOMBARDS

Intended for presentation to a patron and not part of his unique studies, these gunpowder-fuelled exploding cannonballs are designed to release deadly wedge-shaped iron pieces.

1513–1514



DREDGER

During the last few years of his illustrious life, Leonardo da Vinci designs a man-powered dredger that can scoop mud from water systems in order to prevent overflowing.

machine Verrocchio used. Teenager Leonardo called it "a concave sphere that makes fire". This was a concave mirror, known as a burning mirror, designed in such a way that rays reflecting off its surface do not disperse in random directions, but rather converge on a single point – the focal point – and so produce intense heat. 40 years later, in his 60s, by then a famous artist, Leonardo still recalled it with admiration: "Remember the welds that were used to solder the globe of Santa Maria del Fiore." The event stuck with him.

SCIENCE MEETS ART

As Leonardo worked his way through the science of mirrors, he acquired the mental habit of moving from the direct observation of the mirrors and their reflections to the geometrical diagrams that explained their functioning, and then back again to the mirrors and to more direct observations. In essence, he was teaching himself how to 'see' the science behind the phenomena he was observing.

It must have been at this moment that, as a young boy, Leonardo made a huge intellectual leap: he realised that this science of optics, when put in the right hands, enabled painting to reveal deeper truths about the human condition.

In the very first piece he painted entirely by himself, *The Annunciation*, now at the Uffizi in Florence, Leonardo painted thick and translucent atmospheric effects that had never been seen in a painting. He was the only artist who understood that to enhance the connection between viewers and painted stories, an artist had to account for modulations of colours due to exposure to different light sources.

As odd as it may seem to us today, optics was a hot topic in the Renaissance. It was a distinct form of philosophy that explained how vision works, literally how we 'see'. But explaining how vision works entailed understanding how the mind processes information gathered by the eye. This, in turn, meant wrestling with one of the fundamental questions of philosophy: How do we know the world? Optics then was a philosophical investigation that studied the role of vision in learning about the world. To be a great scholar of optics, one had to be a great observer of the physical world and a great recorder of visual experience.

Leonardo learned about optics as a philosophy from an 11th-century book titled *Book of Optics* by the Arab philosopher known in the Renaissance as Alhazen – his real name was Abu Ali al-Hasan Ibn al-Haytham – that had been translated into Italian in the 14th century. A copy of the Italian translation was in the hands of an artist who lived a few blocks away from Verrocchio's workshop.

The tenet of Alhazen's optics was that the eye never errs because it is the perfect organ to capture the only thing that we 'see' of the world: infinite variations of lights and colours. Today thanks to Newton we know that light is colour, but back then it was believed that they were two different entities, although one could not be perceived without the other. Alhazen also made Leonardo understand that it was the atmosphere that generated small, imperceptible variations of shadows and penumbra that in turn manifested the deepest emotions of people. To capture these emotions through facial expressions and body movements, Leonardo had to capture the particle-filled atmosphere on people's faces and their bodies.

"It took him more than ten human cadavers to fully understand veins"

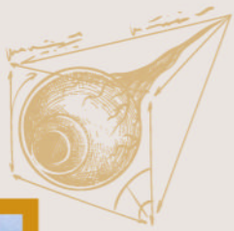
This is why the atmosphere was so important to Leonardo the painter. And this is also why Leonardo spent the rest of his life using blurred shadows to get to the psychology of the people he painted. He had some great successes, as in the portrait of Ginevra de' Benci, the sister of a Florentine friend: natural light from the background percolates to the foreground, creating delicate shadows on the sitter's face and neck that beautifully evoke the mood of this bride-to-be who was destined to marriage but aspired to a life of the mind. And he had also astounding failures, such as the *Adoration of the Magi*, which he abandoned after having worked on it frantically for about two years. He could not achieve the optical rigour and poignant expressions he had come to expect of himself for each of the hundred figures he had sketched for this painting.

WAR MACHINES

In 1483 Leonardo moved to Milan, seeking work as a military engineer for the duke of Milan. He described war as "brutal madness", but nonetheless he designed fanciful "instruments of war", as he called his stunning speculative drawings of armoured vehicles, bridges,

LEFT In his first solo painting Leonardo created his signature atmospheric effects, especially in the fading mountain view in the background, which he later called 'aerial perspective'

MIDDLE-LEFT Leonardo depicted light not as we see it – as one solid beam – but rather as a set of discrete rays, charting the individual destination of each one, line by line



BOTTOM-LEFT This painting with over 100 figures was an optical problem Leonardo was unable to address to his satisfaction. He abandoned it

LEFT The delicate shadows on the sitter's face and neck evoke her state of mind at this stage of her life when she would have preferred pursuing a life of the mind to marriage

BELOW Da Vinci's sketch of a giant ballista on six wheels

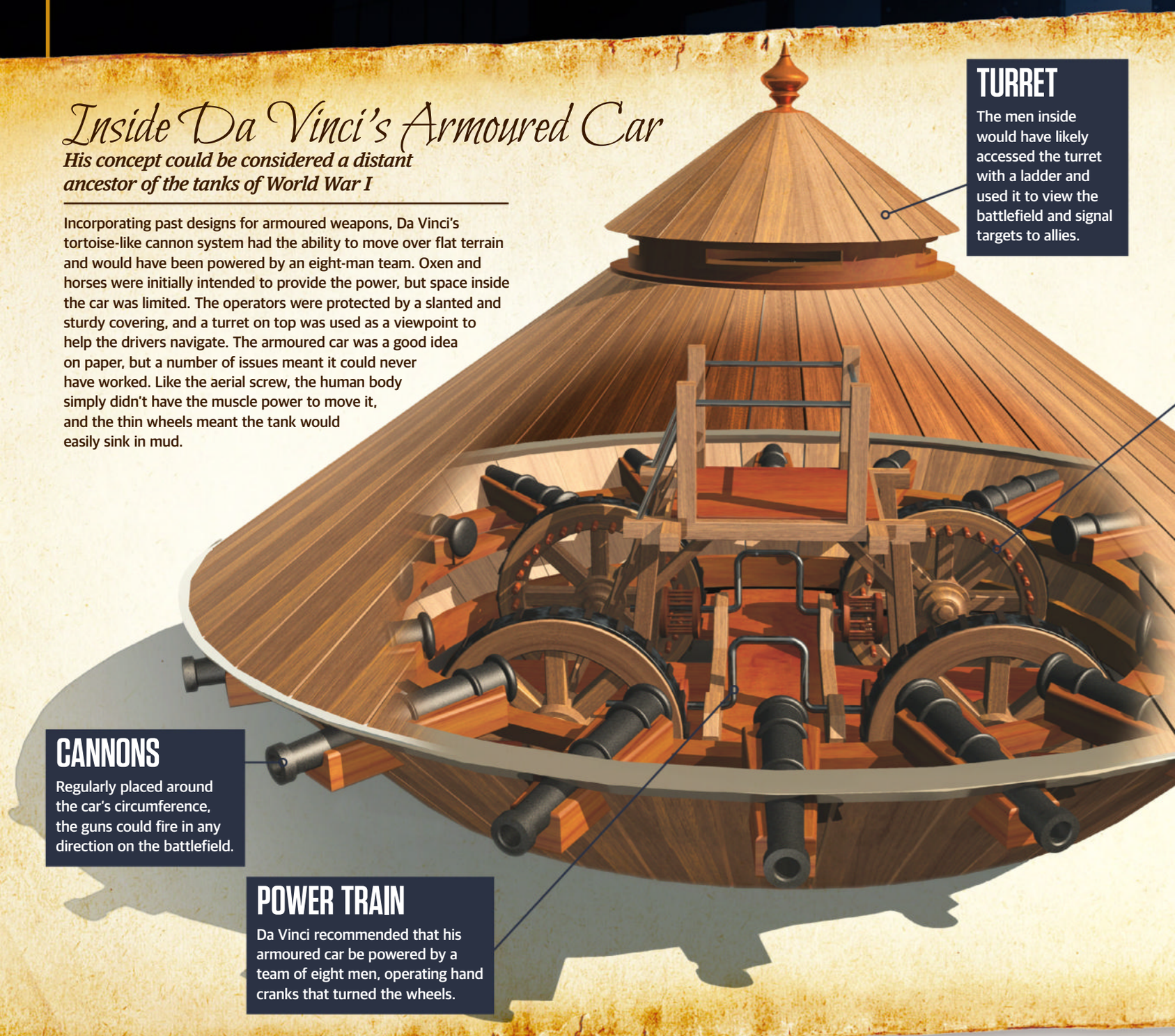
mortars, cannon, and catapults – none became real weapons. He was more successful in instructing how to paint war. Interestingly, for him what conveyed the violence of war was not the fight itself, but the thickness of a cloud made of dust, smoke, and blood, mixed with light and shadow. He wrote: "You must first represent the smoke from the artillery, mingled in the air with the dust stirred up by the movement of the horses and the combatants." Thinking more like a physicist than an artist, he explained that dust is made of particles of different weights: the finest particles, which get to the highest reaches, mingle with air and acquire its colour; heavier particles stay closer to the ground, mingling with smoke and acquiring "the appearance of a dark cloud". He himself had to paint such a battle for the Florentine Republic, the *Battle of Anghiari*, but as he wrote, on 6 June 1505, "at the very moment of laying down the brush" the weather deteriorated, and it became "as dark as night." A jar broke. Water spilled. Rain poured in great quantities and "the cartoon tore". People in the Renaissance believed transformational events were marked by exceptional natural occurrences. The storm that erupted that day and tore the preparatory cartoon was a dark omen for Leonardo's *Battle of Anghiari*, which indeed he never painted.

War was behind another of Leonardo's lost works, the bronze equestrian statue the duke of Milan commissioned Leonardo to celebrate his father, which, at the height of eight metres, was a major undertaking. Conscious of this technical and artistic enterprise, on the evening of 17 May 1491, sitting in candlelight, Leonardo opened a new notebook to record "everything related to the bronze horse, presently under execution." A dark moment came four years later, when the duke ▶

Inside Da Vinci's Armoured Car

His concept could be considered a distant ancestor of the tanks of World War I

Incorporating past designs for armoured weapons, Da Vinci's tortoise-like cannon system had the ability to move over flat terrain and would have been powered by an eight-man team. Oxen and horses were initially intended to provide the power, but space inside the car was limited. The operators were protected by a slanted and sturdy covering, and a turret on top was used as a viewpoint to help the drivers navigate. The armoured car was a good idea on paper, but a number of issues meant it could never have worked. Like the aerial screw, the human body simply didn't have the muscle power to move it, and the thin wheels meant the tank would easily sink in mud.



TURRET

The men inside would have likely accessed the turret with a ladder and used it to view the battlefield and signal targets to allies.

CANNONS

Regularly placed around the car's circumference, the guns could fire in any direction on the battlefield.

POWER TRAIN

Da Vinci recommended that his armoured car be powered by a team of eight men, operating hand cranks that turned the wheels.

repurposed the metal set aside for this monument to forge cannons to fend off a military attack. Leonardo was gracious enough to at least pretend to understand: "[Of] the horse I shall say nothing because I know the times," he wrote the duke, "my life in your service." But an even darker day came in 1499, when he saw French bowmen shooting arrows at the clay model of his horse until it was reduced to pieces. Grimly he summed up his 20 years in Milan: "the duke lost his duchy and his things and his freedom and none of the work I planned for him was carried out."

But in truth, he had accomplished plenty in Milan. He painted – and finished – *The Last Supper*, which his friend the

"In 1483 Leonardo moved to Milan, seeking work as a military engineer for the duke of Milan"

mathematician Luca Pacioli praised as "an exquisite image of humans' burning desire for salvation", even though, before too long, because of Leonardo's experimentation with the painting technique to get nuanced atmospheric effects, the mural was "nothing but a blurred stain". In Milan he also delved into other sciences: geology, botany, zoology, anatomy, hydraulics. At times, these other subjects took over his life entirely. Others were lifelong interests to which he returned intermittently. All, though, were subordinate to painting, which for him was always the highest form of investigation of the natural world.

HUMAN ANATOMY

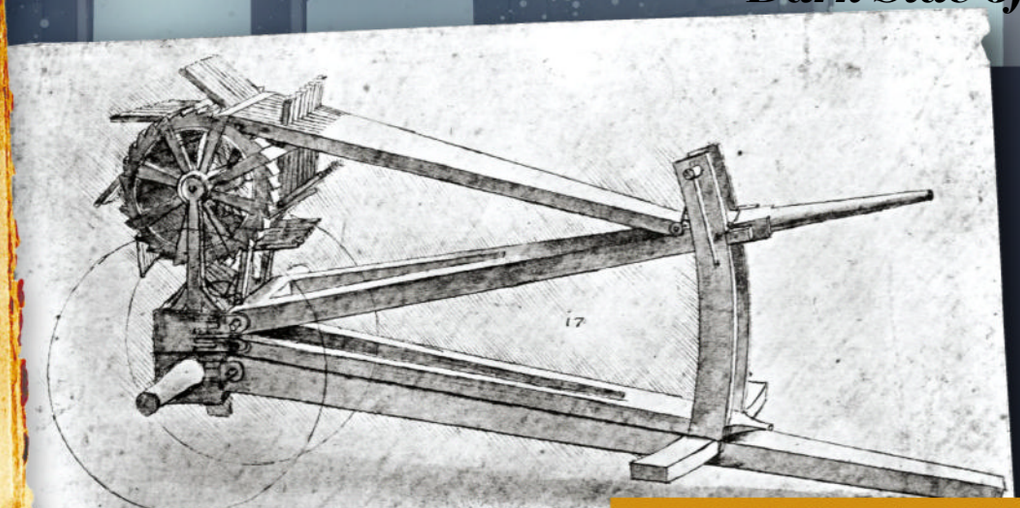
In 1500 he returned to Florence and in the following ten years, even though he moved around taking trips to Milan, Tuscany and central Italy, he focused on the investigation of the human body.

WHEELS

Despite including studs on the wheels to add friction, it is likely the armoured car would have got stuck in boggy and uneven ground.

ARMOUR

The plated sloping design proposed by Da Vinci was possibly superior to WWI tank armour, as the 45-degree angle would help deflect the impact of enemy projectiles.



LEFT A concept sketch for a multi-barrelled gun from Da Vinci's collection

BELOW-LEFT This giant treadmill concept had crossbows loaded on the inside

BELOW A modern interpretation of a Da Vinci machine gun concept

All images © Alamy, © Getty Images, © Shutterstock

He dissected over 30 corpses, including a two-year-old child, a seven-month-old foetus, and a centenarian man, whose old body, Leonardo wrote, was easy to dissect because "it was deprived of fat and humours which greatly prevent the observation of organs." He was meticulous: it took him more than ten human cadavers to fully understand veins, dedicating each dissection to different veins, which he carefully cleaned from surrounding muscles and tendons. His friend, the physician Paolo Giovio, said Leonardo "dissected the corpses of criminals in the medical schools, indifferent to this inhuman and disgusting work," but in reality he mainly dissected animal corpses – cows, pigs, bears – which were easier to find than human cadavers. His anatomical drawings look so realistic that we might almost be led to believe that he made them during dissections. Nothing could be further from the truth. He made them at his desk, reorganising the notes he took during dissection, which must have been necessarily brief – and spattered with blood. He planned an anatomy book. "My depiction of the human body," he wrote, "will be shown to you just as if you had a real man before you," adding that in fact, his anatomical images will be more useful than a real dissection. "Though you may have a love for such things" – Leonardo wrote – "you will perhaps be impeded by your stomach [...] (or) by the fear of living through the night hours in the company of quartered and flayed corpses, fearful to behold." His book would show bodies "from different aspects, from below, from above, and from the sides, turning the subject around [...] just as if you had ▶

RIGHT One of Leonardo's most spectacular speculative drawings of weapons illustrates armoured vehicles, although the power or engine that was supposed to move them is unclear

BELOW The death of Da Vinci as painted by Francois-Guillaume Menageot

Heart of Glass

Da Vinci's anatomical obsessions took him to interesting places

Out of all of the different areas of the human anatomy that Da Vinci observed, it is his work on the heart that is arguably the most famous. His fixation with blood flow, and how it caused the arterial valves to open and close, inspired him to create his own model.

He started by pouring wax into the gate of an ox's heart before waiting for it to completely set. Da Vinci then used the wax replica as a template to create his own version of the heart out of glass, which would enable him to see through it clearly. Next, he pumped water and grass seeds through the glass heart, noting that the widening at the base of the aorta caused vortices that made the grass seeds swirl around, which helped the aortic valve to close.

Da Vinci also managed to observe the heart's rotational movement, another fact that was unknown at the time. As extraordinary as the glass heart was, what Da Vinci had seen would not be repeated again until the 20th century. However, he never worked out that the heart was responsible for pumping blood around the body – William Harvey went on to discover this in 1628.

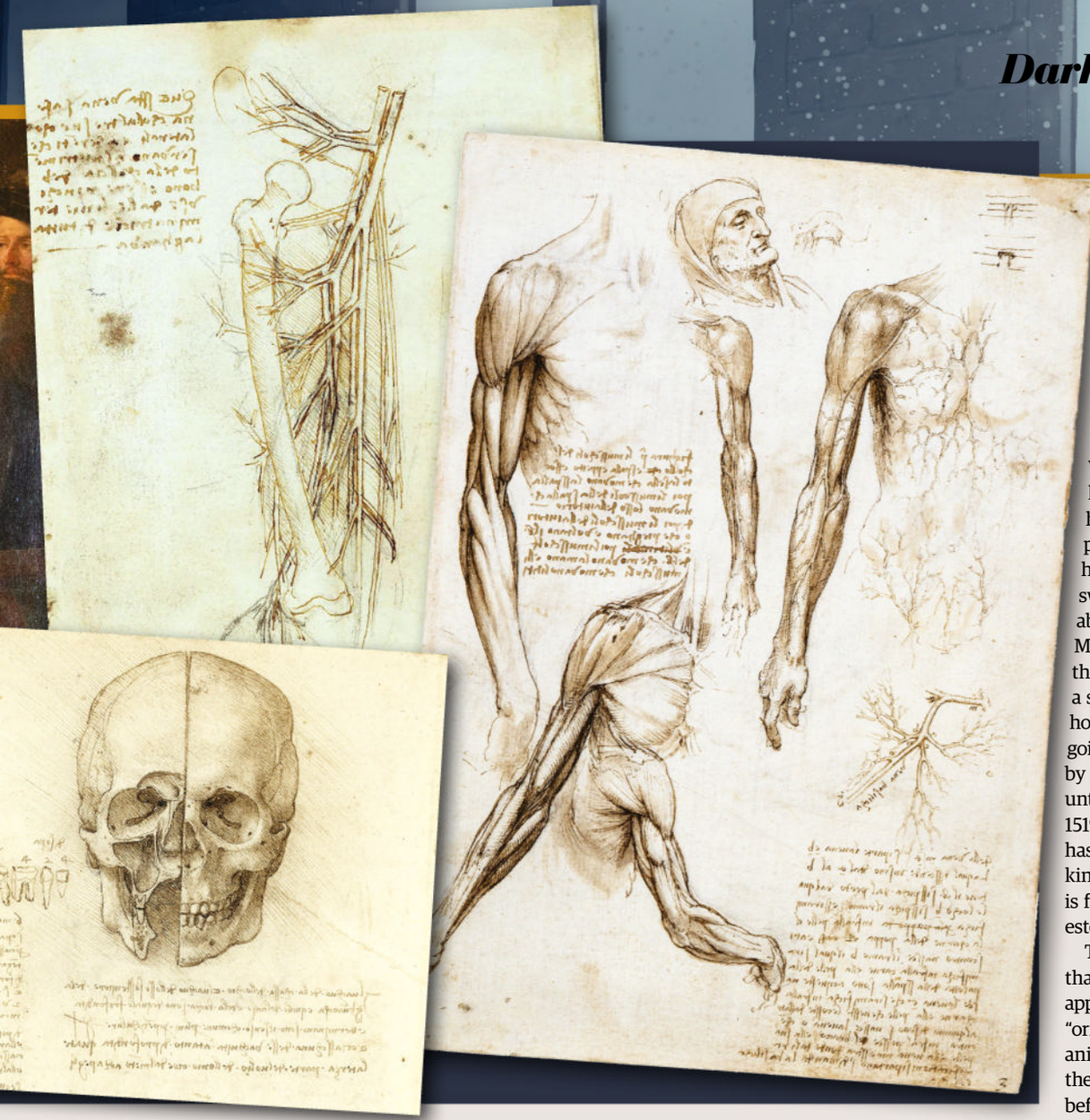
the same limb in your hand and went on turning it gradually." In the winter of 1510 he hoped to complete it and reminded himself to bound his anatomical folios as they were "a collection without order". Of course, he never finished the book. But his anatomical drawings, especially those of shoulder and arms, are behind the masterful rotation of his painted figures.

PURSUIT OF PERFECTION

Leonardo was a perfectionist. By all accounts, he was fun to be around, a great talker and a fabulous dinner companion. He knew how to tell jokes and entertain a crowd with witty debates on lofty topics – in one famous debate, he defended the superiority of painting over mathematics. But when working he went into a kind of trance. It was reported that "he would not put down the brush in his hands from sunrise till the shades of evening, forgetting to eat and drink," while other times, "as the whim or fancy touched him" he would "seize the brush, give one or two brushstrokes to a figure, and then suddenly depart to go elsewhere." Then there were days in which "he would not touch the work with his hand, but he would stay for one or two hours of the day only to contemplate."

