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ALL ABOUT HISTORY

MAKING THE MAN OF STEEL

STALIN

- Inside the Soviet tyrant's brutal rise
- Terror tactics and powerful propaganda
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Frida Kahlo
How the artist sought solace through her surreal portraits

BARE-KNUCKLE BOXING EXPOSED
No-holds-barred look at the Victorian fight club

BIRTH OF THE AMERICAN CIVIL WAR
How the Battle of Bull Run signalled the long war ahead

CALIGULA: MAD, BAD AND MISUNDERSTOOD?
Why the Roman emperor deserves a second chance

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“One death,” Joseph Stalin once said, “is a tragedy; a million is a statistic.” Unfortunately this is the only measure for Stalin’s brutal legacy. 10 to 20 million died at his hands and 18 million passed through his Gulag prison camps. The Man of Steel was under no illusion about his own barbarity: “The advantage of the Soviet model,” he said, “is that it solves problems quickly – by shedding blood.”

However, it seems many modern-day Russians seem to be less clear eyed on the subject. Last year during the centenary of the Bolshevik Revolution, which paved the way for Stalin’s rise, monuments to the man were erected across the country. A Russian opinion poll last June also crowned him the ‘most outstanding’ figure in world history.

With state-approved textbooks softening Uncle Joe’s image, praising him as an “effective manager” and for defeating the Nazis in World War II, it’s no wonder the number of Russians who think Stalin committed ‘political crimes’ has dropped. It’s down from 51 per cent in 2012 to 39 per cent today. The number of Russians who know nothing about his repressions also doubled over the same time, growing from 6 to 13 per cent.

For a hard look at how Stalin actually rose to power and ruled through terror and intimidation, head to our cover feature from page 28.
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KING OF THE SIX DAYS

Long before they were the twin passions of hipsters everywhere, Piet van Kempen proved that coffee and cycling go hand-in-hand while taking a break during a six-day cycling event at Wembley Arena. Known as the 'King of the Six Days,' the Dutchman’s record is too long to print, but he won 32 track racing competitions and rarely polled outside of the top three during his career from 1920 to 1943.

1936
FIRST CRYOGENIC BURIAL

The mylar-wrapped body of Dr James Bedford is placed in a steel capsule filled with liquid nitrogen so that he can be cryogenically frozen. On 12 January 1967, the psychology professor became the first person to be preserved for future resuscitation. Though Dr Bedford doubted the chances of him being resurrected, and doctors have dismissed the treatment as pseudo-science, his frozen body is stored to this day in a vault in Scottsdale, Arizona.
A crowd fills Trafalgar Square to celebrate the end of World War I. Within minutes of the armistice being signed between the Allies and Germany on 11 November, pandemonium is said to have broken out in London, with up to 100,000 taking to the streets to sing and dance. The party continued for the rest of the week, with a big bonfire lit against the base of Nelson’s tower (pictured here bearing a hoarding for victory loans).
“Crimes of which a people is ashamed constitute its real history. The same is true of man”

Jean Genet, French novelist
From seeking vengeance to bobbies on the beat, discover how the way we crack down on crime has changed over time.
CRIME & PUNISHMENT

Policing across history

Discover how law enforcement, from the ancient world to the modern day, have kept the thin blue line.

CLUBBING TOGETHER
In Ancient Egypt, public officers carrying staffs maintained law and order. Topped with a metal ball and engraved with the pharaoh’s name as a symbol of their authority, these staffs were also used as weapons. They may have inspired the modern-day police truncheon.

CHINESE LAW AND ORDER
During the first half of the Eastern Zhou Period, an elaborate judicial system was established in China with local magistrates appointing prefects to investigate crimes. Progressively for its time, both men and women could hold prefecture positions.

THE BLOODY CODE
Offences carried the death penalty in England in 1688.

PARISIAN POLICE CHIEF
King Louis XIV signs a new edict establishing the new office of Lieutenant General of police in Paris, awarding it to Gabriel Nicolas de la Reynie. It marked the start of the national government providing law enforcement.

DUTCH NIGHT WATCH
Amount of time a captain would have to serve in the Schutterij or civic militia.

BOW STREET RUNNERS
Along with his half-brother John, author and magistrate Henry Fielding founded London’s first professional police force, the ‘Bow Street Runners.’ The force lasted for almost a century before it was disbanded in 1839.