He was hypercritical of his own work, and urged artists to be the same way, as perfect works bring "more honour than money." He valued excellence of execution over everything else and believed that "excellent painters produce few works, although these are of such quality that people stop in admiration to contemplate their perfection." But perfection was also Leonardo's demon.

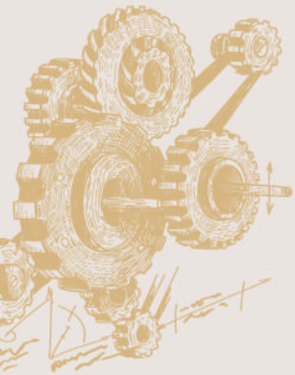
Leonardo was aware of his talent, admitting that "rarely in the world will one such as I be born again", but his inability to complete things must have been frustrating, especially because he couldn't help it. Money did not move him to action, even though he needed plenty to afford the lavish lifestyle he became accustomed to; nor did fame, and he acquired much during his lifetime. It was common for him to delve into a specific topic and write frantically for months on end, and then abruptly abandon it,



TOP A typical anatomical drawing of vessels that Leonardo created at his desk based on the sketches he took during dissection

ABOVE-MIDDLE The muscles of the shoulder and arm are shown from multiple directions

ABOVE A 1489 sketch of a dissected human skull shows the level of research undertaken



without ever publishing a single page of the thousands he wrote. Also, his approach to painting left many baffled. Baldassare Castiglione, who was an acute observer of people, reported that Leonardo had developed such "strange concepts and new chimaeras, that even he who has such talent in painting does not know how to paint them." A physician who knew Leonardo thought that the culprit was "his volubility of character and his natural impatience." Another friend thought that "he knew so much and this did not allow him to work." Yet another said that his constant search of "new means and refined artistic techniques" made him discard his early ideas.

It is hard for us to understand how slowly and deliberately Leonardo worked. For instance, the *Mona Lisa*, which is a masterpiece of darkish shadows, has no trace of brushwork. But modern quantitative X-ray fluorescence spectroscopy – an imaging technique that makes it possible to access the paint layers used in flesh tones – reveals that Leonardo applied dozens of layers of translucent glazes "in very thin films, down to a micrometre scale" – that is, one-millionth of a metre – to render the woman's flesh. To use the modern terminology of chemistry, we would say that Leonardo painted the *Mona Lisa* with materials of low atomic density – that is, that are highly diluted and have a small concentration of particles – which he applied in minimally altered shades. This is the secret of *Mona Lisa*'s smile: multiple layers of varnishes with low atomic density. And yet, Leonardo did not finish the *Mona Lisa*.

> "Leonardo was determined to be the artist who took Renaissance painting where it had never gone before"

The unsightly brownish patches in the middle ground that look like hills were preparatory layers for a water landscape, which he never painted.

DEATH AND LEGACY

In 1517 Leonardo accepted the invitation of the French king to be his court painter. He settled in a property the king gave him at Cloux, in the Loire Valley. By then he was an old man, his health failing. A visitor who came to see him reported that he was "somewhat paralysed in his right hand" and that he could "no longer colour with such sweetness as he used to," but that he was able "to do drawings and to teach others." Mainly he wrote, especially his book on the art of painting, which was basically a simplified 'Alhazen for artists' to teach how to paint people's emotions. He kept going and going, draft after draft, sentence by sentence, page after page. Time passed, until there was no longer time. On 2 May 1519, Leonardo died. He was 67. Legend has it that he "expired in the arms of the king". This is only a legend, but although it is factually untrue, it suggests the genuine esteem the king had for his painter.

The most held belief about Leonardo is that, for him, art was about copying the appearance of nature, what he called the "ornaments of the world" – sea, land, trees, animals, grasses, flowers. It wasn't. Before the word "psychology" was invented, before empathy existed as a concept, Leonardo was determined to be the artist who took Renaissance painting where it had never gone before – into the inner, invisible worlds of its subjects.

His unparalleled artistic skills allowed him to make visible complex bodies of knowledge and translate into images and diagrams abstract concepts from geology, hydraulics, philosophy, physics, and optics, based in part on what he read in books but also what he saw with his own eyes. He never ceased thinking about the world the way artists do, in visual terms. This is why the result of Leonardo's inquiry was not a book (he drafted many and finished none), or an experiment (though he performed many and designed even more), or even a drawing (though he drew compulsively). The result was always more art. Because for Leonardo, the ultimate focus was on the inner emotional lives of the people he portrayed. It is his emphasis on the human, on how human beings instinctually react to others and to the world, that gives his paintings such a modern feel, that allows them to continue to speak to us even 500 years later.

Ancient Japan

Age of Legends

Discover the god emperors and warrior queens of myth that make up Japan's mysterious early history

Written by Ben Gazur

The human history of Japan dates back at least 30,000 years. At that point, the four main islands of Japan were connected and land bridges joined them to both Korea in the south and Siberia in the north. The first humans to occupy what is now Japan simply walked in.

While their stories remain in the archaeological record as flint tools and the remnants of settlements, we know almost nothing of their history. The development of writing tells us what the Japanese said about themselves. What little does emerge may be part-myth and part-truth, but it reveals a society often riven by war.

THE JOMON & THE YAYOI

The first culture to develop in Japan was the Jōmon around 10,000 BCE. We do not know what the Jōmon called themselves, but their name comes from their distinctive pottery style of intricately arranged cords, which archaeologists call Jōmon, meaning rope-patterned. Some of the pottery created by the later Jōmon would not look out of place in a modern art gallery. Their stylised pottery statues of people known as dogū so closely resemble spacemen in suits that some take them to be evidence of alien contact.

Contact with space aliens is unlikely, but when contact came between Japan and Asia it spelled the doom of the Jōmon people. Climate change around 1000 BCE saw them driven further south in Japan by cold weather. The Yayoi of China lived in a lush environment that dried out around the same time to create the Gobi desert of today. This destruction of their homelands caused a wave of migration. First settling in Korea, the Yayoi began migrating to Japan around 300 BCE. With their arrival, 10,000 years of Jōmon culture disappeared from the archaeological record.

Not much is known about the displacement of the Jōmon. Was it in a single wave of migration? Were they destroyed by warfare? The alternative is the Yayoi came in smaller numbers over a long period and integrated themselves.

Recent analysis of DNA has revealed that on average, a modern Japanese person derives only around ten per cent of their genes from the Jōmon. However the Yayoi came to Japan, their offspring swamped those of the Jōmon. The indigenous Ainu of Japan share more DNA with the Jōmon though, so it is possible some aspects of Jōmon culture survived in them.

Because of their lack of a writing system, our knowledge of Yayoi culture is limited. We do know that they formed clans called uji. At the head of each clan stood a man who mediated between humans and spirits, or kami, as well as acting as a military leader. Over time these clans grew in power and territorial size, forming the first states in Japan.

The Yayoi brought crucial innovations to Japan. The cultivation of rice emerged at the same time as the Yayoi arrived. The stone tools of the Jōmon were abandoned in favour of metal implements that allowed greater working of the land. Weapons and armour of bronze and iron reached Japan around the same time, mostly imported from China or Korea because of the lack of metal ores in Japan. By the 1st century CE, axe heads, spears and swords made of iron were becoming common throughout Japan. Conflict between clans drove the need for ever more weaponry.

THE FIRST EMPEROR

According to the two great works of Japanese legend written in the 8th century CE, the *Kojiki* and *Nihon Shoki*, the first emperor of Japan was Jimmu. Born in 711 BCE, Jimmu was a descendant of the goddess Amaterasu and, with his brothers, was the leader of a clan. They sought a location to cement their rule. "By dwelling in what place shall we most quietly carry on the government of the empire? It were probably best to go east."

Together they led their people east. Jimmu was provided with a sword that was magically sent by a deity to use in battle. As they travelled east, they fought a clan under the command of Nagasunehiko – the long-legged man – and were defeated. Jimmu realised that because they were fighting eastwards, they were fighting against the rising of the sun and so approached from the east, under the guidance of a huge three-legged crow. This time Jimmu was victorious and settled the land of Yamato. We are told that he "extirpated the unsubmissive people".

Other clan leaders accepted the right of Jimmu to rule, thus marking his accession as monarch of Japan. The chronicles that set down the life of Jimmu were written over 1,000 years after his supposed rule. Many consider Jimmu to be wholly legendary, but some wonder whether the tale of his migration might have echoes of the coming of the Yayoi people to Japan.

THE CIVIL WARS OF WA & QUEEN HIMIKO

Much of Japanese history at this early date is conjectural and little can be known for certain. Early Chinese accounts of their interactions with the Japanese, who they called Wa, record the trade of iron weapons and also the reasons they may have been required. According to Chinese sources: "During the reigns of Huandi [147–168

Image source: wiki/Museum of Fine Arts Boston

RIGHT The Soga clan and then the Fujiwara clan came to dominate the royal court through marriage of their daughters into the imperial family

BELOW The first emperor of Japan was the legendary Jimmu, who led his people eastward and conquered other kings – with the aid of a three-legged crow

Image source: wiki/Egenolf Gallery

ABOVE The first emperor of Japan, Jimmu, is said to have been descended from the gods and created the imperial throne through conquest

CE] and Lingdi [168–189 CE] the country of Wa was in a state of great confusion, war and conflict raging on all sides. For a number of years, there was no ruler. Then a woman named Himiko appeared. Remaining unmarried, she occupied herself with magic and sorcery and bewitched the populace. Thereupon they placed her on the throne." This civil war of the Wa is the earliest historical war in Japan of which we have a written record, but much remains mysterious.

Himiko is said to have been a shaman and queen of Yamatai, whose location remains unknown. We are told she lived in a palace surrounded by ever-vigilant guards. She had 1,000 female attendants, but only one man who relayed her orders. Apparently Himiko was a great ruler and brought peace to her kingdom. She sent emissaries to the Chinese court and received praise in return.

Himiko did not pacify all of Japan, however, and Himikuko, ruler of a rival state, rose in conflict against her. Peace was restored but did not long survive Himiko's death. "Then a king was placed on the throne, but the people would not obey him. Assassination and murder followed; more than 1,000 were thus slain. A relative of Himiko named Iyo, a girl of 13, was then made queen and order was restored."

Japanese sources make no mention of Himiko, but some scholars have sought to link her with other powerful queens of around this time.

JINGU & THE SEVEN-BRANCHED SWORD

Empress Jingū is said to have reigned from 201-269 CE following the death of her husband, Emperor Chūai. Chūai died without any obvious heir, and Jingū acted as regent for their unborn child. The *Nihon Shoki* gives an account of her rule and the many acts of warfare she carried out.

As soon as Jingū came to the throne, she sought to put down potential rebellions. We are told that one village leader, Hashiro Kuma-washi, would not obey imperial decrees because he was "a fellow of

> *"PEACE WAS RESTORED BUT DID NOT LONG SURVIVE HIMIKO'S DEATH"*

Image source: wiki/Kadokawa Shoten

ABOVE Empress Kōken abdicated but continued to influence behind the scenes - until she retook the throne with the monk Dōkyō by her side

Image source: wiki/artelino.com/archive

powerful frame, and had wings on his body, so that he could fly, and with them soar aloft". Jingū struck down the rebel and pacified the region. In one area she avoided battle by executing the sister of an obstreperous general as a warning.

Jingū's greatest exploit, however, was her invasion of Korea. She announced that she "intended in person to chastise the West". Understanding that it was a patriarchal society that she was attempting to lead, she informed her army: "Although I am a woman, and a feeble woman too, I will for a while borrow the outward appearance of a man, and force myself to adopt manly counsels."

With a mighty fleet and army, Jingū crossed the sea, taking up a battle-axe herself. When the enemy king saw the forces arrayed against him, he surrendered, completely and utterly. Other kings and lords also offered rich annual tributes to Jingū. After returning to Japan, she finally gave birth to her husband's heir – a full three years after his death. Much, it may be assumed, is legendary in the tales of Jingū, but many historians do believe that there was a reigning empress around this time to whom myths and tales of Jingū were later attached.

In the Japanese account of her life, we are told that a "seven-branched" sword was presented to Empress Jingū as part of the tribute. Intriguingly, a sword with seven branches off the main blade still exists today. Held in the Isonokami Shrine in Nara prefecture, its Chinese inscription says: "Never before has there been such a blade. The crown prince of the king of Baekje, who lives under august sounds, had this sword made for King of Wa in the hope that it might be passed on to later generations." Baekje was a kingdom in Korea and this sword, along with the legend of Jingū, may tell us much about the relationship between Japan and Korea in antiquity.

UNIFICATION IN THE KOFUN PERIOD

Empress Jingū is generally considered the last ruler of the Yayoi period. The Kofun period that followed is marked by the growing power of the Yamato emperors, descendants of Jingū. Their increasing power is seen in the large Kofun tombs that they were buried in, from which the period takes its name.

These graves are packed with sophisticated arms and armour, alongside other treasures. Swords have been found with glittering, gilded hilts shaped like animals from myth. Iron armour is often decorated with bronze and gold. These implements of war became necessary as the Yamato sought to increase their power and territory.

THE TŌDAIJIYAMA SWORD

The Kofun tombs of Japan were the burial sites of important Japanese people – people who were often sent to the afterlife with rich grave goods like swords

In the 130-metre-long tomb at Tōdaijiyama, one sword was found that revealed much about Japan in the 2nd century CE.

Inside the tomb were 29 iron swords. One of these, 1.1 metres long, was inlaid with a Chinese inscription in gold, reading: "This ornate sword was manufactured in an auspicious day of the fifth month in the... Zhongping era. The metal from which it has been wrought has been refined many times; it is pure... The fortune of the one who wears it will accord with the stars..." The Zhongping era, which spanned from 184 to 189 CE, refers to the rule of the Chinese Emperor Ling of Han.

Was this sword sent from China to a Japanese king? All we can know is that the sword was a treasured item. The tomb it was found in was built in the 4th century, 200 years after the sword was first forged. Other inscribed swords are known, but this unearthed Tōdaijiyama Sword is by far the earliest.

Image source: wiki/(National Land Image Information (Color Aerial Photographs), Ministry of Land, Infrastructure, Transport and Tourism

ABOVE Kofun tombs were large mounds built for important people and often included rich burial goods like the Tōdaijiyama Sword

The Grass-Cutting Sword

Each person who takes the Chrysanthemum Throne of Japan is presented with three legendary items

Japan's imperial regalia consists of an ancient gem, a sacred mirror, and a sword known as Kusanagi-no-Tsurugi – the Grass-Cutting Sword.

According to a legend set down in *Kojiki*, an 8th-century chronicle, this famous sword was discovered in a battle between a god and a monstrous eight-headed serpent. Once the beast was slain, Kusanagi-no-Tsurugi was found inside its tail. The sword then passed to the goddess Amaterasu, the deity from whom all Japanese emperors are said to be descended.

The sword was once used to protect the emperor when fire spread across a field. The warrior holding it hacked down the burning grass to put out the fire and discovered with each stroke that he could control the direction of the wind.

According to one record, the original sword was lost in the Battle of Dan-no-ura when it was thrown into the sea to prevent it being captured. The sword currently used at coronations may therefore be an ancient replica. The regalia are closely guarded today, so it seems unlikely whether scientific analysis will ever be done to determine the truth of the matter.

Image source: wiki/Museum of Fine Arts Boston

ABOVE The legendary Grass-Cutting Sword earned its name when Prince Yamato Takeru used it to slash down burning grass to save his emperor

At the court in Yamato, the emperors – or Ōkimi, meaning great king, as they called themselves – ruled over a complex web of clans. Some clans were given special roles; the Otomo and Mononobe were often placed in charge of the military, while others served ritual roles or as ministers of state. Inconvenient sons who might otherwise have muddied the line of the imperial succession were sometimes given new surnames and roles, occasionally even creating new clans in the process.

Thanks to clay models left as grave offerings from this period, we know that there was a highly developed cavalry that rode horses with saddles and stirrups. These Haniwa figures also show soldiers in suits of armour made from overlapping plates and armed with a sword worn at the hip. Using clan leaders to muster and command armies, the Yamato emperors were able to subjugate the southern half of Japan under their rule.

THE ARRIVAL OF BUDDHISM

Japan continued to receive migrants from East Asia throughout the Kofun period. As well as introducing the Chinese writing system and methods of organising an imperial court, many immigrants rose to prominent positions. The incoming people were called Toraijin, and by the 9th century, nearly one-quarter of the clans in the Honshu region could actually trace their ancestry back to ancestors from outside Japan.

The migrants also brought with them Buddhism for the first time, marking the start of the Asuka period. In Japanese tradition, Buddhism came to Japan when a king from Korea sent Emperor Kinmei Buddhist images and texts in 552 CE. The emperor is said to have declared: "Never have I heard of such an exquisite teaching." But while he may have been impressed, several clans were not so taken with Buddhism. The Mononobe and Nakatomi clung to the traditional teachings of Shinto, believing that Buddhism would harm the relationship with the kami spirits and thus Japan. While Buddhism was not made the official religion, the Soga clan was allowed to adopt it.

The Soga clan was influential at court and several of its members married into the imperial family. Kinmei's son, Emperor Bidatsu, married a daughter of the Soga clan as his second wife. When Bidatsu died, conflict broke out, with the Soga looking to place the emperor's younger, Soga, son on the throne.

At the Battle of Mount Shigi, the Soga triumphed. According to some, this was through divine aid when they invoked Buddhist symbols. What is known is that an arrow struck down the head of the Mononobe clan, his closest advisers were killed, and his troops scattered. The Soga now firmly embedded Buddhism into Japanese culture.

They continued to influence imperial politics until 645 when the leader of the Nakatomi clan conspired with Prince Ōe to assassinate a member of the Soga clan. This was done in front of the reigning Empress Kōgyoku. Shocked by the murder, she abdicated in favour of her brother. The Asuka period came to an end with the Taika Reforms brought in by Prince Ōe that saw greater centralisation of power in the hands of the emperor. Clans were still influential, but much of their ability to control the throne was removed, limiting their overall power in the imperial court and making it a little harder for one clan to influence the ruler.

Image source: wiki/Dogu (Musée national de Tokyo, Japon)

ABOVE Jōmon culture flourished in Japan for 10,000 years and its extraordinary pottery productions give tantalising clues into their society

Image source: wiki/Waseda University Theatre Museum, Ukiyo-e.org

ABOVE Empress Jingū received divine aid in her conquest of Korea and extracted yearly tribute from the kings she conquered

EMPRESS KŌKEN & THE MONK DŌKYŌ

In 749 CE, an imperial princess took the throne as Empress Kōken. Her father had no direct male heir and ruled alongside her. When he died in 756, his will stated that Kōken's heir would be Prince Funado. However, Kōken was convinced by the powerful Fujiwara no Nakamaro that Funado was insufficiently loyal to the throne and that he should be replaced by Prince Oi. As soon as this was done, conspiracies sprang up not only to return Funado to the line of succession, but to remove Empress Kōken from power.

The conspiracy was soon uncovered and Kōken issued orders to her guards to arrest all involved. The Japanese history *Shoku Nihongi* goes into great detail about how the conspirators were captured, tortured and forced to confess. Empress Kōken issued an edict that told her subjects how the conspirators planned to kill Nakamaro, steal the seals and ritual objects of the crown, and replace her on the throne.

After the attempted coup, Nakamaro became even more powerful. Vast revenues of state were entrusted to him as well as control of the military. In 758, Kōken abdicated the throne, apparently willingly, to Prince Oi, who became Emperor Junnin. Nakamaro managed to remained one of the leading statesmen at court despite the change in monarch.

Kōken continued to be a power at court, but she fell ill in 761. The cure was found through Dōkyō, a Buddhist monk and son of a minor clan. Soon he was attending court with the former empress and some believed that the two had become lovers.

> *"BY THE 9TH CENTURY, NEARLY ONE-QUARTER OF THE CLANS IN THE HONSHU REGION COULD TRACE THEIR ANCESTRY BACK TO ANCESTORS FROM OUTSIDE JAPAN"*

When Kōken recovered, she returned to court, but, in 762, she declared Emperor Junnin was not acting as a ruler should. She issued an edict that would make Junnin a figurehead while all real power resided with her. Threatened by the return of Kōken and an increasingly powerful Dōkyō, Nakamaro raised a rebellion.

Nakamaro attempted to seize the insignia and seals of government as well as replacing the compliant Junnin with a stronger emperor. Forced to flee the capital, Nakamaro led his forces east, but imperial troops sent by Kōken blocked his path. When battle turned against Nakamaro he tried to escape on a boat across Lake Biwa. He was captured and, alongside his family, executed. His head was taken to decorate the palace walls.

Empress Kōken now deposed Junnin entirely and retook the throne for herself under the title Empress Shōtoku, with the loyal Dōkyō by her side. Unfortunately, there was no end to the power and wealth Dōkyō desired. In 768 a message was sent from the Usa Shrine saying that the gods wanted Dōkyō to be emperor. Shōtoku was puzzled by this divine order so she sent a messenger to confirm that this was really what the gods desired. The oracle replied:

"Since the establishment of our state, the distinction between lord and subject has been fixed. Never has there been an occasion when a subject was made lord. The throne of the Heavenly Sun Succession shall be given to one of the imperial lineage; wicked persons should immediately be swept away."

Dōkyō was seen as a grasping usurper and his hold on power began to loosen. When Empress Shōtoku died in 770, he was removed from every office and forced into exile in a low-ranking monastery.

THE FUJIWARA CLAN

Nakamaro was just one member of the powerful Fujiwara clan. His defeat did not lead to their destruction. Many of the clan had been opposed to his high-handed ways and refused to be drawn into his rebellion. They remained at court even when Dōkyō was in the ascendancy.

With the death of Kōken and the banishment of Dōkyō, the clan continued to grow in power. They came to marry into the imperial family, served as regents and governors, and chose emperorsd. The rise of the samurai and professional soldiers grew under the Fujiwara clan as Japan moved into the Heian period.

The CLUB KID Killer

With their eccentric costumes and decadent behaviour, they dominated New York's nightlife until a brutal murder tore them apart

Written by Callum McKelvie

As the 1980s drew to a close, a quirky group of youthful outsiders began to dominate the New York club scene. These were strange creatures to mainstream observers, a misfit band of queer outcasts who found fame due to their outré styles and shocking subversive humour. Throughout the 1990s, these so-called 'Club Kids' ruled the city's nightlife, their influence spreading far beyond their inner circle and growing to include future celebrities, such as drag superstar RuPaul, among their ranks. For young, queer partygoers the Club Kids were transgressive, exciting and new. "It felt like Babylon," former member Walt Cassidy reminisced during an interview with *Another Man*. But, on 17 March 1996 the new Babylon fell, when one of the movement's creators, Michael Alig, brutally murdered and dismembered fellow Club Kid Angel Melendez. But who was Alig? Why did he kill Melendez? And just how did this transgressive movement end so violently?

INTRODUCING MICHAEL ALIG

Born in Indiana in 1966, Michael Alig could never have been accused of fitting in. His sexuality saw him constantly beaten up and hounded in a community that was far from accepting. A particularly traumatic moment occurred when Alig was given the cold shoulder by close friend Jeff. The pair had developed feelings for each other, but when Jeff's father caught them kissing, stern words were had with his son. From then on the boy ignored Alig, breaking the 16-year-old's heart. Compared to his hometown, New York was a Warholian dreamland and it was here that the young Alig escaped.

Initially moving to the Big Apple to continue his studies, when Alig discovered the city's thriving nightlife, any academic aspirations were forgotten. He met and befriended a fellow student called Ludovic, who was dating artist Keith Haring. On one occasion, Alig recalled arriving at a party in a limousine and Ludovic exiting on a lead wearing only underwear and white body paint. Michael Alig was entranced.

Beginning work as a busboy, Alig was determined to become a promoter and organise his own wild parties. He masterminded The Filthy Mouth Contest in which guests were invited onto the stage to utter the most revolting and shocking phrases they could imagine. Despite Alig reminiscing in the *New York Post* that it was "one of my biggest successes," nightlife impresario Rudolf Piper recollected to reporter Frank Owen that "it wasn't the rousing success Michael thought it was, but it wasn't a complete fiasco either."

But Alig was undaunted. He began to gather around himself an eclectic group of outsiders who brought a new, manic energy to the dying club scene.

NEW KIDS ON THE BLOCK

In 1987, *The Village Voice* reported on the death of pop-art superstar Andy Warhol at age 58. In the 1960s the artist had hosted numerous parties at his studio, The Factory, which had become the stuff of New York legend. One year prior to Warhol's death, Studio 54, the world-famous nightclub that had been at the centre of disco during the 1970s, closed its doors for good. In reporting Warhol's passing, the journalist Michael Musto famously stated that it signified "the death of Downtown". The scene was set for a nightlife revolution and the Club Kids were here to start it...

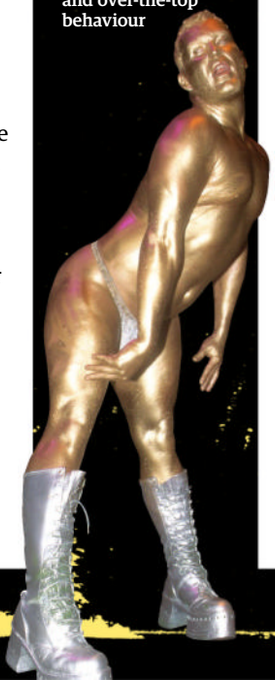
LEFT Famous drag performer RuPaul appeared with the Club Kids on *Geraldo*, his style influencing the movement

BELOW The Club Kids' look went far beyond their initial movement, proving wildly influential on the club scene

"HIS SENSATIONALIST PRANKS DEVELOPED A MEAN-SPIRITED EDGE. ALIG WOULD URINATE INTO EMPTY BEER BOTTLES AND HAND THEM OUT AS FREE DRINKS"

ABOVE Michael Alig in 1995, one year before the brutal murder of Angel Melendez

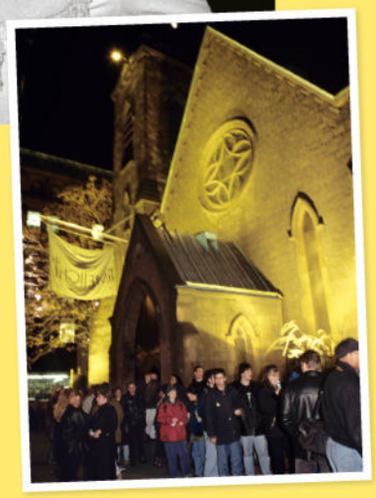
BELOW The Club Kids were known for their extravagant and over-the-top behaviour



The movement began in the late 1980s as a result of Alig's extravagant events such as 'Consumer Hall', which saw partygoers dress in eccentric homemade creations made out of Saran wrap and cereal boxes. Alig, along with James St James, Dj Keoki and Astro Erle (among a multitude of others) formed the inner circle of this new group. They were gloriously queer and celebrated androgyny in their outrageous costumes, elaborate DIY constructions that flew in the face of established fashion, and drew inspiration from everything from consumer culture to hardcore gore imagery. Adopting monikers, such as 'Waltpaper', 'Desi Monster' and 'Ernie Glam', the Club Kids carried children's lunchboxes and were clownish in the extreme.

The main haunt of the Club Kids was the Limelight, a nightclub venue that was run by the enigmatic Peter Gatien in the shell of an old church. The Club Kids had developed a subversive and shocking reputation, one that was epitomised by their most famous event, Disco 2000. This legendary night was populated by grotesque characters, the most infamous being 'Ida Slapter' who sprayed the crowd with champagne anal enemas and pulled lit Christmas bulbs from her rectum.

Yet despite (or perhaps because) of this outrageousness, the Club Kids quickly found mainstream appeal beyond the New York club scene. They had a magazine, *Project X*, which began merely as an advertisement for their ventures but soon grew to explore fashion and music. They appeared on numerous television talk shows, being interviewed by Joan Rivers, Phil Donahue and had multiple appearances on *The Geraldo Rivera Show*. "We became the darlings of the club scene, paid merely to show up and bring a bit of fabulousness to the mix," Alig wrote in the *New York Post*. "We led a pampered existence of fancy dinners and media exposure."



Club Kid culture spread across the nation, inspiring youthful outsiders who now celebrated their own difference. What was central to the idea of the Club Kids was the notion that you could be famous simply by being, predating modern influencer culture. "We were pushing ourselves as identities," Club Kid Walt Cassidy told *Another Man*. "We had this understanding that our identities were a brand and that was a new idea."

DARKNESS IN THE DISCO

But for Alig, perhaps intoxicated by his new-found fame or consumed by his reputation as a rabble rousing disruptor, things quickly began to escalate. His sensationalist pranks began to develop a mean-spirited edge. Alig would urinate into empty beer bottles and hand them out as free drinks. Once, despite claiming to *The Guardian* that he could not remember doing so, Alig purportedly took his 'pee' obsession to a new extreme and emptied his bladder onto the head of a barmaid, laughing at her obvious distress. Fenton Bailey, a friend of Alig's, described in his biography the time that Alig and company refused to pay the $5 entry fee at an AIDS charity event, apparently more content to make a spectacle of themselves than conform.

Much of this behaviour was going hand in hand with another problem – drugs. Narcotic substances had always been a part of the New York club scene. Studio 54 had been known for its patron's cocaine use, IRS agents discovering five pure ounces of the substance during a 1978 raid. For the Club Kids the drug of choice was ketamine, a hallucinogenic anaesthetic used in both humans and animals. The drug was introduced to New York's dancefloors in the 1980s, used alongside other 'club drugs' like ecstasy. But the Kids didn't stop there and other, much harder drugs, such as heroin, quickly became a staple of their parties.

Upon arriving in New York, the fresh-faced Alig was a teetotaller. "He didn't drink and he didn't do drugs – in fact he made fun of junkies and drunks," Bailey reminisced. "He would sip on a white wine spritzer just so people didn't think he was a complete bore." But then, something happened. During an argument with then-boyfriend DJ Keoki over his cocaine use, Alig snorted the substance in an act of petulant defiance. Soon, he had become a habitual user himself. Over the years his drug and alcohol abuse grew steadily worse, purportedly overdosing on a deadly cocktail of heroin, cocaine, ecstasy and ketamine – *twice*.

As their undisputed king became increasingly enslaved to his drug habit, dealers were purportedly paid to attend the Club Kids events, Alig stating they were given $200 per night. In 1994 Rudy Giuliani became the Mayor of New York and launched a campaign to improve what he referred to as "The Quality of Life" in the city, targeting any form of "disorder" that was disrupting New York. Singled out in his campaign was the nightlife, Giuliani seeing the clubs as a haven for drug users. "Things were coming to an end, and I knew it," Club Kid James St James remembered sadly during an interview with *VICE*. "People were dropping dead all the time, overdoses; everyone in our circle was on heroin. It was a sad time."

TOP The Club Kids quickly earned celebrity status, shown here appearing on the *Geraldo* TV series

ABOVE-MIDDLE Michael Alig and fellow Club Kid James St James during a rave at the Limelight, 1991

ABOVE The infamous Limelight nightclub hosted thousands of partygoers

Peter Gatien in the Limelight

Nicknamed 'The Ghost', this enigmatic entrepreneur was the owner of the Club Kids' favourite haunt

Dubbed 'the King of Clubs' by the *New York Post*, Peter Gatien was the owner of many of the hottest spots on the 90s New York club scene. Indeed, it was claimed that his nightlife empire earned him $1 million per week. One of his most profitable venues was the Limelight, the home of the Club Kids located in a former church.

On the night he opened the Limelight club, hordes of protestors swarmed outside the venue and the Reverend Paul Moore Jr, then the Episcopal Bishop of New York, stated, "we are horrified." Gatien would describe this comment as a "three-word, worth its weight in gold review."

Easily recognised by a black eyepatch, since a childhood injury had cost him his left eye, those who staffed Gatien's empire nicknamed their enigmatic employer 'The Ghost'. One of his clubs, The Tunnel, became the place to play for up-and-coming rap artists, spotlighting such on-the-rise talent as 50 Cent, Snoop Dogg and Missy Elliot.

A 1996 investigation attempted to prosecute Gatien on charges related to selling drugs, but he was acquitted two years later. However in 1999 he pleaded guilty to charges of tax evasion and was deported to Canada four years later.

ABOVE-LEFT In 1994 Rudy Giuliani was sworn in as the new mayor of New York, promising to improve the "quality of life" in the city – which meant cracking down on anti-social behaviour

ABOVE During the 1990s New York police adopted a zero-tolerance approach to drugs

THE PARTY'S DEMISE

And so it appeared that the Club Kids were destined to become nothing more than a footnote in the history of New York's nightlife, a fondly remembered movement of queer liberation until the drugs dominated the scene. But events that occurred on the night of 17 March 1996 would change their legacy forever. In his memoir *Disco Bloodbath*, James St James states that for months prior to that night, Alig had been stealing both money and drugs from fellow Club Kid Angel Melendez. Angel was known for wearing a pair of huge wings strapped to his back, and had been occasionally staying with Alig.

That night, Angel went to Alig's apartment where another Club Kid, Robert "Freeze" Riggs, was also staying. Melendez demanded his money but of exactly what happened next, we can never be sure. The argument suddenly turned violent, Melendez lashing out at Alig until Freeze grabbed a nearby hammer. He struck Melendez on the head several times until he dropped to his knees. But furious from his own minor injuries, Alig suddenly grabbed either a jumper or a pillowcase and smothered the 25 year old until he ceased moving.

Leaving to compose himself, Freeze's confession stated that upon his return he caught Alig pouring Drano (a chemical drain cleaner) down Melendez's throat before sealing his mouth with duct tape. But Alig disputed this, claiming it was days later during an attempt to mask the smell of the decomposing body. Unsure of what to do, the pair hid Melendez in the bathtub until they figured out a plan.

Using money stolen from Melendez, Alig redecorated his apartment with luxurious furnishings. Some sources even claim that, during the week the body remained hidden in the bathroom, parties were held in the flat. Finally, the decision was made to dispose of Melendez's body by dismembering it. Alig himself volunteered to do the deed, in return for ten bags of heroin and the promise that Freeze would procure the knives.

Melendez's legs were wrapped in plastic and sealed in duffle bags before being thrown in the Hudson river. His torso was placed in a large cardboard TV box that the pair also transported to the river, with the unwitting help of a taxi driver, and watched as it floated into the distance. The pair had just committed the final act in one of the most despicable crimes in New York's history.

"FREEZE STATED THAT UPON HIS RETURN HE CAUGHT ALIG POURING DRANO (A CHEMICAL DRAIN CLEANER) DOWN MELENDEZ'S THROAT"

Death of an Angel

The life of the 25-year-old Club Kid who was brutally slain by Alig and "Freeze"

When Angel Melendez appeared in the clubs of New York, he became instantly recognisable for his trademark look; a large pair of angel wings strapped to his back. Moving to the city with his family when he was just eight years old, as a younger man Melendez dreamed of working in the film industry, possibly even becoming an actor. Like the other Club Kids, he too was an outsider and, being Colombian by birth, was likely the subject of far more prejudice than his white counterparts.

Melendez, however, seemed to have been disliked by some of the other Club Kids, seen as a 'wannabe', feelings possibly linked to his Latino heritage. Reporter Frank Owen in his book *Clubland* claims that "a pronounced streak of racism ran through the Club Kid scene," a sentiment author Yamil Avivi further explored in his paper *Remembering Andre 'Angel' Melendez: Rave Subculture's Contested/Conflicted Memory of a Racially Motivated Murder.*

Unfortunately, many articles covering Melendez's death dismiss him as simply a 'drug dealer'. Melendez purportedly worked as a dealer (reporter Frank Owen claiming to have purchased ketamine from Melendez for a *Village Voice* cover story) and was said by Alig to have been one of a number paid to attend events at the Limelight club.

Following Angel Melendez's murder on 17 March 1996, the police were originally reluctant to investigate despite the pleas of his father and brother, Johnny. In the years since, Melendez's name, while never forgotten, has become almost a footnote in the story of the Club Kids, overshadowed by that of his killer, Michael Alig. Yet Angel Melendez deserves to be recognised as a Club Kid of his own, and the horrific circumstances of his death duly remembered.

Image source: wiki/Fabebk CC BY-SA 4.0

THE AFTERMATH

Unbelievably during the five months that Melendez was missing, Alig was far from silent about his crime, telling "anyone who would listen" that he had committed murder. One night at the Limelight, Alig arrived with the word 'Guilty' scrawled across his forehead. Journalist Frank Owen's own version of the story, *Clubland*, quotes Alig as later confessing that "we conspired to tell the truth but in a way nobody would believe us."

Soon however, the unsavoury rumours began to spread. Johnny Melendez, perturbed that his brother appeared to have vanished without a trace, posted flyers requesting any information regarding his disappearance. An article by Michael Musto appeared in the *Village Voice*'s gossip column and sometime later the cover featured a story by aforementioned reporter Frank Owen that went into shocking detail, even naming Alig.

But even then, Alig's friends struggled to believe it. Filmmaker Fenton Bailey in his memoir even states that they "thought Michael had conceived the whole thing as one of his situationist pranks", a stunt intended to reinvigorate his failing career. In August of 1996, Melendez's torso was finally discovered floating in the Hudson. Both Alig and Freeze were arrested and on 1 October 1997 each was sentenced to 10 to 20 years behind bars.

A TAINTED LEGACY

Throughout his imprisonment Alig battled to beat his heroin addiction, a *New York Times* article even mentions a prison official who claims Alig spent five years in solitary confinement. "I thought, I'm in jail, but I'm not suffering as much as I should be, because I'm blanketing myself with opiates," Alig recounted to *The Guardian* in 2014. "So I need to stop using that and suffer."

Alig was released from prison on 5 May 2014, the terms of his parole being that he must not drink or do drugs and must submit himself for random drug tests. "Michael made no secret of the fact he longed to do drugs," Bailey recounted, "and intended to do them again just as soon as he could. And he did." Six years after his release, on Christmas Eve 2020 aged 54, Michael Alig was found dead, the cause was an accidental heroin overdose.

Upon Alig's release, the world seemed conflicted on how to deal with the Club-Kid-turned-killer. Notoriety of his crime had been helped by James St James's publication of his memoir *Disco Bloodbath*, a documentary called *Party Monster* and the subsequent 2003 film adaptation starring Macaulay Culkin. Sympathetic profiles, such as Jonathan Van Meter's 2006 piece *Party Boy in a Cage*, and Alig's own 2014 recount of the murder for the *New York Post* attempted to show him as a reformed character and rehabilitate him into the New York scene. But others struggled to forget his horrendous crime. In 2017, when Alig was booked as part of the lineup for a queer club night, a petition to have him removed gained 2,500 signatures.

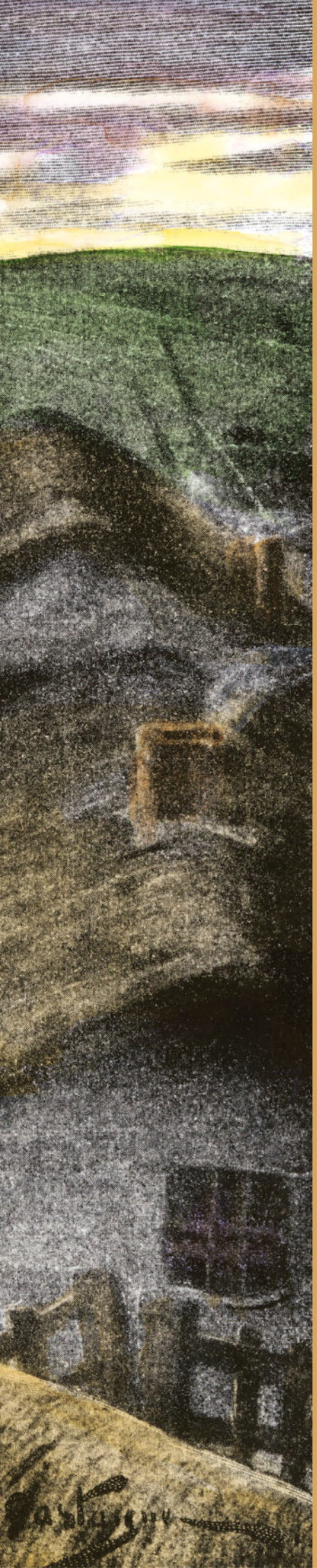
However Alig is to be remembered, the unfortunate truth is that Melendez's life was viciously taken and Alig and Riggs' crime forever tainted the legacy of a queer movement that was inspiring to thousands of young people.

ABOVE-LEFT Michael Alig (far left), with fellow Club Kids Richie Rich, Nina Hagen, Sophia Lamar and Genetalia

ABOVE-RIGHT Upon leaving prison, Alig reconnected with his old Club Kid friends, shown here with James St James during the filming of *Party Monster 2*

ABOVE The 2003 film *Party Monster* starring Macaulay Culkin focused on Alig, dramatising the murder

People lived in fear of hearing the banshee's wail as it was an omen of death



Irish Folklore

From leprechauns to banshees, Ireland's mystical creatures hold a special place in the country's identity and physical landscape

Written by Emily Staniforth

The Emerald Isle boasts a huge and eclectic array of mystical creatures that have come to define Ireland's long and magical history. The country's folklore is rich and complex, with stories of fairies and leprechauns having been circulated and passed down through generations in the oral tradition. This means many of the tales that make up Irish legends have different versions that vary and differ from place to place and through time. These stories, however, are held close to the hearts of the Irish people, and traversing Ireland's broad and varied landscape highlights just how ingrained these folkloric traditions have become in their identity.

Tuatha Dé Danann and the Aos Sí

The creature that appears most frequently and is most ingrained in Irish folklore and history is the fairy. Referred to in Irish as the Aos Sí, fairies have a long and illustrious history on the island, with their story beginning way back in ancient times when the Tuatha Dé Danann, a tribe of people said to have supernatural powers, were supposedly some of the original dwellers of Ireland. They lived an existence of battling other rival groups of the island, including the Fomorians, but always managed to end up on top. However, when the Milesians arrived on the shores of the country, they attacked the community and the Tuatha Dé Danann were forced underground. Living in mounds, known in Ireland as Sidhe, the Tuatha Dé Danann used their magic to become the Aos Sí: fairies or, as many Irish people call them, the "wee folk" or "little folk".

Elements of the story of the Aos Sí can be found all over Ireland, with natural and man-made sites of significance attributed to the fairy folk in some way, remaining a consistent feature of the landscape. Sidhe mounds, where the fairies are said to live since their defeat at the hands of the Milesians, were, and still are, viewed as the homes of fairies, and as a result are sometimes considered to be entrances to the Otherworld – where the ancient beings of Irish mythology, such as the Celtic deities, live alongside the Aos Sí. As a result, Sidhe mounds ▶

are sacred places in Ireland that people aim to protect. Away from their folkloric explanations, many of the Sidhe mounds that populate Ireland's scenery actually served as burial mounds or tombs for the ancient civilisations of Ireland. The fact that many tombs have been discovered within Sidhe mounds has only added to their mystery over the years.