REFORMING FRANCE
Following the French Revolution and the rise of Napoleon, the minister of police, Joseph Fouché, reformed law enforcement in France. Among the changes was the new Parisian police force, the Prefecture of Police, which remains today.

NEW SHERIFF IN TOWN
Stephen F. Austin, founder of Texas, called up the Texas Rangers for the first time in to protect colonists. They were involved in a number of famous Old West criminal cases, including Bonnie and Clyde, the organisation is still in existence.

The term ‘police’ originated from the Greek word ‘polis,’ which meant city-state.
SLAVES ON THE BEAT
While magistrates were generally responsible for policing in the Ancient Greek city-states, in Athens, state-owned Scythian slaves enforced the law. Famous for their skills as archers, these lawmen received a salary and their own home for patrolling the streets.

DIVIDE AND CONQUER
Emperor Augustus established several different police units in Rome: the Praetorian Guard that reported directly to him; the Cohorts Urbanate who quashed riots; and the Vigiles who acted as night watchmen and fire fighters.

THE PRAETORIAN GUARD
Mandatory service for a Praetorian Guard was 9 years.

16 YEARS
Number of men in the Praetorian Guard during Augustus’ rule

4,500-6,000
Number of cohorts in the Guard

TUDOR PEACE KEEPERS
The Wars of the Roses left England deeply unstable. To restore royal authority over his new kingdom, Henry VII increased the number of Justices of the Peace throughout the country to uphold local law and order.

BROTHERS IN ARMS
Santa Hermandades, local brotherhoods of armed individuals famed for their brutality, are formed in Spain to serve as a police force. During their reign, Isabella and Ferdinand establish them throughout the country, creating a general police force.

OTTOMAN MARTIAL LAW
Originating from the militia of the conquered Byzantine Empire, the martolos (from the Greek for ‘armed men’) kept the peace in the Ottomans’ European territories - including Greece and the Balkans - until the 17th century.

NEIGHBOURHOOD WATCH
For the Anglo-Saxons, policing was enforced through the tithing, a community group of ten people. All heads of their households, they were responsible for each other and if one broke the law, the others had to bring them to court.

MODERN POLICING
Home Secretary and future Prime Minister, Robert Peel established the Metropolitan Police Force. In his honour, the Victorians referred to the police as ‘bobbies’ in England and ‘peelers’ in Ireland.

DUSTING FOR PRINTS
Juan Vucetich, an Argentine police official, made the world’s first positive identification of a criminal based on their fingerprints, proving a woman had cut her own throat in an effort to frame another for the murder of her children.

KILLER BREAKTHROUGH
DNA evidence was used for the first time to convict a murderer in the UK. Colin Pitchfork pleaded guilty to the murder of two girls in Leicestershire, after his DNA was proven to match samples left at the crime scene.
For a society that had so much pride and honour at stake, Viking Age disputes were often settled by a test of arms. However, rather than stemming from a sudden clash of flaring tempers between warriors, these trials by combat were carefully considered by local assemblies. They listened to a challenger’s claims regarding stolen property, besmirched honour or the breaking of an oath before deciding if it warranted a duel - or holmgang, as it was called. These fights were also governed by strict rules, but carried a very real risk of injury for either contender.

**WHAT YOU’LL NEED...**

**Sword**

**Shield**

**Cloak**

**Warrior**

**Bull**

---

**THE CHALLENGE IS ISSUED**

The challenger would outline terms, with the fighters agreeing on how much the loser would pay. But the rules of combat could vary from region to region, so if you’re from out of town make sure to pay attention when the elder known as the law-sayer outlines what weapons you can use, who can strike first and exactly what constitutes defeat.

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**STACK THE ODDS IN YOUR FAVOUR**

**SCANDINAVIA , 9TH-10TH CENTURIES**

**Watching for blood**

The combat would end when blood fell on a cloak laid on the ground. Watchers would hail victory at this point.

**Protective clothing**

Most wounds were to the thigh, leg or arms, with those taking part using armour to lessen the chance of death.

**Weapon of choice**

The sword was most commonly used, with many carrying two: one in the hand and a back-up hanging from the wrist.

**Second fighters**

Duelists wouldn’t face their opponent alone. They would have a second fighter with shields that they used to protect their man.

**Well-defined ring**

Fights often took place at a dedicated place like a sacred grove. Combatants had to stay within the confines of an outlined ring.