Other landmarks of significance that are tied to fairy lore include the plethora of stone circles across Ireland. Structures that date from a wide period of Ireland's bygone past, from the Iron Age through to the medieval era, have remained largely untouched due to the belief of the Irish that these areas serve as 'fairy forts' or 'fairy rings'. Originally built as defences around the properties and farmsteads of historic Ireland's small kingdoms, to protect people and livestock from raiders, the ruins of these fortifications have, over the years, become inextricably intertwined with fairy folklore. Like the Sidhe mounds, they are considered to be precious spaces, and potential portals to the Otherworld. Of course, it is understandable that later civilisations may have attributed these strange structures to the fairy folk as a way of attaching meaning to their existence.

Fionn Mac Cumhaill and the Giant's Causeway

How was Ireland's most famous landmark created?

In County Antrim, on the north coast of Northern Ireland, a strange configuration of columns exist out into the sea towards Scotland. Formed around 60 million years ago, the basalt columns that make up this famous landmark were the result of a historic volcanic eruption as well as the separation of the landmass of Ireland from North America. Over time, a story was passed down by the inhabitants of Ireland to explain this odd, and supernatural-looking, natural phenomenon.

First written down in the medieval period, the story goes that the giant called Fionn Mac Cumhaill (or Finn MacCool) built a causeway between Ireland and Scotland in order to fight his Scottish rival Benandonner. Though versions of the tale differ as to what exactly happened between the feuding giants, it is believed that Benandonner crossed the specially built causeway and either destroyed it on his way back to Scotland in a fit of rage, or as a preventative measure to stop the fearsome Mac Cumhaill from coming after him. Another version of the story tells of how Mac Cumhaill actually built the causeway in order to reach a Scottish lover, but that by the time he had built and walked the causeway he was so exhausted that he died.

The story of the basalt structure has captured the imagination of people throughout the centuries, with the landmark retaining the name of the Giant's Causeway and continuing to attract visitors from around the world.

> "Bad luck was said to befall anyone who tampered with the integrity of a fairy fort"

For fear of incurring the wrath of the strange, mythical, and sometimes vengeful creatures who are believed to inhabit the circular fortifications, people gave them a wide berth and worked to preserve the areas in which they were found.

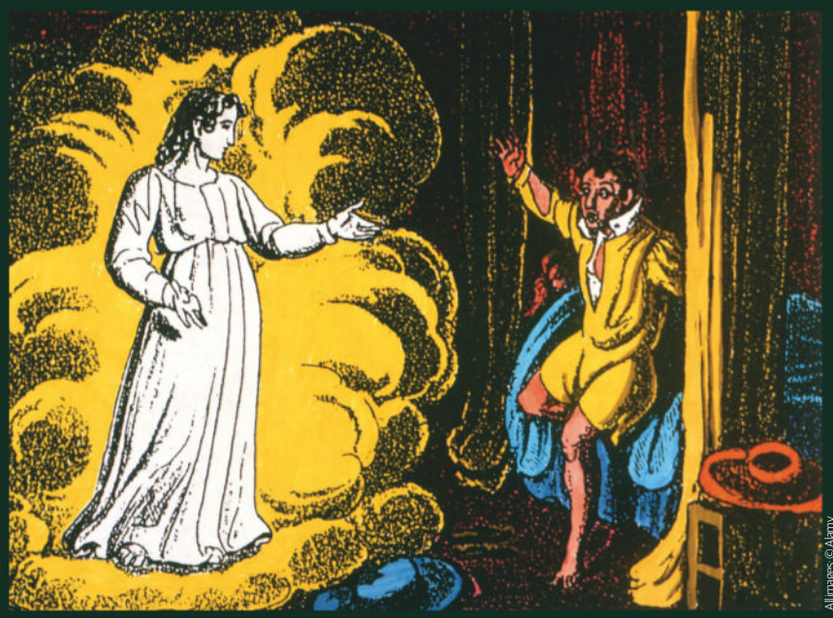
The fear of the wrath of the fairy folk was all too real throughout Ireland's history, especially when it came to any damage to so-called fairy forts. Bad luck was said to befall anyone who tampered with the integrity of a fairy fort and to some extent those superstitions live on. An article in *The Irish Times* pointed out that as recently as the 20th century, the destruction of fairy forts was thought to be responsible for unfortunate events taking place: "It is widely believed that the demise of Sean Quinn's cement and insurance empire in Cavan and of John DeLorean's sports car industry in Belfast were directly attributable to the conscious destruction of 'sacred' ringforts." Even more recently, in 2017, an Irish politician reportedly attributed damage done to a road to fairy forts being disturbed: "There are numerous fairy forts in that area... I know that they are linked. Anyone that tampered with them back over the years paid a high price and had bad luck."

The Irish Mascot

There are many different types of Aos Sí in Irish folklore, many of whom are tied to the story of the Tuatha Dé Danann. Arguably the most iconic of all these fairies is the leprechaun. Plastered across fridge magnets and postcards for all tourists to take home from their trips to Ireland, and a global mascot for St. Patrick's Day, the leprechaun has become symbolic of Irish mythology and identity. But where did this mischievous creature come from?

The origins of the leprechaun are complicated to say the least. Unlike other folkloric creatures that have a singular traceable origin, leprechauns are a little harder to pinpoint. It is believed by some that they are a diminutive form of fairy, and evolved after the Tuatha Dé Danann went underground. Rather than living with others of their kind, leprechauns lived solitary existences and took the form of little bearded men. Why leprechauns were smaller than other fairies is not clear, but their size is an important factor in establishing where the word "leprechaun" came from. Some scholars have speculated that the term derives from the old Irish words "luchorpán" or "lupracán". When examining the origins of these words, "Lú" translates from Greek to mean "small", while "corp" comes from the Latin word "corpus", translating as "body". Thus, the leprechaun is quite literally a person of "small body".

The leprechaun character may also have come from the story of the ancient Celtic deity Lugh, a hero of Irish mythology and god of the Sun and the light. Lugh, along with other Celtic gods and goddesses, inhabited the Otherworld with the Tuatha Dé Danann as Christianity swept across Ireland and forced the traditional deities out. As a result of living in Sidhe mounds, Lugh began to stoop to fit in his new surroundings. He thus became known as Lugh-chromain, meaning Stooping Lugh. It



All images © Alamy

is a possibility that the term "leprechaun" came from "Lugh-chromain" and that over time the image of the stooped god evolved into the concept of the mischievous petite men that populate Ireland's history. One of Lugh's domains as a deity was craftsmanship, and as leprechauns are sometimes attributed with being shoemakers, it would make sense that they may have emanated from lore surrounding Lugh. Lugh has also been depicted in Irish mythology as a trickster – again, a well-known attribute of the leprechaun.

A third explanation of the leprechaun is that they are the water sprites that feature in *Echtra Fergusa maic Léti* (The Adventure of Fergus Son of Léte). In this tale, which dates from the 8th century, mischievous sprites attempt to kidnap the sleeping hero Fergus and drag him into the water. However, Fergus wakes up and captures the sprites who promise him three wishes if he lets them go. This concept of a fairy creature being able to grant wishes has also become associated with leprechauns, and so it is possible this tale contributed to the evolution of the leprechaun myth.

What is likely is that over time and across the country, all these stories of

ABOVE Fairies, or Aos Sí, form a central part of Ireland's folklore and history

RIGHT Athgreany in County Wicklow is the site of an ancient stone circle and a hawthorn tree that has long been associated with fairies

BELOW-RIGHT In some tales, the banshee appeared as a beautiful young woman despite being the harbinger of death

LEFT A depiction of a leprechaun, complete with a pair of shoes he may have made

BELOW An illustration of leprechauns leading a drunk man astray

BELOW-RIGHT It may have been the giant Fionn Mac Cumhaill that killed the vampire Abhartach

troublesome male fairy-esque creatures amalgamated to create the leprechaun that is such a symbol of Ireland today. However, the version of the character that is most familiar today has some particular characteristics. One of the most iconic aspects is that they are keepers of wealth, and can sometimes be found at the end of a rainbow with a pot of gold. Another firm attribute of the leprechaun is that they are always male. Fairies, in general, appear to be able to be of any sex, whereas there is no record of a female leprechaun ever being mentioned in any tale.

The Bowl of the Banshee

The most feared of Ireland's fairy creatures is undoubtedly the banshee. Just as a leprechaun is always male, a banshee is always female with the term "banshee" deriving from the old Irish "bean sidhe" which literally translates as "fairy woman". For the Irish, coming across a banshee is something that should be avoided at all costs, as the banshee's scream is said to be the herald of death itself. In some circumstances, hearing a banshee signalled an impending death, whereas sometimes the wail of the banshee told of a death that had already occurred, but the person hearing the cry may not have been given the news yet.

Of course, like any folkloric tale, there are differentiations in the accounts of those who have heard the cry of the banshee. While the banshee's function

The Ossory Werewolves

Who were Ireland's wolf warriors?

Though tales of werewolves and wolf-human hybrids are rife across European folklore, Ireland's tale of the werewolves of Ossory ties werewolf lore to ancient Irish kingship. The ancient kingdom of Ossory had a long history, and the royal lineage of the kingdom was believed to descend from Laignech Faelad, the king of Ossory's brother who had the ability to transform into a wolf. As a result of Faelad's supernatural powers, the descendants of the Ossory kings inherited the wolf genes and formed a mercenary tribe of vicious werewolves for hire. Accounts of these fearsome wolf warriors can be found in medieval Irish sources, but are also described in English and Norse accounts from around the same time.

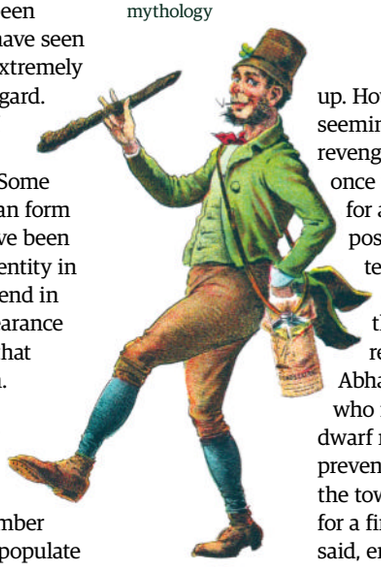
Wolves existed in Ireland throughout the ancient and medieval periods, and were such an issue that the Irish bred a dog specifically to hunt them: the Irish Wolfhound. It is most likely that the legend of the Ossory werewolves derived from a group of ancient Irish warriors who became associated with wolves due to their tendency to wear wolf skins and have untamed hair. When these fearsome warriors went on raids, it was referred to as "going wolfing". Somewhere down the line, these wolf-like warriors were attributed with the power to actually turn into the creatures by those who passed the stories of their existence down through the generations.

Image source: wiki/Topographia Hibernica

remains largely the same across each version, the wailing sound so synonymous with the banshee appears in different forms. For example, in County Kerry in the southwest of Ireland, when people refer to the cry of the banshee they talk of haunting but pleasant songs and melodies that can be heard in the night. However, in Leinster in the east of the isle, the banshee's piercing scream can shatter glass with its pitch. The idea that a wailing sound, in whichever form it comes, is associated with death can easily be linked to the Irish tradition of keening – a historic lament that formed a central part of the mourning process for many grieving people throughout Ireland's history.

The appearance of the banshee also takes different forms. They have been described by those who claim to have seen them as everything from tiny to extremely tall; young or old; beautiful or haggard. There have even been accounts of the banshee as a headless woman with a bowl of blood in her arms. Some banshees do not even take a human form as most fairy creatures do, and have been described more as a supernatural entity in appearance. One fairly common trend in descriptions of the banshee's appearance though, are the piercing red eyes that frighten those who look into them.

BELOW The idea that leprechauns wear green is a much later addition to their mythology



The Irish Vampire Abhartach

Aside from creatures that can be classified as fairies, there are a number of other mythological beings that populate Ireland's long history. The concept of the vampire is a worldwide phenomenon, but Ireland has its very own vampiric tale to keep you up at night. First appearing in a book called *The Origin and History of Irish Names of Places* by Patrick Weston Joyce in 1870, Abhartach is a much more modern addition to the creatures of Irish folklore.

The story goes that Abhartach, a mystic tyrannical dwarf, was the leader of a town called Slaghtaverty. The people of the town were terrified of him and after years of torment and abuse, they implored another local chieftain from a nearby town to help them be rid of Abhartach. Answering their call for help, the chieftain killed Abhartach and buried him standing up. However, the very next day Abhartach seemingly came back to life and wanted revenge. And so the chieftain returned and once again defeated him, burying him for a second time, again in a standing position. But the walking dead don't tend to give up easily and by the next day Abhartach was back terrorising the community. The chieftain, realising he needed help to vanquish Abhartach for good, consulted a druid who informed him that the zombie dwarf needed to be buried upside down to prevent him from rising from the dead. So, the town's hero returned to kill Abhartach for a final time and, as the druid had said, ensured he was placed in his grave standing on his head. For extra security, a large stone was placed on top of the grave, and Abhartach was finally trapped.

> "The banshee's piercing scream can shatter glass with its pitch"

Again, there are discrepancies between different versions of the Abhartach story. Some accounts attribute the killing of the dwarf to Fionn Mac Cumhaill – the architect of the Giant's Causeway – while in others the legendary hero Cathain saves the townspeople. Another distinct difference in versions is that in some retellings, Abhartach returns from the dead as a terrifying blood-drinking predator. It is likely that on some level, the widespread myth of Abhartach served as some source of inspiration for Ireland's Gothic authors Bram Stoker and Sheridan le Fanu, the creators of the fictional vampires Dracula and Carmilla respectively. Without the story of Abhartach, who knows how those classic horror stories might have looked? The supposed grave of Abhartach, where the vampire creature is still said to be trapped upside down, can be located next to a hawthorn tree in County Londonderry. The presence of a physical grave is representative of how visible folklore like this was, and still is, to the Irish. As with the fairy rings, forts and mounds, the physical landscape of Ireland acts as a constant reminder of the legendary creatures who continue to leave their mark on Ireland and the Irish people.

WOMAN of LETTERS

We uncover all we can about the mysterious woman who penned a rare medieval prayer text

Interview by Jonathan Gordon

Examples of medieval female authorship are few and far between, so when one is available, it's worth examining. Such is the case with *Prayers and Meditations*, a prayer guide written around 1415 by a woman and focusing on women from the *Bible*, such as Mary, Martha and Mary Magdalene. Where did it come from, who was the author, and who commissioned it? These are just some of the questions we wanted to ask Dr Ben Parsons whose new book, *Two Middle English Prayer Cycles*, explores this text and its significance.

How did you first become aware of Prayers and Meditations and its significance?

Like most readers, I first encountered the text through the short samples included in Alexandra Barratt's excellent anthology *Women's Writing in Middle English*. However, I'm ashamed to say that I did not appreciate its full resonance at that point, no doubt owing to the embarrassment of riches Barratt offers. Some years later, the text drifted across my radar again when I was approached by a priest and amateur historian who wanted help reading a scan of its manuscript. I duly obliged, and my interest in this singular and significant piece was well and truly piqued.

Why is it believed that this was written by a woman and why is that significant?

The author makes her gender clear from the outset. In her prologue, when making a customary plea for the reader's prayers, she asks that God 'have mercy and pité on me, sinful, and make me a good woman'. The very fact that she reveals her identity, even in such oblique terms, is significant in its own right. There are a handful of texts from the period demonstrably written by women, but most are only identifiable from broad hints. For every Julian of Norwich or Margery Kempe, there are a number of shadowy, anonymous figures whose genders have to be inferred from their work, such as the authors of the romantic dream vision *The Flower and the Leaf* or the short lyrics of the *Findern Manuscript*. Yet the author does not only increase the number of medieval female writers known to us; she also adds to our understanding of female authorship itself and the potential forms it might take.

EXPERT BIO

© Dr Ben Parsons

DR BEN PARSONS

Dr Ben Parsons is associate professor of Late Medieval and Early Modern Literature at the University of Leicester. His previous work includes *Punishment and Medieval Education* (Boydell & Brewer, 2018). He is also the editor of *Two Middle English Prayer Cycles*, featuring this text, available now.

Main image: © Getty Images

IT IS VERY UNUSUAL TO SEE A MEDIEVAL WOMAN SELF-CONSCIOUSLY TAKING ON THE ROLE OF INSTRUCTOR

One of the main idiosyncrasies of her work is the fact that she is expressly serving as mentor to her reader, and doing so with an easy self-assurance; it is very unusual to see a medieval woman self-consciously taking on the role of instructor, let alone so unapologetically. Equally impressive is the level of education she displays. She is comfortable translating from Latin, producing her own renderings of the *Vulgate Bible*, and she shows knowledge of a wide range of authorities. She also suggests that she received her instruction formally, rather than in the less rigorous venue of the household where medieval women were usually taught. Early on she refers to the 'abc', the common primer medieval schoolchildren encountered as an entry-point into literacy. In a period in which formal schooling was confined to boys, and a small minority of boys at that, this knowledge is remarkable.

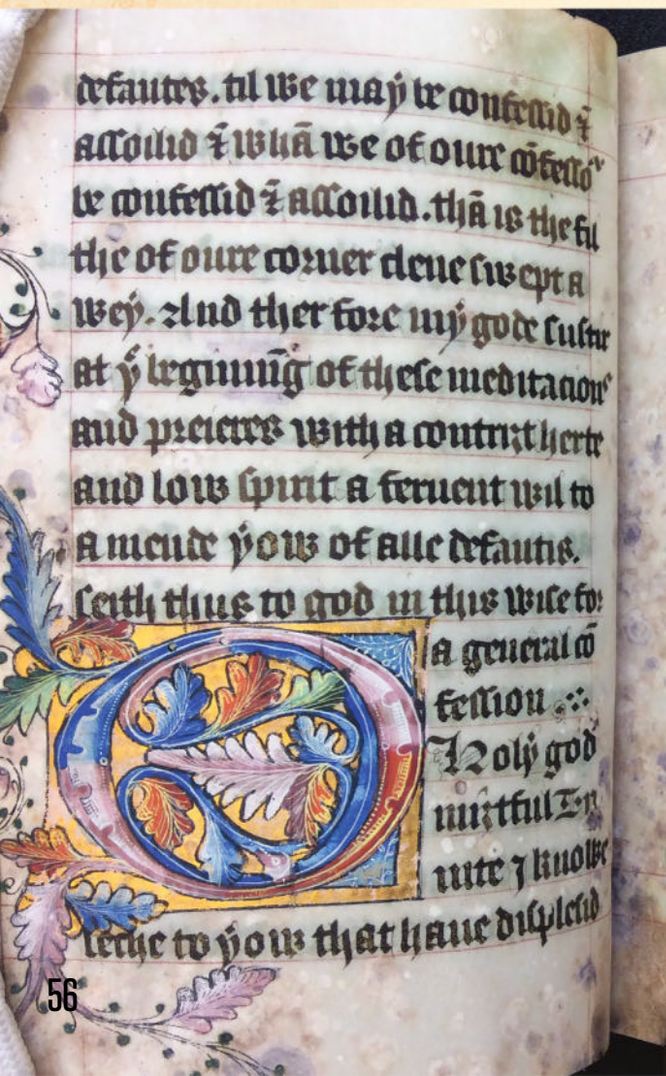
We understand it was also likely written at the request of a second woman. What do we know, if anything, about these two individuals?

Frustratingly little, more's the pity! Beyond acknowledging the gender of the author, and addressing the reader as 'religious sustir', which suggests that both were likely nuns in holy orders, the text tells us nothing about their personal identities. However, it does contain a few tantalising clues about the relationship between them. Our biggest source of information is the manuscript itself. This is now held at the Bodleian under the shelfmark Holkham Misc. 41, reflecting the fact that it was acquired from the library of Holkham Hall, Norfolk, in the 1950s, when it was the seat of Anthony Coke, 6th Earl of Leicester. How the manuscript came into the possession of the Cokes is an open question, but various signs point to it originating from Syon Abbey, a community dedicated to the teachings of St Bridget of Sweden that was founded in Middlesex in 1415. Foremost among these signals is a tell-tale four-dot monogram on its second leaf, which is a hallmark of the abbey's scriptorium. The manuscript's other, ornate decorations likewise tell us that it was not the author's original text but a later copy, perhaps produced in the 1430s as a gift for one of the abbey's noble benefactors. So, the manuscript allows a rough chain of transmission to be pieced together. It looks as though the sequence of prayers was commissioned by one of the early Bridgettine sisters at Syon, who looked to a more experienced meditator outside her order to guide her in her devotions; it was

RIGHT Mount Grace Priory is where an important guide in English was written by Nicholas Love

BELOW-LEFT A closer look at the incredible detail to be found in the prayer guide text

BELOW-RIGHT A stained glass window of Mary from Felbrigg Hall, Norfolk




© Dr Ben Parsons

then later recopied into its current volume. Even that is guesswork, of course, and any further conclusions are on even shakier ground.

Is there anything particularly unusual about the topics chosen or the style of the text?