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**WEIGH YOUR OPTIONS**

It’s also important to figure out what you’ll get if you win. If the stakes are high enough that you stand to profit, go ahead and agree to the rules. Alternatively, you can back out and admit defeat but such an act would be seen as cowardice, a crime in Viking society which carries its own punishment, including exile.
CHOOSE YOUR CHAMPION
If you feel that your opponent is clearly going to outclass you in a duel, then you may want to enlist a volunteer to fight on your behalf. Go for a capable warrior or your muscular son to even things up a bit. Should you be roughly equal to your opponent, though, you’ll unfortunately have to get your own hands dirty.

FIGHT FOR YOUR RIGHTS
In Icelandic law, the fighters would take it in turns to strike each other with the challenged party going first and the challenger attempting to parry. Norwegian combatants simply hacked at each with abandon. Consider shattering your opponent’s shield – it will only take a strong blow as they are made of light wood – to leave them open to your attacks.

TIME TO TOOL UP
Combatants had a single light sword and a shield. In some cases, a second sword could be looped around the wrist on a thong. Some sagas also mention clubs, spears and axes, which again suggests a regional variation in the rules. Religious rites designed to prevent evil magic from blunting the fighters’ blades added a certain level of spiritual protection.

BLOOD IS SHED
Killing each other is generally avoided in hólmgang, although you will get immunity if you do accidentally slay your opponent. Instead you only to draw first blood to win, so aim for the unprotected parts of your opponent’s body and you should soon triumph. After you’ve settled your accounts, remember to slay a bull to appease Odin.

How not to... become labelled a coward
Running away from a hólmgang was bad enough but if you were the one who had issued the challenge in the first place, then deciding not to show up at the duel was the worst thing you could do. In such instances, the person would be outlawed and they would be forever labelled a níðingr. Effectively bestowing the social stigma of a coward, this badge of dishonour would turn the person into a reviled villain. After all, by calling for a hólmgang, the challenger had accused someone of wrongdoing yet sought to avoid the courts. To run at this point, suggested the challenger was at fault in the matter at hand. It was also seen as dishonourable to put one foot outside of the small fighting area – something that was classed as flinching. Should this be done with two feet, however, the uproar would be much greater because it too would be considered as fleeing. The fighter may as well not have turned up at all.

4 FAMOUS... TYPES OF DUEL

JUDICIAL DUELS
EUROPE 700S
If a witness or confession could not settle an accusation between two large parties, then a trial by combat could.

CODE-GOVERNED DUELS
ITALY 1409
The Flos Duellatorum was the first known example of a set of rules for duels, covering techniques from unarmed wrestling to mounted swordfighting.

FIREARM DUELS
IRELAND 1777
The adoption of the Irish Code Duello, consisting of 25 clear rules, made single combat with pistols much more popular.

BALLOON DUEL
FRANCE 1808
The French proved surprisingly innovative at dueling, using gas balloons to shoot each above Paris in 1808. Two Frenchman also fought with billiard balls in 1843.
The Santa Hermandad, or Holy Brotherhood in English, was formed in 1476 by the Catholic Monarchs, Isabella of Castille and Ferdinand of Aragon, with the intention of creating a kingdom-wide military constabulary. Initially comprised of 2,000 armed men provided and armed by the towns, they adopted this striking white jacketed woolen uniform in 1485, marked with a distinctive red cross. It was replaced later with a leather vest.

The men picked for the Santa Hermandad were taken from the citizenry of the supplying towns. Those who were chosen had already worked for local militias to protect their own areas, a practice that had stretched back to 1265. They tended to work in groups of four, with towns providing one horseman for every 100 people and one on foot for every 150.

Although the Santa Hermandad was not a fighting army, it sought to brutally pursue criminals, dealing with looting, assault and bloodshed both on the roads and in the streets. Strong but light iron helmets were provided for the men's protection as they dished out rough and ready justice. There were inevitable abuses of power.

The main body of the uniform flowed to the thigh, leaving the legs covered by trousers made of red cloth and the feet protected by long socks along with sturdy, pointy leather footwear suitable for the uneven grounds on which the men would often walk.

Under the red cross, white backgrounded flag of the Holy Brotherhood, the Santa Hermandad could stop suspects, judge and punish them. A jury of town members would assign the punishment and it could go as far as executing someone.

It led to the Spanish expression 'a buenas horas, mangas verdes' ('at good hours, green sleeves') - which essentially means 'too little, too late'.