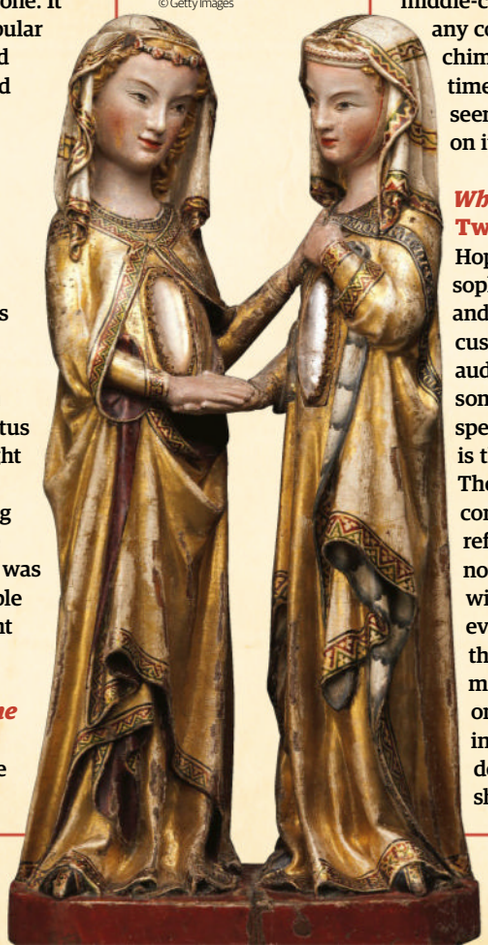
In some respects, the text is quite a conventional one. It follows the template fixed by the enormously popular *Meditations on the Life of Christ* (c.1340), attributed (erroneously) to St Bonaventure. Like that text and its various imitators, it retells the New Testament narrative in vivid, emotive and highly sensory language that allows the reader to visualise its scenes and insert themselves imaginatively into them. Yet her approach differs markedly from most texts in this tradition. On the one hand, she takes pains to feminise Christian devotion and even Christ himself, drawing lengthy comparisons between Jesus' life and such typically 'feminine' duties as house-cleaning, pregnancy and food-preparation. On the other, she is less interested in parading her own learning and cementing her status as a teacher. She seems aware that her reader might not share her competency in Latin or familiarity with the church fathers, and avoids namedropping authorities or reeling off Latin quotations as male advisors tend to do. Whoever the author was, she was obviously a patient as well as highly knowledgeable teacher, and it is easy to see why her reader sought out her advice.

How common were prayer guides like this one in the 15th century?

Guides on the same model are an important genre in medieval literature. The Pseudo-Bonaventuran *Meditations* kick-started a wave of adaptations and imitations across Europe. Its influence is everywhere in medieval culture: most languages have at least one translation, and it provided a powerful model for lyrics, visual art and sermons, as well as contemplative literature, well into the 16th century. In English, its most important adaptation is the *Mirrour of the Blessed Lyf of Jesu Christ* (c.1409), written by Nicholas Love, prior of Mount Grace in North Yorkshire. Love's version is one of the most widely read texts in medieval English, surviving today in over 60 manuscripts, although it too is not a straightforward reworking. Nicholas Love effectively weaponised the *Meditations*, using it to combat the mounting heresy of Lollardy and to weave orthodox Catholic teaching into the biblical account of Jesus' life. His work therefore complements the *Prayers and Meditations* in that it shows another direction in which the prayer-guide framework could be stretched.


2x © Dr Ben Parsons

BELOW Mary visiting her relative Elizabeth after learning she is pregnant is an important female-focused story from the *Bible*
© Getty Images



Could you tell us more about the other text that features in your book and how this one compares?

The other text is quite a different beast. Entitled *The Fruyte of Redempcyon*, it was written by Simon Appulby (or 'wretched Symon') shortly before 1514, when its first edition was printed by Wynkyn de Worde. Appulby himself is an interesting figure, since he is one of England's last adherents of the strict form of seclusion known as anchorism. A priest by profession, in 1513 he entered a sealed chamber attached to the church of Allhallows London Wall, and remained there until his death in 1537. Paradoxically, however, his enclosure was a gesture of commitment to rather than withdrawal from the urban congregation he served, one that raised the prestige of the church through his devotions. Accordingly, his prayer collection is attuned to the needs of a lay, middle-class readership, most noticeably in its denial of any conflict between faith and commerce. It obviously chimed with his audience: it was printed at least five times over two decades, and one of those editions seems to be a bootleg version designed to capitalise on its popularity.

What do you hope readers will take away from Two Middle English Prayer Cycles?

Hopefully they will have a greater sense of the sophistication and subtlety of medieval devotion, and the way in which skilled authors might customise its teachings to address a variety of audiences and needs. But beyond that, there are some specific ways in which the two authors still speak to us. One striking feature of both texts is their emphasis on tolerance and compassion. The author of the *Prayers and Meditations* in fact concludes on this note, advising her reader to reflect on her worthlessness 'in the syght of God', not as a reality but as a sort of mental exercise that will stimulate 'pité and compassion' for others; she even adds that the only real difference between the 'most perfith' and 'most sinful man' are the material circumstances in which they lived. Not only are we unaccustomed to seeing these virtues in medieval culture, but the fact that the author devises practical techniques to encourage them shows the esteem in which they were held.

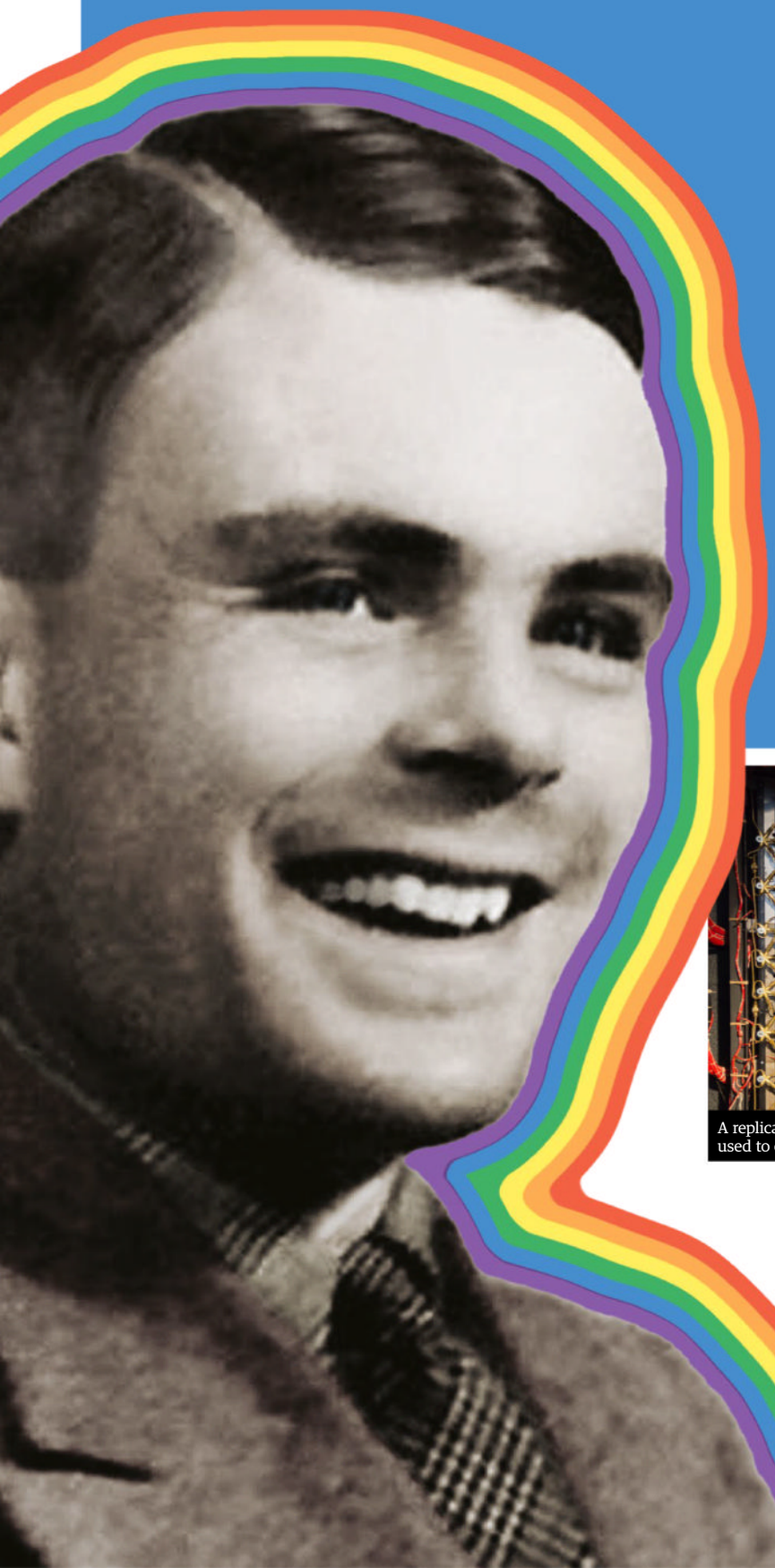
LGBTQ+ LEGACIES

From peanut butter to the modern computer, discover the impact of LGBTQIA+ people in the world of science and technology

Written by Christopher Evans

Did you know that a gay man designed the modern computer we use today? Or that a lesbian almost halved the infant mortality rate of New York City? These incredible achievements made by LGBTQIA+ people in science, technology, engineering and medicine have not always been told. While many hid their true identities and sexuality out of fear of persecution, others were left out of the history books altogether. As times have changed and societal views have shifted, their real stories have been unearthed, so here are five LGBTQIA+ people whose contributions, in one way or another, have changed the world.

ALAN TURING



Known as the 'father of modern computing', Alan Turing was a noted genius from a young age. He studied mathematics at Cambridge University where he designed the Turing machine, the mathematical model of the modern computer.

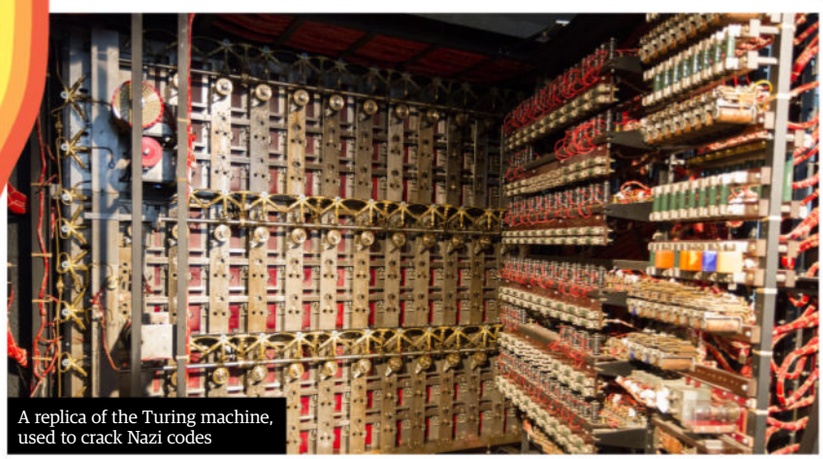
During World War II, Turing worked for the British government helping to crack the Enigma code, which the German military were using to encrypt their transmissions. While UK spies could intercept these messages, it was impossible to decode them as they had billions of possible combinations.

Turing and his fellow codebreakers built a machine called the Bombe, which could scan through all possible decryptions much faster than humans, enabling them to decipher the Germans' messages and turn the tide of the war to beat the Nazis. It is said that without Turing's work, the war may have lasted much longer, thus costing millions more lives.

After the war, Turing continued his pioneering work within computer science, including what would later become the building blocks of artificial intelligence.

Despite his legacy, Turing's life is often looked back on with tragedy due to the persecution he faced for his sexuality by the very country he served. In 1952, just seven years after the end of World War II, he was arrested for indecency after admitting to a relationship with another man. He was punished by chemical castration via hormonal treatment intended to lower his libido, and his security clearance was revoked, thus ending his career. Two years later, on 8 June 1954, he was found dead at home from cyanide poisoning. His death was ruled a suicide.

In 2009, the UK government apologised for the way Turing was treated, and in 2013 he was granted a royal pardon. In 2017, the Turing Law was passed in his name, enabling men with historical gay sex convictions to apply for a formal pardon.



A replica of the Turing machine, used to crack Nazi codes

"IT IS SAID THAT WITHOUT TURING'S WORK, THE WAR MAY HAVE LASTED MUCH LONGER, THUS COSTING MILLIONS MORE LIVES"

DR SARA JOSEPHINE BAKER (DR JO)

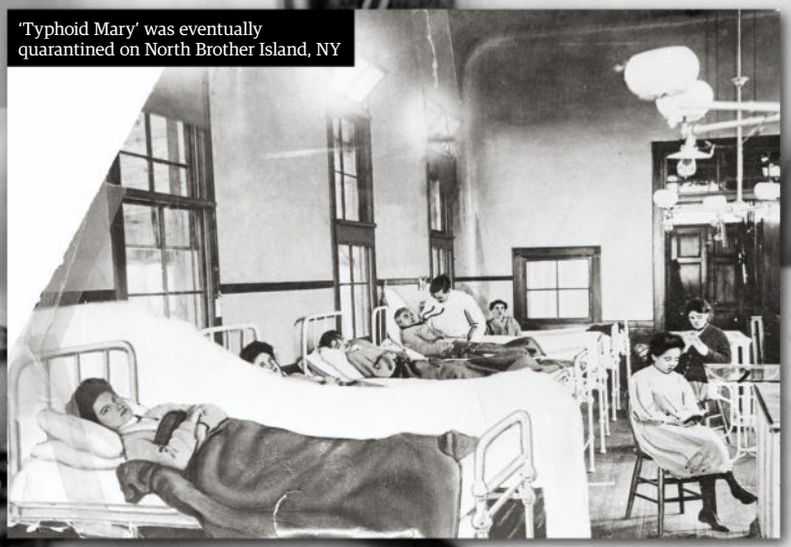
After the death of her father, 16-year-old Sara Josephine Baker gave up her scholarship to a liberal arts college and instead applied for medical school.

After graduating in 1898, Baker took a year-long internship at the New England Hospital for Women and Children in Boston. After her internship, she returned to New York and joined the New York Health Department as a part-time inspector. In 1907, she was promoted to Assistant Commissioner of Health where she was instrumental in rolling out the smallpox vaccine and tracking down the infamous Mary Mallon, or 'Typhoid Mary', a cook who unknowingly passed typhoid from household to household, leading to nine outbreaks.

In 1908, Baker was appointed the Director of Child Hygiene and focused her attention on poverty-stricken areas of the city where overcrowding and disease were rife and the child mortality rate sky high. Baker developed several programmes that used preventive medicine and education. Nurses would visit the homes of mothers and teach them about germs and how they spread; centres were set up to hand out bacteria-free milk and check babies' health; girls aged between 12 and 16 were taught how to care for their baby siblings while their parents worked.

The results of Baker's efforts were enormous, saving thousands of lives, and by 1923 New York City had the lowest infant death rate of any major city in the United States and Europe. In fact, the success of her programme was so great that male physicians even attempted to have her department shut down, as they claimed having so many well babies was having a detrimental effect on their own business.

Dr Jo was an open lesbian who lived with her female partner up until her death from cancer in 1945.



'Typhoid Mary' was eventually quarantined on North Brother Island, NY

SOPHIE WILSON

Sophie Wilson studied computer science at Cambridge University in the 1970s, before joining Acorn Computers as a computer engineer. At university, Sophie had designed a microcomputer that could be programmed to feed cows at regular intervals. This machine became the basis for the Acorn Computer, a very successful early microcomputer that was used by scientists and IT professionals.

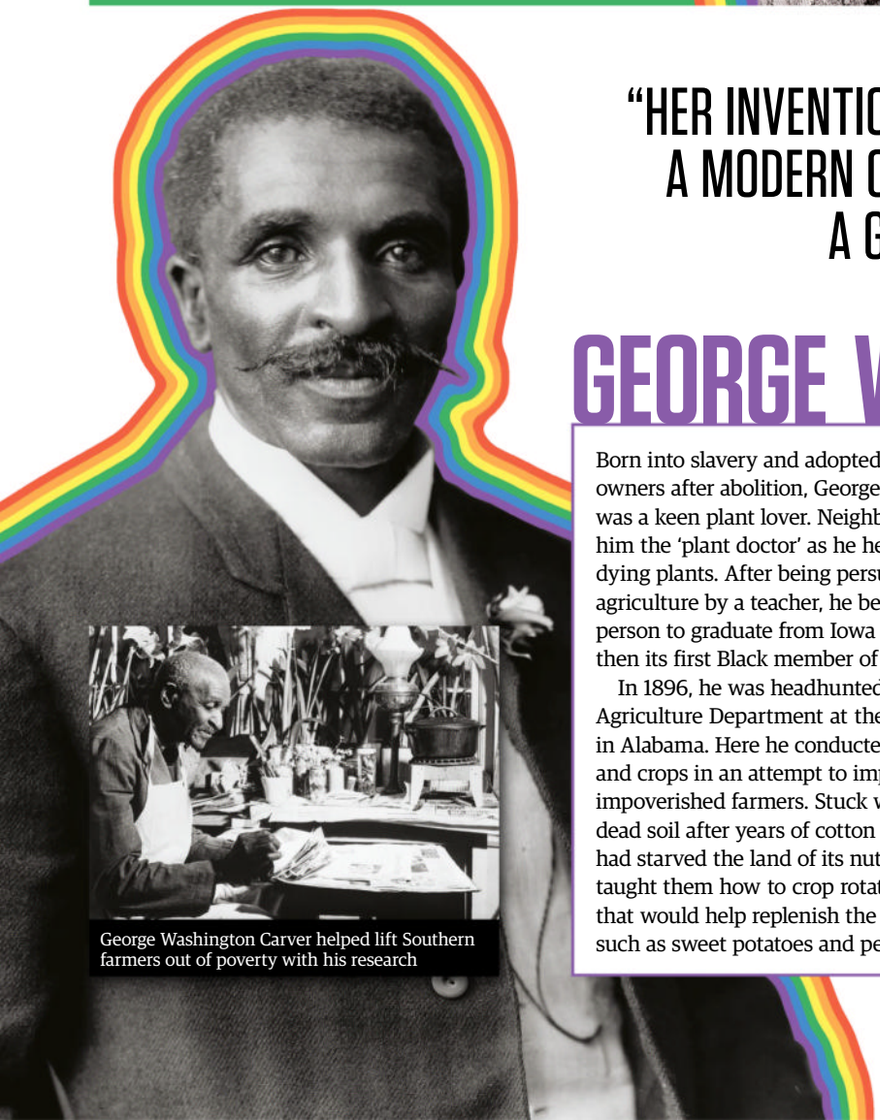
In 1981, the BBC put out a call for a company to build them a computer they could use for an education programme. Sophie designed and built a prototype in only three days, and won Acorn the contract with the BBC. The computer she designed became the BBC Microcomputer, better known as the BBC Micro, and was sold to thousands of schools across the UK, becoming the first experience of a modern computer in the classroom for a generation of children. Sophie went on to design what would become the ARM microprocessor. Since it used very little power, the ARM was revolutionary and went on to be used in thousands of electronics, including 95 per cent of smartphones and tablets.

Sophie underwent gender reassignment in 1994, transitioning from male to female, was appointed CBE in 2019, and became a Distinguished Fellow of the British Computer Society in 2020.

The BBC Micro at the Centre for Computing History, Cambridge

"HER INVENTION BECAME THE FIRST EXPERIENCE OF A MODERN COMPUTER IN THE CLASSROOM FOR A GENERATION OF CHILDREN"

GEORGE WASHINGTON CARVER



George Washington Carver helped lift Southern farmers out of poverty with his research

Born into slavery and adopted by his former slave owners after abolition, George Washington Carver was a keen plant lover. Neighbours would call him the 'plant doctor' as he helped revive their dying plants. After being persuaded to study agriculture by a teacher, he became the first Black person to graduate from Iowa State College, and then its first Black member of staff.

In 1896, he was headhunted to lead the Agriculture Department at the Tuskegee Institute in Alabama. Here he conducted research into soil and crops in an attempt to improve the lives of impoverished farmers. Stuck with land full of dead soil after years of cotton farming that had starved the land of its nutrients, Carver taught them how to crop rotate with produce that would help replenish the soil. Produce such as sweet potatoes and peanuts added vital nutrients, leading to more profitable cotton growth for the farmers.

At the time, there was very little use for these kinds of crops, so Carver set to work on ways to utilise them, inventing hundreds of plant-based products from what were considered 'undesirable crops'. These included things like flour, paint and cosmetic products. Over time, sweet potatoes and peanuts became a staple of the South, and it is said that without Carver's inventions, peanut butter may never have been created.

Although he never made any conclusive statements about his sexuality, it is widely believed that Carver had relationships with some of his male students, and chose to live out the last years of life with his assistant, Austin Curtis Jr. The pair were often seen walking around campus arm in arm checking on their experiments.

SALLY RIDE

In 1977, NASA began searching for young scientists to join its space programme as 'mission specialists'. Sally Ride, a student studying for her master's degree and doctorate at Stanford University at the time, answered a newspaper advert and was one of only five women chosen for NASA's class of 1978.

Ride completed her training the following year, and in 1983 broke the highest glass ceiling of all, becoming America's first woman to go to space, as well as the youngest American astronaut at the time. With four male colleagues, Ride went into orbit aboard the Space Shuttle Challenger, controlling a robotic arm that placed satellites in orbit.

In the lead-up to her mission, the press hounded Ride with questions concerning the type of makeup she would be taking into space and whether being an astronaut would affect her ability to have children. Sally Ride would later remark, "it's too bad our society isn't further along."

The following year, in 1984, Ride embarked on a second mission, and in 1986 helped investigate the Challenger disaster that killed seven of her colleagues. In 1987, she left NASA to take up a fellowship at Stanford University.

Fiercely private about her personal life, it was not until after Ride passed away from cancer in 2012 that her obituary quietly confirmed her 27-year relationship with her female partner, Tam O'Shaughnessy.