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There were inevitable abuses of power.
A ROYAL EXECUTIONER
THE MAN WHO WAS TASKED WITH KILLING HIS KING PARIS, 20 – 21 JANUARY 1793

The role of a royal executioner was not easy, as they were responsible for carrying out the death sentence for convicted criminals. However, when it came to executing a royal, the matter became even more complex – after all, a monarch was anointed by God. Charles-Henri Sanson is one of the most famous executioners in history, having performed almost 3,000 of them in his career, including the execution of King Louis XVI of France. Although Sanson was not a royalist, he was conflicted about being responsible for the death of the king – he had hoped, in vain, that a rescue effort would be made.

CONFIRMING THE EXECUTION
Sanson is told that the king has petitioned to have his execution delayed by three days to prepare for his death. The petition is denied, although the king is allowed a final meeting with his family and a confessor. A reluctant Sanson is assures that the king's beheading is scheduled for the morning.

THREATENING LETTERS
Sanson returns home, saddened that he will have to execute the king in the morning. Some letters await him, including instructions to ready the scaffold and to expect the king at 8am. Other letters beg him not to kill the king – one in particular states that a rescue attempt will be made and if Sanson tries to stop it then he will be killed.

STARTING THE DAY
On the morning of the 21st, Sanson leaves home with his brothers, Charlemagne and Louis Martin, embracing his wife before he goes out the door. Feeling uneasy about the duty he is going to have to perform, Sanson fears that this will be the last time he will see her, possibly concerned about the inevitable backlash from some royalist members of society.
REACHING THE SCAFFOLD
The crowds that have gathered in anticipation of the king’s execution are so large that it takes two hours for Sanson and his brothers to reach the Place de la Révolution. His assistants, Gros and Barré, have erected the guillotine ready, although Sanson still believes that the king will be rescued before the sentence can be carried out.

ARRIVAL OF THE PRISONER
The king was expected to arrive at 8am, but like Sanson it took two hours for Louis’ carriage to arrive at the Place de la Révolution. Convinced that some form of a rescue mission will be attempted, his carriage is accompanied by a number of troops who line the Parisian streets to prevent the king from being freed.

MOVING TO THE SCAFFOLD
King Louis’ confessor climbs out of the carriage followed by the king himself, who appears rather collected considering the circumstances. As he moves towards the steps of the scaffold Sanson looks around to see if there were any signs of a rescue attempt underway - he is dismayed to see that there are not.

FINAL PREPARATIONS
Sanson’s two assistants bound the king’s hands before he ascends the steps up to the scaffold, supported by his confessor. The king moves to one of the sides in an attempt to speak to the crowd and proclaim his innocence. However, the drummers are ordered to beat their drums so that the king cannot be heard.

EXECUTING THE KING
The king is tied down and Sanson releases the guillotine, severing Louis’ head from his body. After the beheading, Sanson’s assistant pulls the king’s head out of the basket to display it to the audience, with some cheering loudly and others turning away in revulsion. The executioner privately laments that there was no sign of the so-called rescue mission he had been warned about.

The guillotine was used to execute thousands during the French Revolution.

King Louis XVI was condemned to death by the National Convention.
In the late 18th century, Britain faced a prison crisis. The country had long become accustomed to transporting criminals to its American colonies but when the War of Independence broke out in 1775, human export had to be halted and jails began busting at the seams.

To relieve the pressure on the prison system, parliament passed the Criminal Law Act 1776 and it saw dilapidated, decommissioned ships - typically ex-naval vessels - be converted into floating gaols. They became known as hulks and they would be moored in harbours and rivers. But although the measure was supposed to be temporary, they actually remained in existence for about 80 years.

Conditions on board were nothing short of terrible. English prison reformer John Howard was aghast, finding many convicts on board the first hulk, Justitia, “had no shirts, some no waistcoats, some no stockings, and some no shoes”. The hulks were rapidly viewed as hell on water and due to overcrowding and poor nutrition, diseases such as tuberculosis and typhus spread rapidly. Mortality rates on the hulks were as high as one in three inmates.

But then the hulks were intended to be as much of a deterrent as a punishment. Inmates worked on the docks all day and spent the rest of the time clapped in irons, even sleeping in fetters. They would sleep in cramped conditions and wake to terrible smells. The interiors of the ships were as wet as the water outside and they would be dark and foreboding. Things were so bad that a serious inmate riot broke out on HMS York in 1848.