It was said that revealing her sexuality would have been a "career wrecker", due to NASA's stereotype of choosing the 'Right Stuff' and may have been the reason she never publicly came out.

Following her death, she became the first acknowledged gay astronaut and was posthumously awarded the Presidential Medal of Freedom in 2013 by President Obama, which her partner Tam accepted.

Ride works on the Space Shuttle Challenger during NASA's 1983 STS-7 mission

Greatest Battles

BATTLE OF TEWKESBURY

TEWKESBURY, ENGLAND, 4 MAY 1471

Written by Tom Garner

In the popular imagination, the Wars of the Roses ended with the death of Richard III at the Battle of Bosworth in 1485. The House of York had fallen and England belonged to the Tudors under Henry VII. However, it is arguable that the true fight between the houses of York and Lancaster ended 14 years previously. The Battle of Tewkesbury is one of the greatest clashes in English history and was the final direct encounter between the Yorkists and a purely Lancastrian force. It witnessed the death of a prince of Wales, destroyed the ambitions of a queen, entrenched the rule of a king and sealed the grisly fate of another monarch. Its story has all the hallmarks of a medieval epic and was the culmination of decades of civil strife.

England had been engaged in an intermittent but bloody civil war since 1455. Until that time the

Many Lancastrian nobles and knights sought sanctuary in Tewkesbury after the battle, but Edward had them dragged out and executed within days

Plantagenets had ruled uninterrupted for 245 years, but the deposition of Richard II in 1399 by his Lancastrian cousin Henry IV transformed the status quo. Richard II's declared heirs were the Earls of March, and some of their descendants later became the Dukes of York. The Yorkists never forgot their thwarted claims to England's throne. Henry IV succeeded in establishing a Lancastrian dynasty, which reached its zenith under Henry V. However, it was the weak rule of his son Henry VI that would see Yorkist ambitions reasserted.

Medieval kingship depended on personal charisma and political skill. Henry VI possessed none of these. He ascended the throne in 1422 aged only nine months and, thanks to the military campaigns of his father and uncles, had been in the privileged position of being crowned both king of England and France, the only English king ever to do so. Despite this, his long minority was beset by infighting between ambitious nobles on his council, and by the time he came of age, it was obvious that Henry lacked the ability to control his aristocracy. Consequently, Henry VI's vast lands in France were gradually lost and he made continuous mistakes in his foreign and domestic policy. When the English finally lost the Hundred Years' War in 1453, Henry descended into madness.

Into this power vacuum stepped Richard, Duke of York, who was declared lord protector of England by the royal council, much to the chagrin of Henry's feisty queen Margaret of Anjou. York, who was keenly aware of his own strong claim to the throne, attempted to eliminate Henry VI's favourites to consolidate power. The Wars of the Roses began in 1455 when York killed the Lancastrian Duke of Somerset at the First Battle of St Albans. Queen Margaret became increasingly alarmed at York's growing power and their mutual antipathy exploded into a full-blown civil war in 1459. Although York himself was killed at the Battle of Wakefield in December 1460, his eldest son Edward continued the fight and proclaimed himself King Edward IV in March 1461. He proceeded to defeat the Lancastrians at the Battle of Towton in 1461, known as the bloodiest battle in English history. The still-feeble Henry VI, along with Margaret and their son Edward, Prince of Wales, was forced to flee to Scotland.

The House of York was triumphant. Edward IV was a striking contrast to Henry VI. Although he was only 19 years old in 1461, he had considerable


Although they were once mortal enemies, Queen Margaret and Warwick combined forces in a last attempt to topple Edward IV


The Prince of Wales was brought before Edward IV after the Battle of Tewkesbury

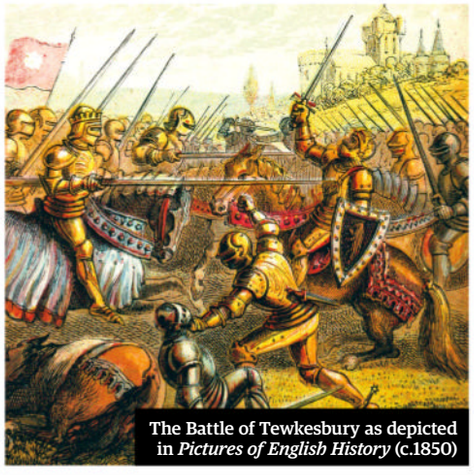
military acumen. He was also known to be affable and good looking, making him the epitome of what a medieval warrior king should be. These personal qualities and his victory at Towton ensured that he had widespread support for his rule, but his throne was not yet secure. While Henry VI was still alive, Edward could not guarantee total loyalty from his subjects. Henry spent four years wandering through Scotland and northern England, surviving on the goodwill of Lancastrian sympathisers, but he was eventually captured in 1465 and held in the Tower of London. At this stage, Edward chose not to kill Henry, as he was a visibly poor figurehead for the Lancastrian cause. His death would have meant that the unproven Prince Edward, who might have been a more potent foe, would represent the Lancastrians. As events turned out, Edward IV's greatest enemy came from within.

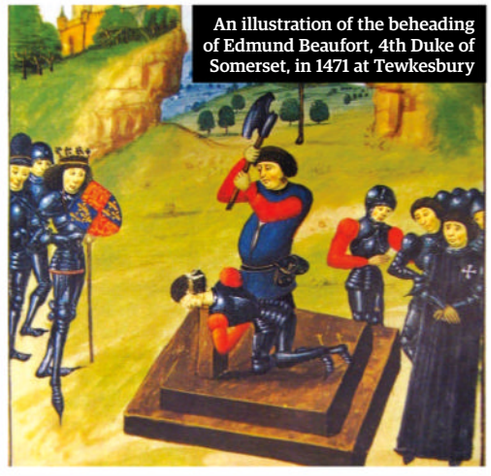
Edward IV largely owed his crown to one person: Richard Neville, 16th Earl of Warwick. As the constable of Calais, Warwick had been crucial to the Yorkist cause during the late 1450s and early 1460s. Calais was not only strategically vital to England but also held its largest standing army. In many ways he was becoming more powerful than the king and tensions began to brew throughout the 1460s, particularly after Edward married Elizabeth Woodville while Warwick was trying to arrange a match with the sister-in-law of Louis XI of France. The two men slowly grew apart, each mistrusting the other. In 1469, Warwick openly rebelled against Edward IV and even briefly took him prisoner after the Battle of Edgcote. Warwick was forced to release Edward and flee to France where he made an alliance with an angry, but desperate, Margaret of Anjou to restore Henry VI. To secure the deal, Warwick married his daughter Anne Neville to Henry's son Prince Edward, and after a successful invasion, Edward IV was forced to flee to Flanders.

Henry VI was released from the Tower of London and restored to his throne in October 1470 in an event known as the Readeption. Warwick's career as 'kingmaker' was now at its peak and he himself virtually ruled England, as Henry VI was by now mentally incoherent. However, this situation would not last long. Edward IV returned, landing off Yorkshire to reclaim his throne in March 1471. He soon gathered an army and defeated and killed Warwick at the Battle of Barnet on 14 April 1471. This was a crushing blow to the Lancastrians. Although Warwick had been a traitor to both causes, he was a significant military and political leader, and his loss would greatly influence the course of the final battle for Lancastrian England.

Warwick may have been killed, but his scheming plans were very much alive. Edward IV had only defeated one half of the alliance against him. As part of Henry VI's Readeption, Margaret of Anjou raised her own army and fleet to help restore her husband to the throne. A Lancastrian fleet of 70 ships set sail and, by an ironic twist of fate, Margaret landed at Weymouth in Dorset on the same day as the Battle of Barnet. After hearing of Warwick's destruction, Margaret wanted to leave England, but she was persuaded to try to link up with the Welsh forces of Henry VI's half-brother Jasper Tudor, Earl of Pembroke. The Duke of Somerset (the son of the previously executed duke) and the Earl of Devon had already raised an army of 6,000 men in the West Country. With this army, Margaret headed north towards Wales.

Meanwhile, Edward IV had to rapidly reassemble an army to deal with Margaret as he had disbanded most of the men who had fought at Barnet. The king realised that Margaret would march to meet Pembroke and set off in hot pursuit from Windsor with 5,000 men, making the Yorkists slightly outnumbered by the Lancastrians. Margaret was


The Battle of Tewkesbury as depicted in *Pictures of English History* (c.1850)


An illustration of the beheading of Edmund Beaufort, 4th Duke of Somerset, in 1471 at Tewkesbury

also in haste, and on 3 May 1471, the Lancastrians halted near Tewkesbury after a forced march from Dorset. The Yorkists caught up, having marched almost 50 kilometres in one afternoon. Both sides were exhausted but they were now so close to each other a battle was inevitable, and the fate of England would be decided the next day.

In the early morning of 4 May, the Lancastrians deployed their force in the fields south of Tewkesbury. Their force was divided into three divisions or 'battles'. The Duke of Somerset was in overall command and positioned himself on the right flank. On the left was the Earl of Devon and the centre was shared between Prince Edward and the more experienced Lord Wenlock – an untrustworthy character. Sometimes known as 'the prince of turncoats', he had initially been a Lancastrian but had spent most of the conflict as a Yorkist and only realigned himself with the Lancastrians during the Readeption. His real loyalty was with his long-standing ally the Earl of Warwick, but now that he was dead, Wenlock's allegiance was uncertain. Margaret of Anjou herself took refuge in a religious house away from the battlefield.

By contrast, the Yorkists were unified. Edward IV commanded the centre with Yorkist stalwart Lord Hastings on his right. On the left was the king's youngest brother Richard, Duke of Gloucester (the future Richard III) whose loyalty was unquestioned.

The battlefield terrain favoured the Lancastrians. In front of them lay difficult ground that included, according to a pro-Yorkist anonymous chronicler, "Foul lanes and deep dykes, and many hedges with hills and valleys, a right evil place to approach, as could well have been devised." If Edward IV was to stop the Lancastrians from linking up with Jasper Tudor, then he would have to cross these obstacles. The king had no choice but to deploy his tired army. He advanced warily and placed 200 spearmen into trees beyond his left flank as a precaution. This prudence would later pay dividends. The morning spring sunshine revealed two armies of glinting armour and colourful waving banners, but with a whiff of modernity. The Yorkists had the advantage of artillery and, combined with archers, they began to blast the Lancastrian lines before a general attack. The cannonballs shredded hedges and smashed through armour and flesh. Somerset decided to counter this bombardment by taking his division around the Yorkist left and attacking Gloucester's flank. He would be largely concealed by the dense terrain but he needed Wenlock's support to press home the attack.

Somerset manoeuvred his men and surprised Gloucester's flank by breaking their cover and charging towards the Yorkists. Gloucester reacted quickly, turning his division to face Somerset's men and sheltering behind a hedge. This broke the Lancastrian momentum. Part of Edward IV's centre also turned to counter the attack. The weight of numbers began to tell against Somerset and he looked to Wenlock for support. Wenlock's banners failed to advance from the "marvellous

LANCASTRIANS

PRINCE EDWARD OF WESTMINSTER

Edward was the only son of Henry VI and Margaret of Anjou, born into the midst of the strife between York and Lancaster. Still only aged seven when the Battle of Towton took place, Margaret fled to Scotland with her son, then France, to avoid capture. He returned aged 17 to fight for the throne.

JOHN WENLOCK

Like a number of other nobles of this era, 1st Baron Wenlock fought for both the Yorkist and Lancastrian cause on different occasions, although this earned him the nickname 'prince of turncoats'. He fought in six battles of the Wars of the Roses, before falling in the field at Tewkesbury.

EDMUND BEAUFORT

Raised in France, Edmund claimed the title of Duke of Somerset from his executed older brother, although his claim was challenged. He had been heading towards Wales to get the support of Jasper Tudor when the Yorkists stopped him at Tewkesbury, where he was defeated and executed.

YORKISTS

EDWARD IV

Edward was both ouster and ousted during the Wars of the Roses, having taken the throne from Henry VI following victories at Mortimer's Cross and Towton in 1461, only to face revolt and Henry reinstated in 1470. He gained support while taking refuge in Flanders before returning to London in 1471.

RICHARD, DUKE OF GLOUCESTER

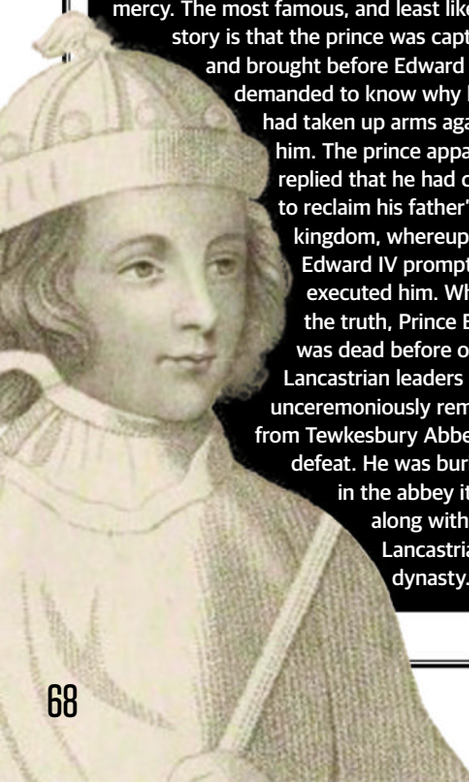
The future Richard III was Edward IV's brother and one of his main supporters as he sought to take back the throne in 1471. He was at the heart of the fighting at Barnet and held the vanguard at Tewkesbury. Richard then sat as Constable of England for the trial and sentencing of captured Lancastrians.

EDWARD OF WESTMINSTER: ROSE WITHOUT FLOWER

Henry VI's heir was showing signs of burgeoning kingship before his untimely death

Edward of Westminster, Prince of Wales, spent most of his short life growing up in exile and the shadow of war. Born in 1453, he was the treasured only son of Henry VI and Margaret of Anjou. He witnessed his first battle when he was seven years old at the Second Battle of St Albans in February 1461, which apparently toughened his spirit. While he and his mother were living in exile in 1467 the Milanese ambassador to France reported, "He already talks of nothing but cutting off heads or making wars, as if he had everything in his hands or was the god of battle or the peaceful occupant of that (English) throne." A fellow exile Sir John Fortescue also remarked, "As soon as he became grown up he gave himself over to martial exercises... and he often delighted in attacking and assaulting the young companions attending him."

The youth was clearly nothing like his father and appeared to be more like his warmongering grandfather Henry V. Nevertheless, this ruthless potential would be destroyed at Tewkesbury where Prince Edward was killed aged 17. The manner of his death is disputed. Most historians agree that he was killed in the fighting. Others claim he was captured by his brother-in-law the Duke of Clarence, who ordered him to be murdered despite the prince's pleas for mercy. The most famous, and least likely, story is that the prince was captured and brought before Edward IV who demanded to know why he had taken up arms against him. The prince apparently replied that he had come to reclaim his father's kingdom, whereupon Edward IV promptly executed him. Whatever the truth, Prince Edward was dead before other Lancastrian leaders were unceremoniously removed from Tewkesbury Abbey in defeat. He was buried in the abbey itself, along with the Lancastrian dynasty.



All images © Alamy, © Getty Images

strong ground" of the Lancastrians' original position. Nobody knows why Wenlock failed to help Somerset, but it is likely that he was torn between assisting the duke and fighting against his old king. Edward IV's spearmen emerged and attacked Somerset's rear. This broke his men who "greatly dismayed and abashed... took them to flight".

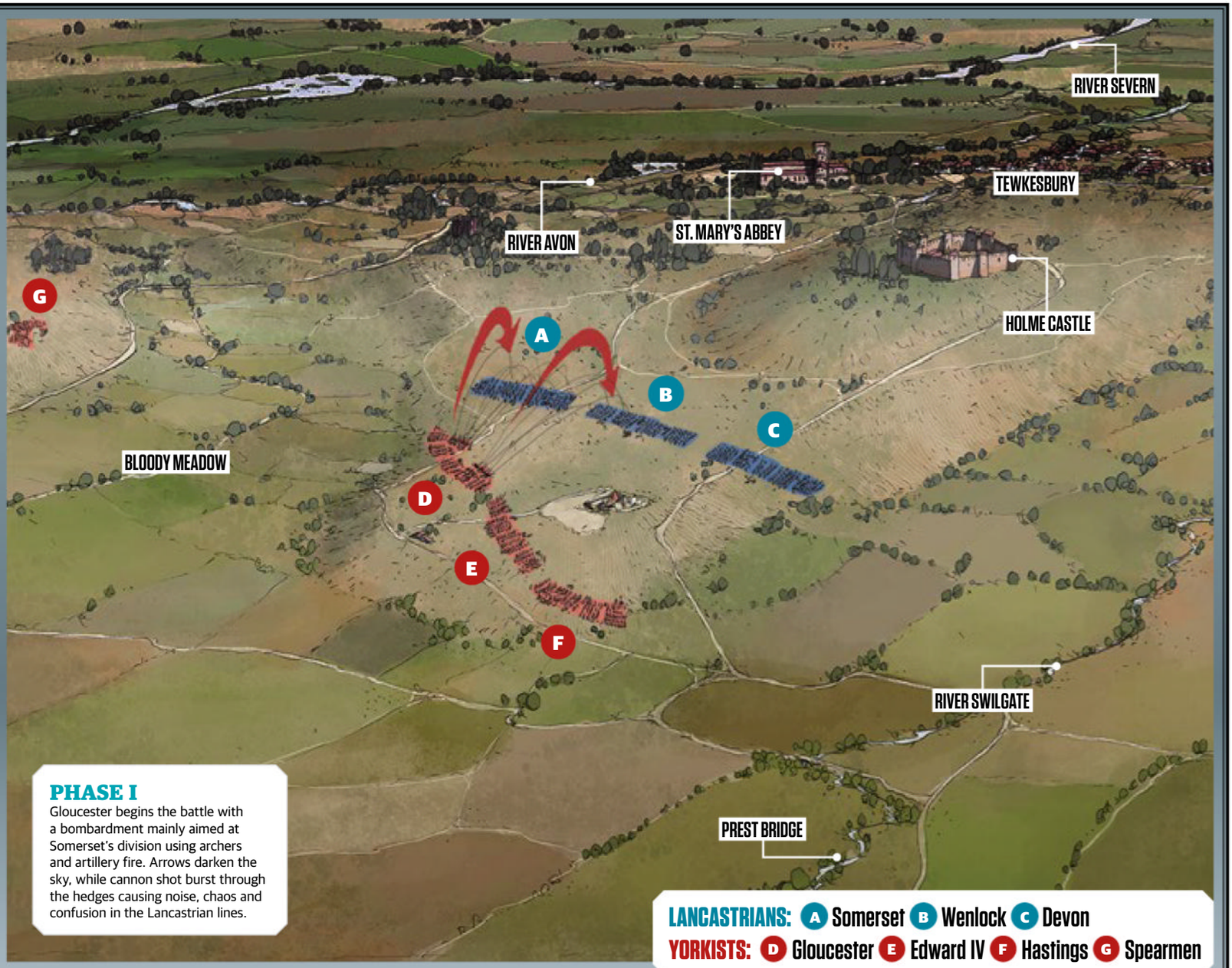
Edward IV saw his chance and, leading from the front "displayed his banners, did blow up the trumpets, committed his cause to Almighty God and advanced directly upon his enemies". At the same time, Somerset somehow made his way back to the remaining Lancastrian positions and, in the midst of the raging battle, marched up to Wenlock and denounced him as a traitor. He then picked up an axe, set upon Wenlock and "struck his brains out of his head".

While the members of the Lancastrian leadership were murdering each other, the Yorkists advanced through the dykes and hedges and pressed into their disintegrating opponents. A large number of Lancastrians became trapped by the River Severn and were massacred by the Yorkists on its banks. Others tried to take sanctuary in Tewkesbury Abbey, including Somerset and other Lancastrian leaders, although the Earl of Devon, and more crucially the prince of Wales, had already been killed on the battlefield. During the Middle Ages, 'sanctuary' meant that fugitives could hide in churches in order to achieve immunity from arrest, but Edward IV was in no mood to abide by ecclesiastical laws. After two days, the vengeful Yorkists forcibly entered the abbey and dragged out the Lancastrians, which included Somerset; Hugh Courtenay, the younger brother of the Earl of Devon; Sir John Langstrother, the prior of the Knights of St John of England; and Sir Gervase Clifton. They were subjected to brief trials and executed. Such was the violence perpetrated within and near the abbey it had to be closed for a month and re-consecrated.

The Yorkists had triumphantly won the battle. The Lancastrians lost about 2,000 men, while the Yorkist losses are more uncertain. What was most significant was the dynastic destruction of the Lancastrians. With Prince Edward dead, Margaret of Anjou's hopes were utterly destroyed. She surrendered to Edward IV within days, and on 21 May, the king paraded her in a chariot through London to visually symbolise her downfall. That same night the pitiful Henry VI died in the Tower of London in very murky circumstances. The official cause of death was "melancholy" but it is far more likely that he was murdered on Edward IV's orders. He had been kept alive only to weaken his son's claim to the throne, but he now no longer served any useful purpose. However, what is certain is that Gloucester married Prince Edward's widow Anne within a year of Tewkesbury. Her vast inheritance from her father the Earl of Warwick made her a highly eligible catch. Such are the spoils of dynastic war.

Margaret of Anjou remained a prisoner in England until 1475 when she was ransomed by Louis XI and spent the rest of her life in France, where she died in 1482. The only surviving males in the Lancastrian line were the obscurely placed Jasper Tudor and his nephew Henry. For the next 13 years they would be hunted men in exile, while the Yorkists basked in the glory of their remarkably restored monarchy. After Tewkesbury, Edward IV had defeated all of his enemies, and when he died in 1483, he believed he left a secure dynasty. However, the exiled Henry Tudor had other ideas.