Even so, more than 70 vessels were transformed into prisons and they remained in service even though ships had begun transporting convicts once again in 1787, this time to Australia. As a matter of fact, convicts would be placed on the hulks while they awaited transportation. However, most of the ships were decommissioned during the mid-19th century, with HMS York broken up in March 1854 and the system officially disbanded three years later.
**Prayer space**
Some hulks such as HMS Warrior contained a chapel – in this case it was the scene of a mutiny in the 1840s. But HMS York had a convict visit his fellow prisoners to read the evening church service instead. The men would be forced to answer “amen” after each prayer.

**Hanging laundry**
In line with other hulks, the naval ship HMS York was stripped of its masts when it was converted. In place of the sails was ample space for hanging laundry, giving it the look of slum tenements “with lines of bedding strung out to air between the stumps of the masts,” according to Australian writer Robert Hughes.

**Different decks**
The prisoners were classed by their behaviour as judged by an observer, who recorded each convict in a book. As such, the convicts ranged from very good to very bad and they were not allowed to mix with men of different classes. The best behaved would be placed on the higher deck and the worst on the lower.

**Sick bay**
Should a convict become ill, he would end up here in the sick bay on the lower deck. It had a capacity for more than 100 patients and it was usually busy given the illnesses and disease suffered on board. The worst behaving inmates would also be put in solitary confinement on the same deck, trapped in cramped cell known as ‘the black hole’.

**Moored up**
Prison ships were not supposed to set sail, which is why HMS York was primarily moored up off Portsmouth harbour, on the English south coast, from 1819 to 1852. Officers would live on the ship too, residing in cabins located in the stern and enjoying better conditions.

**Wash troughs**
After waking at 5am, the convicts would be ordered to wash. They would clean themselves in the long water troughs that lined the walls of the washroom before dressing in their uniforms. They would then clean the decks and ready themselves for up to ten hours of work in the dockyards.
Hall of Fame

REAL-LIFE CRIME FIGHTERS

From catching criminals to improving prison conditions, these heroes transformed crime and punishment forever

**HENRY FIELDING** BRITISH 1707–1754
Novelist Henry Fielding co-founded the Bow Street Runners, London’s first professional police force. Funded by the British authorities in an effort to crackdown on the violent crime taking over the capital, this group was served writs and arrested offenders on the authority of the magistrates. The Runners started out as just six men in 1749 but grew to 68 men by 1800. They travelled nationwide to apprehend criminals, successfully slashing robbery rates and upping convictions.

**ELIZABETH FRY** BRITISH 1780–1845
The first woman to fight for prison reform, Fry became a champion for her cause after witnessing the cramped, unsanitary conditions endured by hundreds of women and children at London’s Newgate Prison in 1813. She founded the Association for the Improvement of Female Prisoners in 1817, which lobbied Parliament for change. Fry’s organisation demanded education for inmates, same-sex attendants in women’s prisons, paid employment and even discreet transportation to gaols. Her work led to Robert Peel introducing the Gaols Act in 1823, which implemented some of her ideas. Fry’s writings also influenced penal reform across Europe and the United States of America.

“Punishment is not for revenge, but to lessen crime and reform the criminal” – Elizabeth Fry

**SIR ROBERT PEEL** BRITISH 1788–1850
As the founder of the Metropolitan Police, considered to be the first modern professional police force, Peel is remembered as the ‘Father of Modern Policing’. When he became Home Secretary, law enforcement in London was in disarray and Peel knew that he had to deal with the policing problems - hence the Metropolitan Police Act. Peel’s police force encouraged other reforms across the country, and by 1851 there were around 13,000 policemen in England and Wales.

**SIR WILLIAM JAMES HERSCHEL** BRITISH 1833–1917
While working in India for the British Indian Civil Service, Herschel realised that fingerprinting could be used to identify criminals and prevent impersonation. He started using the process in 1858 for contract signatures, and over the next 15 years Herschel discovered that fingerprints were permanent. Although recognised as a pioneer of fingerprinting, Herschel found himself in a dispute with Scottish doctor Henry Faulds, who published his own work on fingerprinting in 1880. Eventually, Herschel agreed that Faulds was the one to suggest that fingerprints could have a forensic use, but he remained the first man to use them to document criminals.

During his career, Herschel earned a reputation for being incorruptible

**Fry was known as the ‘Angel of Prisons’**
Lola Baldwin
American 1860–1957

Based in Portland, Oregon, Baldwin was one of the first women to become a police officer in the United States. She dedicated years of voluntary work to the welfare of women and children, with a particular focus on young girls who had fallen into prostitution or those who were at risk of being lured into it. Baldwin convinced the city council to fund her work, which led to her being sworn in as a police detective in 1908. She continued to concentrate on the issue of sexual exploitation, and she was even commissioned to investigate interstate prostitution for the Immigration Bureau.

William J. Burns
American 1861–1932

Burns started his career as a private detective before he was accepted into the US secret service. As a respected private investigator, Burns founded the William J. Burns International Detective Agency in 1909 and subsequently became famous for the numerous cases that he solved. Burns’ work made national headlines and his experience led to his appointment as the director of the Bureau of Investigation in 1921, but he was forced to resign following the Teapot Dome Scandal.

Edith Smith
British 1880–1924

As the first female police officer with the power of arrest in the United Kingdom, Smith was a trailblazer for women in policing. Appointed in 1915, she focused on the issue of prostitution in the area of Grantham during WW1. Smith dealt with more than 380 incidents during her career before her retirement in 1918, after working six days a week relentlessly for two years. She died in 1924 after an overdose of morphine.

Samuel J. Battle
American 1883–1966

Battle was the first black person to become a police officer in New York City in 1911. He suffered racial abuse from his fellow officers, but he persevered, earning their respect after saving a white officer’s life in the 1920s. Among his many achievements was the pivotal role he played in ending the riots in Harlem during 1935 and 1941. His career in law enforcement went from strength to strength and Battle received a series of promotions, becoming the first black sergeant, lieutenant and finally parole commissioner in 1926, 1935 and 1941 respectively. He eventually retired in 1951, four decades after he joined the NYPD.

Alphonse Bertillon
French 1853–1914

Bertillon was a trailblazer when it came to developing methods for criminal identification during the late 19th century. Beginning his career in policing at the Prefecture of Police, he quickly saw how disorganised the criminal records were. Realising that there could be a better way to identify reoffending criminals, in 1879 he developed a new system based on anthropometry — in other words, the use of physical measurements. It proved popular, and Bertillon continued to create new techniques, including the mug shot. Although photography was used by the police at this point, it was Bertillon who standardised the practice.
Who invented the electric chair? **Eleanor Jarvis**

The ‘hot seat,’ as its sometimes known, was developed by Alfred P Southwick, a dentist from Buffalo, New York. In 1889, after a spat of botched hangings, New York State threw its support behind Southwick’s idea as a more humane form of capital punishment. A murderer named William Kemmler served as a human guinea pig for the first electrical execution on 6 August 1890. It took eight minutes to kill him, with the current turned up to 2,000 volts. As his body singed, a horrid smell spread through the death chamber. The New York Times reported that “the stench was unbearable”. However, Southwick – who witnessed the execution – told the press: “There is the culmination of ten years work and study! We live in a higher civilization from this day.”

What is the biggest reward ever issued for a wanted criminal? **Tim Peterson**

Currently, the person with the highest bounty on their head is Ayman al-Zawahiri, with the US government offering up to $25 million reward for information on the Al Qaeda leader. Osama bin Laden was valued at the same price, though the authorities say no tipster was paid after his death in 2011. The largest reward ever paid by the US government was $30 million for intel on Saddam Hussein’s sons, Uday and Qusay, who were killed in 2003.

How did Bloody Judge Jeffery earn his name? **Arthur Parris**

The 17th-century British judge George Jeffreys was notorious for his cruelty and corruption. He earned his name in 1685, prosecuting rebels after the duke of Monmouth led an insurrection against King James II. While legend claimed Jeffreys executed up to 700 in just five days, it’s more likely he hung between 150 to 200 people. However, around 800 were also transported to Barbados to work as cheap labour. Jeffreys also personally profited by extorting money from his victims.
No one was safe from the Soviet Union’s terrifying tyrant, who would stop at nothing in his quest for absolute power.

Written by David J Williamson
From relative obscurity to absolute ruler of the Soviet Union, Joseph Stalin's journey to power was deeply rooted in his self-belief and determination to succeed. His apparent talent for organisation brought him to the attention of those much more in the spotlight, a backroom planner who shared their communist ideals - often with a chilling passion - and who could further the 'cause' and make them look good in the bargain.