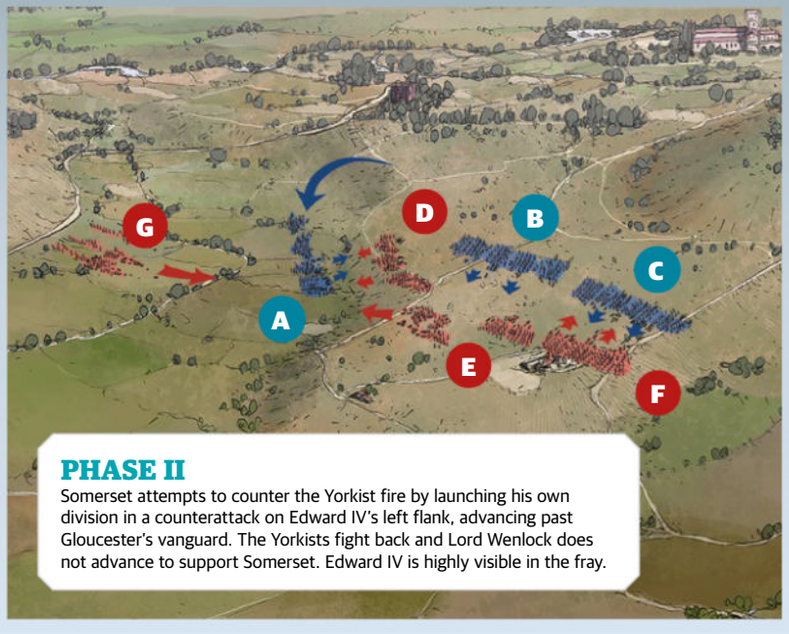
Margaret of Anjou was taken prisoner after Tewkesbury and Edward IV paraded her through London in triumph



PHASE I

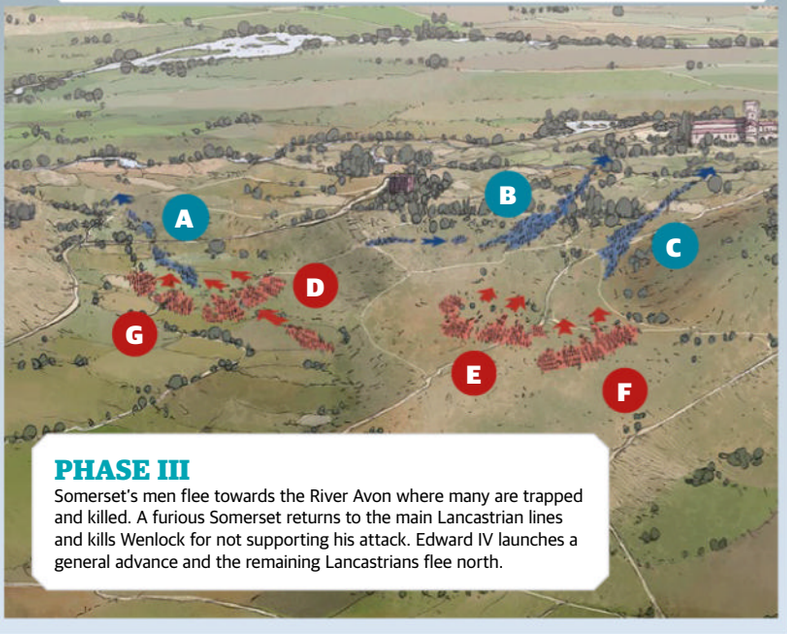
Gloucester begins the battle with a bombardment mainly aimed at Somerset's division using archers and artillery fire. Arrows darken the sky, while cannon shot burst through the hedges causing noise, chaos and confusion in the Lancastrian lines.

LANCASTRIANS: A Somerset B Wenlock C Devon
YORKISTS: D Gloucester E Edward IV F Hastings G Spearmen



PHASE II

Somerset attempts to counter the Yorkist fire by launching his own division in a counterattack on Edward IV's left flank, advancing past Gloucester's vanguard. The Yorkists fight back and Lord Wenlock does not advance to support Somerset. Edward IV is highly visible in the fray.



PHASE III

Somerset's men flee towards the River Avon where many are trapped and killed. A furious Somerset returns to the main Lancastrian lines and kills Wenlock for not supporting his attack. Edward IV launches a general advance and the remaining Lancastrians flee north.

Map by: ROCIO ESPIN

What If...

THE SALEM WITCH TRIALS HAD NEVER HAPPENED?

The brutality of the events in Massachusetts saw innocent lives lost, but also shocked the continent against further persecutions

Interview by Callum McKelvie

INTERVIEW WITH

© Marilynne Roach

MARILYNNE ROACH

Marilynne Roach is the author of numerous books on the subject of the Salem witch trials, including *Six Women of Salem* and *The Salem Witch Trials: A Day by Day Chronicle of a Community Under Siege.*

For 15 months between February 1692 and May 1693, the American town of Salem, Massachusetts was ripped apart by accusations of witchcraft that spread like wildfire. At the end of this harrowing period some 20 innocent people had been killed, suspected of witchcraft. However, the legacy of those terrible events served as a cautionary warning of the violent excesses of witchcraft trials. Since that time, the term 'witch hunt' has been used as a political metaphor for any unjust harassing of innocent people or groups. But what if the events at Salem had never occurred? Would witch trials have continued throughout America?

What was the situation in Salem directly prior to the witch trials?

The panic that became the Salem witch trials began in a time of growing uncertainty: loss of Massachusetts' charter, insecurity over how much self-rule a new charter would allow, the threat of smallpox, continuing frontier raids by French Canadians and their Wabanaki allies, privateers and pirates at sea, and a declining economy.

Why did the trials begin?

Early in 1692, the nine-year-old daughter and 11-year-old niece of Rev Samuel Parris began acting strangely. Their painful symptoms baffled physicians until one of them suggested the children might be under an evil spell. Matters worsened after a neighbour taught a British anti-magic charm to John and Tituba Indian, Parris's enslaved couple. But now the girls reported seeing the spectres of their tormentors – apparitions no one else could see: witches!

The first of the year's hearings took place on 1 March. Local magistrates questioned beggar Sarah Good, invalid Sarah Osborne, and Tituba Indian, after they were accused of hurting a total of four girls. All three suspects denied the charge of witchcraft but Tituba eventually broke down and, though insisting that she too was a victim, confessed and described a number of other witches whom she did not know. Now people began to wonder who else had joined the Devil's side.

© Getty Images

RIGHT
The hysteria that happened in Salem taught other courts what not to do

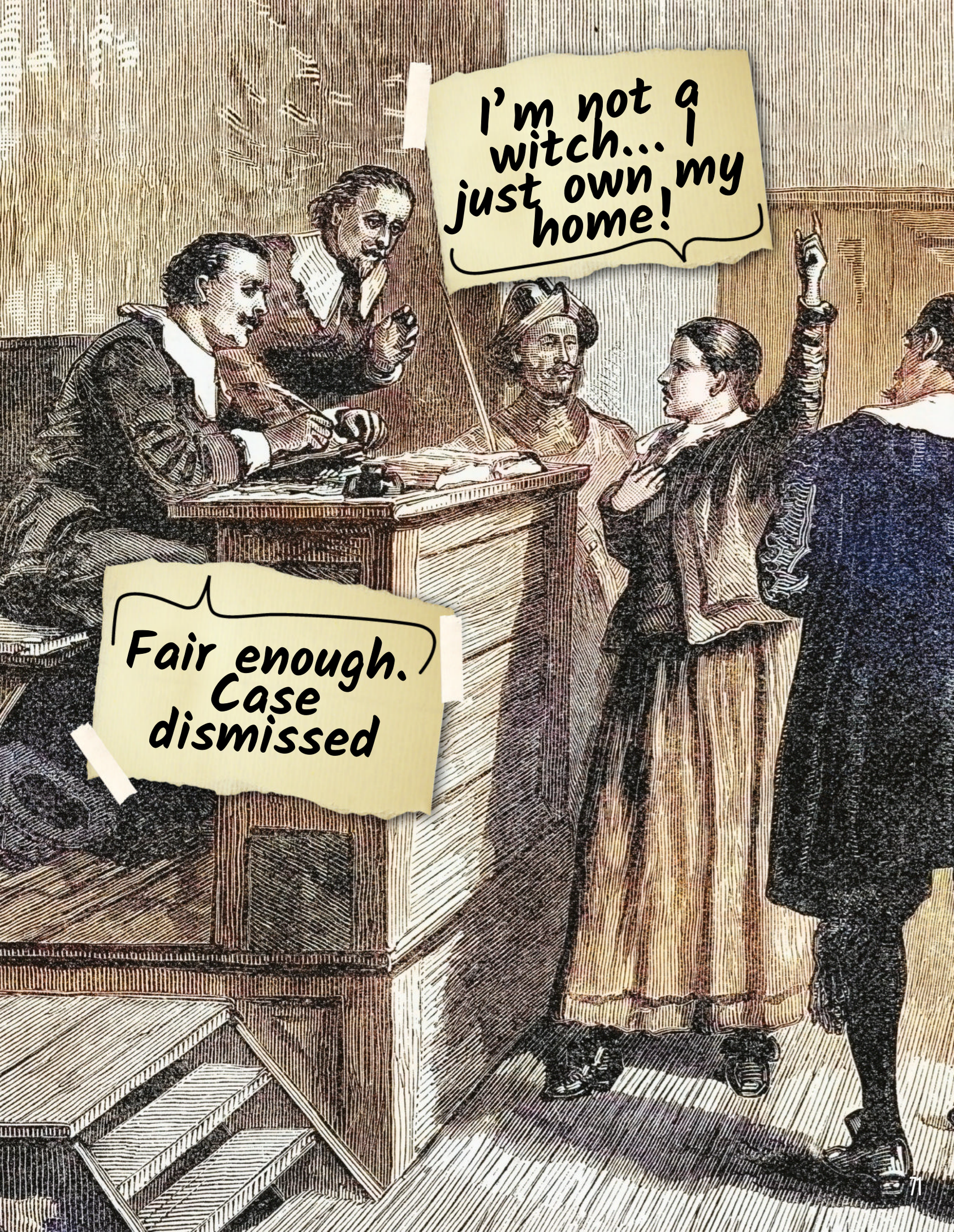
How did the accusations spread?

Suspicions, accusations, and hearings steadily increased throughout March, April and May. When the new royally-appointed governor, Sir William Phips, arrived with the new charter on 14 May, he found the jails of three counties crowded with people suspected of being witches. Because Massachusetts law now had to be reorganised in conformance with British law, Phips instituted a temporary Court of Oyer and Terminer until a permanent superior court could be established. The chief justice was Lieutenant Governor William Stoughton, who held the view that the Devil could not fake the spectre of innocent people without their permission.

The Court of Oyer and Terminer convened in Salem on 2 June, tried Bridget Bishop, and found her guilty. Bishop was hanged on 10 June, after which Judge Nathaniel Saltonstall resigned. Uncertain, the court consulted the Boston ministers (as experts in spiritual matters). The ministers stressed caution about accepting spectral evidence because the Devil did not need permission to counterfeit an appearance. Therefore, spectres were most likely the Devil's delusion. The court, however, ignored the precautions.

The spread of accusations continued, particularly in nearby Andover where

Main image: © Gettyimages


I'm not a witch... I just own my home!
Fair enough. Case dismissed

THE PAST

1597

THE WITCH-HUNTING KING

James VI of Scotland was well known for his obsession with witchcraft. In 1597 he published the *Daemonologie*, a book that expressed his belief in witchcraft and sought to prove the actuality of these practices. It also stated that he considered death the only suitable punishment for such heathen ways. His belief in witchcraft stemmed from a particularly bad storm that he got caught in during a voyage across the North Sea. He thought that the storm was caused by a group of 200 witches who had conspired to kill him. When he heard the confessions, even though they were extracted through torture, his belief only grew.

1644

THE WITCHFINDER GENERAL

Decades prior to Salem one man acquired a fearsome reputation as Britain's premier witchfinder – Matthew Hopkins. A fanatical Puritan, Hopkins and his various associates are believed to have been responsible for the deaths of 300 women. In 1644, John Sterne accused a group of women of witchcraft and Hopkins oversaw a trial which saw 19 of the accused hanged. Following this event Hopkins began to travel throughout East Anglia as the self-styled 'Witchfinder General' and charged a fee for his services. After years of spreading fear and terror Matthew Hopkins died in 1647, most likely of tuberculosis.

1612

THE PENDLE WITCH TRIALS

One of the most infamous witch trials in British history is that of the Pendle Witches. One of the accused, Alizon Device, had an argument with a man named John Law. When Law suffered a stroke he blamed Device and under trial she accused members of the Chattox family, with whom she held a personal grudge. The accusations spread and in August 1612, ten people were executed for witchcraft. The story is particularly well documented and known, mainly thanks to Thomas Potts and his *The Wonderfull Discoverie of Witches in the Countie of Lancaster.*

more people were arrested than in Salem. The panic eventually involved 23 communities and embroiled people from Maine to New York. The Court of Oyer and Terminer convened three more times in Salem and defendants were found guilty. 14 women and five men were hanged and one man was pressed to death for "standing mute" (refusing to agree to his trial). Due to increasing opposition, Phips stopped the proceedings in October pending advice from London.

The Massachusetts' legislature established a permanent court system under the new charter in November. Most of the judges were the same men and William Stoughton was again chief justice.

With the jails now crowded and no news yet from London, the new court met in January 1693 in Salem for Essex County. Forbidden from accepting "spectral evidence", they found only three guilty. The king's attorney felt that the evidence against them was no better than spectral evidence.

When the Superior Court opened in Charlestown for Middlesex County on 31 January, Phips unexpectedly postponed the executions scheduled for the following day. When Chief Justice Stoughton learned of this he was enraged and quit the bench for the remainder of the session. Of the five tried in February, no one was found guilty. Then in April and May the Superior Court for Suffolk and Essex Counties met again, but found no one guilty.

How did the trials come to an end?

Altogether, courts had tried 52 defendants, found 30 guilty of the charge of witchcraft, and hanged 19 before prohibiting spectral evidence. Primarily to acknowledge the errors of the former witchcraft trials, Massachusetts observed a public fast on 14 January 1697, during which Judge Samuel Sewall made a personal apology.

Beginning in 1703, survivors and the families of those executed petitioned the government to clear the names of those found guilty of witchcraft. Governor Joseph Dudley signed a reversal of attainder in 1711 to clear only the names specified in the petitions Monetary restitution followed in 1712. Acting Massachusetts governor, Jane Swift, cleared five omitted names on 31 October 2001. It was only on 28 July 2022 that Governor Charlie Baker finally cleared the

ABOVE
Tompkins Matteson's 1853 painting, *Examination of a Witch*, which likely showcases an event during the Salem witch trials

last of those condemned for witchcraft between 1692–93.

What is the legacy of the trials?
The greatest impact of the 1692 trials was that it ended further prosecution of supposed witchcraft by serving as an example of what not to do. After the Salem outbreak, courts dismissed the idea of harmful witchcraft as nonsense or the Devil's delusion and therefore invalid (as some had warned the Court of Oyer and Terminer all along). The sheer embarrassment of the deadly 1692 debacle prevented justices from pursuing any witch charges that came before them (except for slander suits against accusers).

Even in 1692, when Connecticut wrestled with its own (albeit fewer) witchcraft cases, the turmoil in Massachusetts was so recognisably out of hand, that Connecticut's court delayed their trials until their judges could consider the results of Massachusetts' methods. Consequently, all of the Connecticut defendants lived.

Massachusetts' revised laws, per the new charter, did include a new law against witchcraft that the Privy Council rejected on a non-spectral technicality. (Witchcraft still remained illegal in Britain.) Massachusetts did not contest the decision and thereafter proceeded unprotected by any anti-witchcraft laws.

If the Salem trials had never happened, would witch trials have continued in America?
Without the excesses of 1692 as a cautionary example, a few more cases probably would have come to court in Massachusetts where magistrates, as before the big outbreak, tended to exercise caution when dealing with neighbourhood suspicions. Despite lingering folk traditions, I doubt there would have been many witch trials in the 18th century due to changing opinions on what was and was not possible.

If the Salem trials had never happened, would trials have happened elsewhere?
Other colonies had performed fewer witch trials during the colonial period. That situation would probably have continued without Salem's atypical example as a warning. It would have taken another unusual convergence of pressures and events to trigger so many accusations as happened in 1692. Suspicions lingered longer among neighbours than came to court, though. When the Constitutional Convention convened in the non-Puritan city of Philadelphia, Pennsylvania in 1787, a violent mob harried a suspected 'witch' through the streets, causing the old woman to die of her injuries soon after. Vigilante action against suspected 'witches' continues today in various parts of the world.

If the trials had never happened, what would the legal, social, and political results have been?
Without the lessons of 1692, Massachusetts might have contested the Privy Council's decision to veto the original witchcraft law. If the legal code had kept such a law, there likely would have been a few more suspects tried (but not necessarily found guilty) in the early 18th century – but that's just a guess. Except for serving as a warning, the 1692 trials had a mostly local effect. Politically, though, the trials have proven a handy way of accusing political opponents as being "witch-hunters." Legally, the trials are a caution about verifying evidence. Socially, the trials have been a half-understood example of what other people do wrong – rather than the warning to examine one's own perceptions and motives in times of crisis as it should be.

Was Puritan America destined to have an outbreak of hysteria of this nature?
Only the New England colonies were really Puritan and never all in agreement about doctrine and governance. Events were never 'destined' and the convergence of the specific incidents that did happen was an anomaly. Even after the legal proceedings began, there were several moments when matters could have gone in another direction – but, alas, did not.

If the trials had never happened, would important lessons be lost?
Instead of serving as a caution against the human tendency to panic and think the worst of others on flimsy or incomplete evidence, the trials are mainly remembered (usually with little historical accuracy) as the incomprehensible nonsense of one particular weird group fuelled by lies and/or stupidity. In this way, stereotyping obscures the lessons.

Ferreting out details of the disastrous yet fascinating events of 1692 continues to reveal further intriguing information that throws light on a complicated and compelling story. If the trials had never happened, I would have done something very different with the last 47 years of my life, but I can't imagine what. There is still more to find.

THE POSSIBILITY

1950s

'WITCH' HUNTS

Largely due to the social and cultural impact of the events at Salem, the term 'witch hunts' has become a byword for political and social moral panics that result in a group of people being accused. In the 1950s, Senator Joseph McCarthy famously accused multiple people of being communists, attempting to expose an infiltration of the United States government. He conducted a 36-day series of televised hearings on the matter. Without Salem's example of a 'witch trial', it's possible that misguided and dangerous actions and accusations such as this may not have been called out as easily.

1953

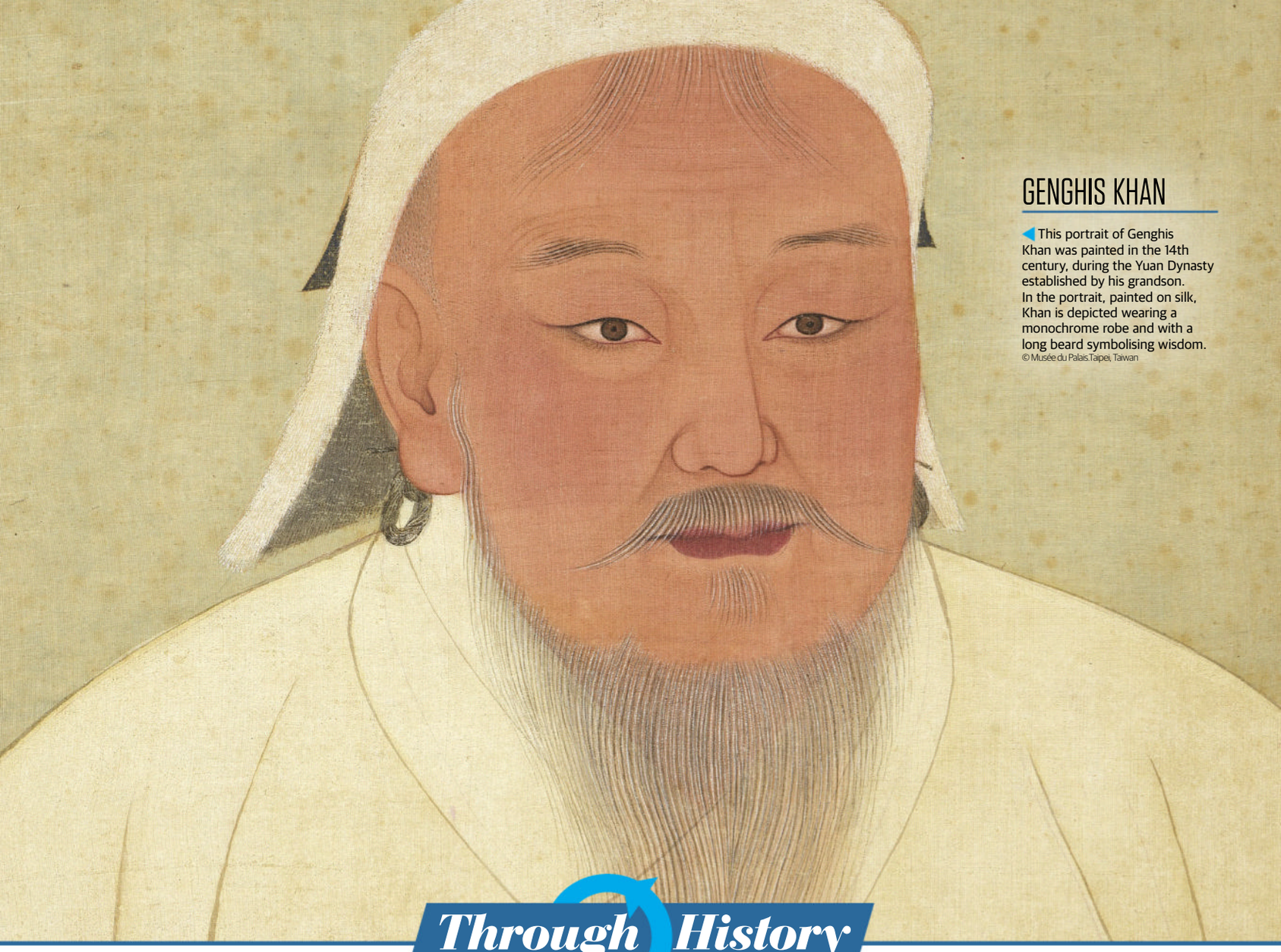
ARTHUR MILLER AND THE CRUCIBLE

In 1953 the celebrated American playwright, Arthur Miller, penned *The Crucible*, a dramatic account of the events at Salem. Miller wrote the play as a criticism of the communist 'witch hunts' headed by Senator McCarthy in 1950s America. In a 1996 article for *The New York Times*, Miller stated that: "The more I read into the Salem panic, the more it touched off corresponding images of common experiences in the fifties: the old friend of a blacklisted person crossing the street to avoid being seen talking to him; the overnight conversions of former leftists into born-again patriots". The Salem witch trials provided a historical metaphor that without, the writer would not have been able to legitimately criticise the ongoing communist scare.