But what they did not count on was the ruthlessness with which he was planning his own future, his place in the Russian Communist Party, and in history. As his career progressed and his power grew, he was able to turn his talents into a weapon with which to eliminate his political opponents with seemingly effortless ease, and bring the ordinary people of Russia to their knees.

Almost completely devoid of personal loyalty, he was able to play the political game with a clear conscience, a fervent distrust of almost everyone around him, and freedom from the shackles of complicated personal relationships that could leave him vulnerable. And yet, ironically, the loyalty he demanded from others was unconditional, and when it failed would lead him to cold-blooded revenge and paranoia.

A firm believer in placing Russia's interests as he saw them at the top, he (unlike many of his comrades) focused on what he felt was needed to consolidate the socialist cause at home, and his dealings with foreign powers, at least in the short term, was conciliatory. Stalin wanted to be left alone to build his country as he saw fit. In reality, he was to become one of the most feared and despised dictators of all time, so that even after his death, his own country was willing to sacrifice his memory in order to distance itself and its ideology from such a regime of horror and fear.

"He was able to turn his talents into a weapon to eliminate his political opponents with seemingly effortless ease"
**REVOLUTIONARY RISE**

Born in 1878 into a lowly peasant family in Georgia, part of the Russian Empire, the early years of Iosif Vissarionovich Dzhugashvili – Stalin’s real name – was to have a profound effect on his life, and may in many ways have helped fuel the distrust and coldness, even cruelty, towards others that were to become the core elements of his character. His father, a cobbler, fell on hard times and turned to drink. When drunk, he would beat his son. Joseph’s mother fell onto the mercy of her devoted faith as an Orthodox Christian, and took refuge with a local priest in return for washing and cleaning.

Having contracted smallpox as a child, Stalin was left with a pockmarked face for life. Along with a deformed left arm from a carriage accident, these were to be constant reminders of the early life he desperately wanted to forget.

A small and quite frail child (Stalin was no more than 5 feet and 6 inches tall as an adult), he suffered from teasing and bullying at school, but was bright and an able student, enjoying art and writing his own poetry, so much so that he won a scholarship to the Tiflis Theological Seminary, to study as a priest. It was here that his interest in socialism first began, secretly reading the works of Karl Marx. Stalin was to later say that it was his radical views - expressing disdain for Tsar Nicholas II - that got him expelled from the seminary. However, their official records showed that the once bright student’s studies deteriorated and that he failed several exams. Either way, Stalin now began to turn his back on his past and start to forge his future.

His passion for the Marxist cause as adopted by the more radical Bolsheviks, led by Vladimir Lenin, gave him an outlet for his energy and extreme views. Embarking on a life of crime encompassing bank robbery, kidnapping and extortion, Stalin ignored moral limits in order to finance the Bolshevik cause. Between 1902 and 1913 he was imprisoned or exiled to labour camps no less than nine times, escaping on seven occasions. By 1906 he was a married man, and by 1907 a father, following the birth of his son, Yakov. But a lack of respect for any authority other than his own and the willingness to adopt the lowest possible ethical standards and attitudes were to remain a trademark of his career.

It was his meeting with Lenin at a conference in 1905 that was the turning point in Stalin’s - and Russia’s - future. Although later ‘rewritten’ by Stalin’s propaganda machine, he was very much one of many who worked passionately in the background for the socialist cause. However, along with Lenin and others such as Kalinin, he was regarded as an ‘Old Bolshevik’, one who had been loyal to the cause before the revolution, and this gave him a certain level of kudos, which proved to be important in furthering his own cause within the party.
IN 1922, LENIN APPOINTED STALIN THE GENERAL SECRETARY OF THE COMMUNIST PARTY, A POSITION HE WOULD HOLD FOR LIFE

STALIN: THE BOLCHEVIK BANDIT

Before he dubbed himself Stalin, the young rebel went by ‘Koba’. Named after the protagonist in a Russian novel about bandits, he adopted the nom de guerre while masterminding a famous hold-up in downtown Tiflis - modern-day Tbilisi, Georgia - on 26 June 1907.

The robbers lobbed grenades at a bank stagecoach and its mounted escort from the top of a nearby building, then opened fire, killing up to 40 guards and bystanders, as well as a number of horses, according to contemporary accounts.

No one knows if Stalin took part in the actual attack; Trotsky once joked that Koba stood back and let others do all the fighting. However, Stalin’s revolutionary comrade Simon Ter-Petrossian, also known as Kamo, seems to have done most of the actual fighting in the Tiflis job. Kamo also put himself in the lead-up to the heist, suffering a grievous bomb-hurling injury that left him confined to bed for a month. Kamo was also the only one ever arrested for the job, but avoided a criminal trial by feigning insanity.