July 2022

THE LEGAL IMPACT OF SALEM

Elizabeth Johnson Jr was the last of the Salem 'witches' to be officially pardoned. Although Johnson Jr was never executed for her 'crime', she was still sentenced. According to *The Guardian*, she was pardoned after a school class spent the year working to research how they could clear her name. The research was then sent to Senator Diana DiZoglio, who passed legislation to formally exonerate Johnson Jr. If the bloodshed in Salem had never occurred, she would not have been convicted.



GENGHIS KHAN

This portrait of Genghis Khan was painted in the 14th century, during the Yuan Dynasty established by his grandson. In the portrait, painted on silk, Khan is depicted wearing a monochrome robe and with a long beard symbolising wisdom.

Through History

HOW THE MONGOLS CHANGED THE WORLD

A new exhibition features rarely seen objects from the great empire of Genghis Khan

In 1206, the Mongol tribes of Central Asia were brought together under the leadership of one man. Unification under the notorious Genghis Khan marked the start of an impressive empire that would become a world powerhouse, expanding across Eurasia. Though Genghis Khan died in 1227, his descendents would continue to oversee the magnificent empire, and his grandson, Kublai Khan, would found the Yuan dynasty as Emperor of China. The Pax Mongolica, a time of peace within the vast Mongol Empire, was instrumental in facilitating the exchange of artistic and scientific cultures from East to West.

A new exhibition at the Musée d'histoire de Nantes is now the first in France to be dedicated to Genghis Khan and the Mongol Empire, and features objects that have never been on display in the West before. Some of these artefacts have been loaned from museums across Europe, to supplement a number from the national collections of Mongolia. Throughout the 450 objects on display, Genghis Khan: How the Mongols Changed the World explores the formation, impact and legacy of the Mongol Empire and showcases how the Mongols interacted with the rest of the world.

IN UNISON

Showing a horse and its rider, this painting by Zhao Mengfu is typical of those painted during the Yuan Dynasty featuring horse motifs. This particular motif, revived under the Yuans, was important in Chinese paintings during the Tang, Song and Jin dynasties.

ANTHROPOMORPHIC PENDANT

Dating from between 4500 and 3000 BCE, this shamanic pendant is made of jade. The belief in the Mongol highlands was that all of nature possessed a spirit, and shamans served as a vessel through which the spiritual world could be accessed.

SAINT ALDEGONDE CHASUBLE

Made with silk fabric and gold thread, a technique widely used during the Mongol Empire, this chasuble was a gift from the Mongol Emperor Möngkä to Louis IX. The garment is intricately decorated with motifs of parrots and fleur-de-lys lilies.

BILGE QAGHAN TIARA

▼ Discovered buried in the tomb of the Turkic emperor Bilge Qaghan, this tiara dates from the 8th century and was originally made up of a variety of semi-precious stones. The central design in the tiara is of the sun and symbolises the creation of the world.

FUNERARY STAGS

▲ Dating from between the 7th and 5th centuries BCE, these ritual ornamental stags were placed at the four corners of a funeral carriage. Deer are considered to be magical animals that act as gatekeepers to the other side and accompany the spirit on its journey to the afterlife.

SWORD OF THE HEAVENS

This large sword, decorated with the head of a deer on its pommel, is known as the Sword of the Heavens due to the spiritual beliefs associated with the animal. It dates from between 2500 and 1800 BCE and is made from bronze.

FUNERARY MASK

Made during the Liao Dynasty between the 10th and 12th centuries, death masks like this one were sewn directly onto the shrouds used to wrap the dead. A number of Liao tombs feature funerary art, like this mask, with nomadic influences.

Genghis Khan: How the Mongols Changed the World

is open at the Musée d'histoire de Nantes until 5 May 2024.

REVIEWS

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

2x © Alamy

MASTERS OF THE AIR

A stunning technical achievement, but haven't we seen these stories before?

Cert: 15 **Creator:** John Orloff **Distributor:** Apple TV **Cast:** Austin Butler, Callum Turner, Anthony Boyle **Released:** Out now

Adding to the spiritual series of WWII shows, following *Band Of Brothers* and *The Pacific*, Steven Spielberg and Tom Hanks have been reunited as producers for this Apple TV show, *Masters Of The Air*. This is the story of the 100th Bomb Group, the American Flying Fortress heavy bombers stationed in England during the war, who took part in some daring and incredibly dangerous missions over Europe.

There are sequences in *Masters Of The Air* that do for WWII air combat what *Saving Private Ryan* did for the Normandy beach landings. The aerial warzone sequences are exhilarating, terrifying, breakneck and awe-inspiring. Spielberg's involvement is from the production office rather than the director's chair and technology has clearly come a long way since his cinematic opus, but visual effects only make something possible, not good. The execution by the VFX team and directors is incredible.

As a result, it's hard not to feel a sense of excitement and dread when we join the air crews for their briefings ahead of a new mission. We have a sense of what awaits them in the skies and can't wait to see, even if it is from between our fingers.

The large cast is nicely humanised, so young yet asked to take on so much responsibility (their chief engineer is only 19). It's easy to root for them because the foibles and troubles of their daily lives are not ignored. Some suffer from debilitating air sickness, others drift towards alcoholism pretty sharply. There are even those who seem to be addicted to the risk, the adrenaline high of the next mission. *Masters Of The Air* does a fine job of taking those young men in flight suits in black and white photos and revealing their relatability.

It's a shame then that the show is otherwise a little pedestrian and familiar. Another mission comes along and not everyone comes home, there's some domestic drama, the American and British airmen don't always get along, and so on. It's all a little predictable and with such a large cast, trying to tell so many stories, it can sometimes feel like the show is stretching itself too thin.

One example is the side thread of Sergeant Quinn (Kai Alexander) who has to parachute from his downed plane and finds himself behind enemy lines in Belgium, working with the local resistance to escape. This thread carries a requisite amount of threat and a quieter sort of tension from the battle sequences. Still, it's the kind of story we've seen depicted elsewhere, not bringing much new to the table and coming back to it periodically as we do, it can feel like we're being pulled around a little too much. However, it feels a little reductive to call out a WWII show for not being original enough. This is solid storytelling with much to admire in terms of production design and effects, which are worth your time on their own. The story keeps things moving and holds it together, but doesn't necessarily offer the depth of its predecessors. ***JG***

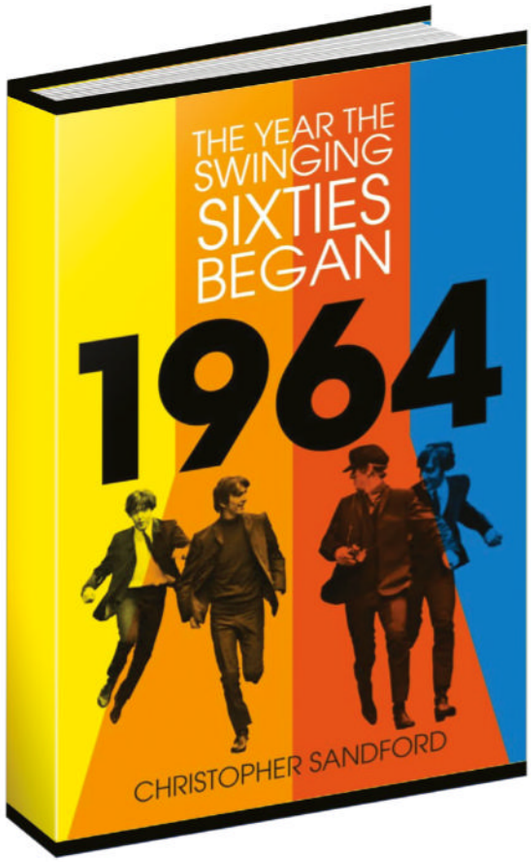
★★★☆☆

Reviews by
Jonathan Gordon, Catherine Curzon, Mallory James

1964: THE YEAR THE SWINGING SIXTIES BEGAN

An entertaining wander through changing times

Author: Christopher Sandford **Publisher:** The History Press
Price: £20 **Released:** Out now

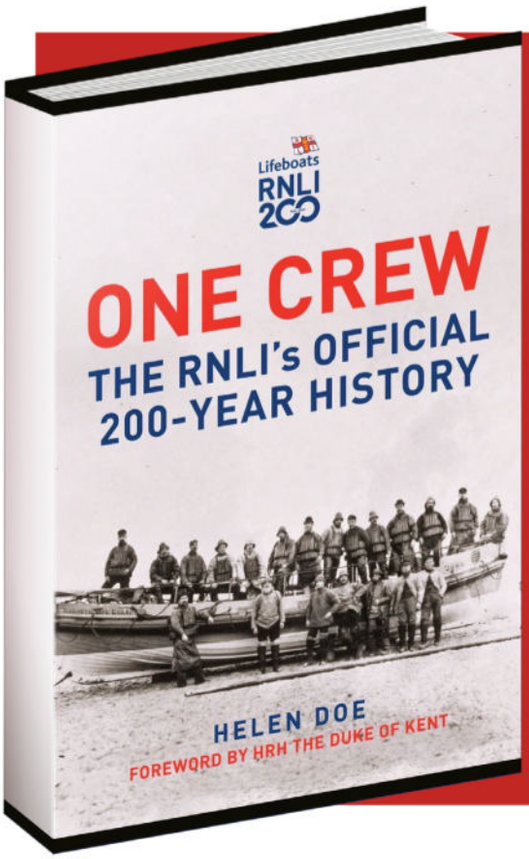


In *1964: The Year the Swinging Sixties Began*, Christopher Sandford turns the clock back six decades to a time of immense global change. As The Beatles became the soundtrack to the swinging sixties, the UK emerged from the Profumo scandal and the Vietnam War escalated, it seemed as though the whole world was in flux.

Sandford's entertaining investigation of the year in which he posits the sixties truly began to swing is a highly readable romp through a year of seismic change. Presented as four sections, Winter, Spring, Summer, and Autumn, each of which he breaks up into individual chapters, this is a fast-moving primer that embraces everything from civil rights to *Top of the Pops*. It is an ambitious project given the comparatively brief page count, but Sandford more or less pulls it off. He clearly relishes cataloguing exactly what it was that made 1964 so memorable and, combining personal anecdotes with cultural milestones, his enthusiasm can't help but rub off on the reader too.

1964: The Year the Swinging Sixties Began is an accessible and engaging history of a year in which the world changed forever. It will no doubt bring a nostalgic glow to those readers who were there and for those who weren't, nicely captures the breathless sense that anything could – and did – happen. Though far from exhaustive, it is readable and fast moving. No doubt this engaging book will find an enthusiastic audience. ***CC***

★★★★☆



ONE CREW: THE RNLI'S OFFICIAL 200-YEAR HISTORY

Learn the history of the Royal National Lifeboat Institution

Author: Helen Doe **Publisher:** Amberley Publishing
Price: £22.99 **Released:** 21 March 2024

In *One Crew: The RNLI's Official 200-Year History*, Helen Doe guides the reader through the history of what has become one of the United Kingdom and Ireland's most valued and respected institutions. For two centuries, the Royal National Lifeboat Institution has been performing its valuable duties at sea, rescuing those in need while navigating wars, tragedy and triumph.

From its founding as an organisation to save those caught in shipwrecks, to early complaints about the lifeboats and into the present day and the future, the RNLI has become an institution. However, it's likely that many casual observers and supporters know little of the RNLI's long history and the challenges it has faced. This book will certainly put that right. Packed with facts and figures and some truly inspiring and moving stories, the book is an involving and exhaustive history of a very important organization indeed.

In Helen Doe's hands, the story of the RNLI has found a capable historian. It is accessible, and unafraid to examine controversy as well as deservedly applaud the RNLI's triumphs. Clearly and chronologically laid out, the book is supported by informative appendices and a very useful bibliography for those who might want to go deeper in their reading.

One Crew: The RNLI's Official 200-Year History will certainly appeal to a broad audience. It is a fascinating read. ***CC***

★★★★☆

Out now!

The Dark History of Victorians

From the morbid obsession with death and the strict mourning rituals to the terrifying criminal underworld of 19th-century Britain, explore the reality of Victorian life that the history books glossed over. Find out how behind the imposing promenades of London lurked disease, deprivation and despair for the city's poorest denizens, and read of the atrocities of the British Empire.

Buy *The Dark History of the Victorians* in shops or online at **magazinesdirect.com Price:** £14.99

HISTORY of WAR **RECOMMENDS...**

Out now!

Kersten's Lists

Author Francois Kersaudy **Price** £25 **Publisher** Mountain Leopard

Felix Kersten was an extraordinary character. A Baltic German by origin, with Finnish citizenship, he studied under a Chinese doctor in Berlin, somehow acquiring the title of professor of manual therapy. Kersten's successful practice attracted the notice of SS Reichsführer Heinrich Himmler and his ability to relieve Himmler's excruciating stomach cramps made him an indispensable therapist for the architect of the Holocaust. He used this influence to save the lives of concentration camp prisoners.

BRITISH WOMEN ARTISTS: FROM SUFFRAGE TO THE SIXTIES

A thoughtful survey of women's art across the 20th century

Author: Carolyn Trant **Publisher:** Thames and Hudson **Price:** £12.99 **Released:** Out now

"Their stories are told not just with reference to wider events, but with careful consideration of their personal circumstances"

British Women Artists offers a detailed and deftly written account of the lives, experiences and artistic contributions of a wide range of women across the changing decades of the 20th century. Covering periods of both peacetime and war, tackling questions of wider social change and personal domestic challenges, Carolyn Trant has crafted a poignant and thought-provoking read.

Certainly, the years in question saw many upheavals and *British Women Artists* carefully situates the artists' lives and work within their wider context. They lived, painted, sketched and sculpted against this ever-changing backdrop. This was a period that grappled with debates over suffrage, changes of social norms and expectations, and the tragedy and horror of both the First and Second World Wars. Their art was not produced in isolation from these wider events and concerns. Sylvia Pankhurst captured in art the treatment she witnessed while imprisoned for her campaigning. Stanislawa de Karlowska (a Polish artist who lived in London) depicted modern street scenes; women and children going about their business. And passages that explore the impact of war on artists – for instance, on their creative output or how women were affected by their experiences as nurses – are particularly moving.

Indeed, *British Women Artists* contains a clear focus on the personal stories of artists. Through this, Trant lifts the lid on overlooked and overshadowed artists, and their stories are told not just with reference to wider events or wider styles and schools of art. Instead, there is a careful consideration of their personal circumstances – their family background, their financial means, their education and opportunities, their relationships and commitments – and how this influenced their lives and art. Trant's commentary around this is engaging and incisive. Readers may find that some of the concerns and conversations here still resonate today.

Alongside this, the text is supported by a number of images. This includes some photographs of the artists themselves, but also images of their artwork that highlight a range of styles and approaches. Being able to visualise the women and their artwork underlines the focus on the personal. Prominent names, such as Laura Knight, naturally stand out when they make an appearance. Sylvia Pankhurst, as mentioned, is noted both for her art and her politics. There are also references to the literary works of Virginia Woolf. Yet at the heart of this work is a collection of women whose names do not so famously precede them. Their many and varied stories of how they produced their art, how they changed and explored their style, how they responded to their circumstances, and how they defied expectations are at the core of *British Women Artists*.

In short, this is a book about life as much as art. And so, while it will of course have a natural appeal to those who are interested in the history of art, it may also find readership among those looking to explore the 20th century or women's history more broadly. ***MJ***

★★★★★

HISTORY VS HOLLYWOOD

Fact versus fiction on the silver screen

THE DUKE

Director: Roger Michell **Starring:** Jim Broadbent, Helen Mirren, Matthew Goode **Country:** UK **Year:** 2020

This tale of a real-life heist may provide the laughs, but just how much does it 'steal' from the past?

VERDICT: An incredibly accurate and immensely fun, feel-good portrait of a real-life heist.

01 Kempton Bunton, a 61 year old, becomes embroiled in the theft of Francisco Goya's portrait of the Duke of Wellington from London's National Gallery. The film portrays the socially conscious Bunton as having three children, whereas he actually had five.

02 Bunton returns the portrait, walking into the National Gallery and handing it back. However, while Bunton did return the painting, he did it by leaving it at the left-luggage of Birmingham New Street Railway Station. He then turned himself in to the police.

03 It is revealed that it was not Kempton who stole the painting, but his son Jackie (Fionn Whitehead). Although this may sound like a good dramatic twist, it was indeed his son (whose real name was John) who stole the portrait, a crime he confessed to in 1969.

04 Kempton's barrister Jeremy Hutchinson fights a successful case which sees Kempton only found guilty for the theft of the frame. This really occurred, and Hutchinson also defended Christine Keeler and Penguin's publication of *Lady Chatterley's Lover*.

05 The finale sees Kempton and his family go to see the 1962 James Bond film *Dr No*, in which it is implied the titular villain stole the painting, Bond spotting it in his lair. This sequence can be seen in the actual film, thanks to screenwriter Johanna Harwood.

Allimages © Alamy

Did you know?

Kewpie mayo can also be approximated by adding a little rice vinegar and sugar to mayonnaise.

OKONOMIYAKI

SAVOURY JAPANESE PANCAKE, OSAKA, 1930s – PRESENT

Gaining popularity in post-war Japan when supplies were scarce, the okonomiyaki evolved in several directions from the earliest pancakes in Japan from around the Edo period (1603-1868). Originally more crepe-like and sweet, savoury varieties with more ingredients and sauces emerged, each with their own twist or interpretation. From this it gets its name, with yaki meaning 'grilled' and okonomi meaning 'what you want'.

Two styles emerged from Osaka and Hiroshima, with the key difference being Osaka pancakes mixed everything into the batter while Hiroshima pancakes cooked toppings on top of a thin base. Post-war rice prices pushed many to try the dish and it remains very popular to this day, served in Japanese restaurants around the world. We'll take a look at a relatively simple Osaka version, although it has some speciality ingredients that are worth hunting down.

Ingredients

- 2 large eggs
- 120g plain flour
- 118ml of dashi stock
- ¼ tsp of salt
- 300g of white cabbage, shredded
- 30g of spring onions, chopped
- 30g of tenkasu or tempura scraps (optional)
- 4 rashers of streaky bacon
- 1 tbsp of vegetable oil
- 76g of oyster sauce
- 39g sugar
- 136g tomato ketchup
- 105g Worcestershire sauce
- Kewpie mayonnaise
- Bonito flakes (optional)
- Pickled ginger (optional)
- Aonori (powdered seaweed, optional)

METHOD

01 You can start by making your own okonomi sauce by whisking together the oyster sauce, sugar, ketchup and Worcestershire sauce until smooth. Store bought is also great if you can find it. Set aside.

02 Mix the eggs and dashi together in a bowl until fully combined. Add to the flour in a larger bowl, add the salt, and mix until there are no lumps.

03 In a final bowl, add the cabbage and spring onions (and tenkasu or tempura scraps if using), and then pour the batter mixture over the top. Stir until everything is evenly coated.

04 Ready a frying pan on a medium-low heat and add the oil. Spoon half the mixture into the centre of the pan and begin to shape into a round, flat shape with spatulas. Press down to close up any air bubbles.

05 As the pancake is cooking, begin to place half your strips of bacon over the top. You can cut these into smaller pieces first if you prefer. Reduce heat to low and allow to fry for 7-9 minutes or until the base is golden brown.

06 Flip the pancake using two spatulas, a second pan or a chopping board to cook the bacon side. Oil can splash at this moment, so flip with care. Press the pancake down to make sure it's making even contact with the pan. Cook for another 6-7 minutes.

07 Flip back out onto a plate or chopping board to serve (repeat with remaining ingredients for a second pancake). Sauce liberally with okonomi sauce and a zig-zag of Kewpie mayonnaise. Top additionally with bonito flakes, powdered seaweed and pickled ginger (all optional).

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