The heist netted the Bolsheviks up to 341,000 rubles, approximately $3.4 million - or over £2.5 million - in today’s money. While Lenin happily took the money to fund the communist’s bid for power, the revolutionary leader tried to distance himself from the Tiflis job when it became apparent that the Georgian people opposed the raid. Once in power, Stalin also downplayed his role in Kamo’s gang, with whom he also participated in several other heists. In 1922, Kamo died when a truck hit his bike as he was cycling, leading some to speculate that Stalin also had him bumped off to help bury the history of the bank robbery.

As a 24 year old in 1902, Stalin organised several strikes

In between his times in prison or exile, Stalin continued to actively engage in aggressive party politics in several areas of Russia, including his native Georgia, where the majority of dissent against the tsar was fuelled by the Menshevik party. This continued following the October Revolution in 1917 and the subsequent Civil War ending in 1919, with Lenin sending Stalin to a number of areas of difficulty and dissent, such as the Baltic States and Ukraine. Although not a military commander, Stalin took the opportunity to demonstrate his ability for such operations and quashed the dissent via violent oppression, executions and the confiscation of food and supplies. By the 11th Communist Party Conference in 1922, Lenin had appointed Stalin as the new General Secretary of the Communist Party, a position he would hold for life, and one that allowed him to slowly and subtly infiltrate the Party with his own supporters.

It was, perhaps, a decision that Lenin would come to regret. Stalin’s actions in quelling the dissenting voices of the people had served its purpose in attempting to bring some semblance of stability to a country rife with revolution and civil war. But Stalin as a blunt instrument was not all to Lenin’s taste, and as his health deteriorated he reflected on the future. ‘Stalin is too crude’ he wrote in 1923. But by now the die were cast, and Stalin saw his great opportunity looming large before him. In 1924 Lenin was dead, and Stalin began his road to infamy. By the end of the decade he would be in complete control, ruthlessly wrestling power from friends and foes alike and setting Russia on a path towards huge change that would cost the lives of millions, creating an atmosphere of terror in which neighbours, friends and family lived in suspicion and fear of one another, and especially of the man who now controlled every aspect of their lives.
AS A POLITICAL ADVERSARY, HE WAS TO SHOW NO MERCY OR RESPECT FOR OPPONENTS OR COMRADES ALIKE

It is debatable that Stalin ever did have any true friends, or that anyone was ever truly close to him. He did form friendships of a kind, but this was more a case of what use they would be to him and for how long, rather than a genuine desire for companionship. His private life, even from an early age with an unhappy abusive childhood, did little to improve as an adult. Even being married twice, with children from both marriages, did not seem to bring him true joy and happiness. Having lost his first wife to typhus at a young age, his second was to find the pressures of marriage to a cruel and cold-hearted dictator too much to bear, and shot herself. Stalin immediately created a cover story of appendicitis rather than have the truth come out – even to his own children.

As a political adversary, he was to show no mercy or respect for opponents or comrades alike. As his power grew through the 1920s and into the ‘30s, many were to find to their cost that it was just as dangerous to be close to Stalin as it was to be an outspoken opponent of his regime. Such was his obsession with loyalty from those around him and the paranoia of distrust and perceived plotting against him, that he never shied from taking drastic immediate and brutal action against those who dared to oppose him. At the 1934 Party Conference, it had been a foregone conclusion that Stalin would once again be re-elected as party chairman. However, some 300 delegates dared to vote for the popular politician Kirov. Stalin still won the vote, but furious at such outrageous dissent, he saw to it that all who had voted against him were arrested and either imprisoned or shot.

COUNTING THE COST OF TERROR

APPROXIMATELY ONE-THIRD OF COMMUNIST PARTY MEMBERS WERE EXECUTED

30,000 ARMY LEADERS WERE DISCHARGED BETWEEN 1937-39

1.5 MILLION PEOPLE WERE SENT TO THE GULAGS DURING THE 1930S

IN 1933 ALONE, 45,755 ESCAPED THE GULAGS

ROUGHLY 786,000 OPPONENTS OF THE REGIME WERE SENTENCED TO DEATH BETWEEN 1930-52

383 LONG LISTS OF THOSE TO BE ARRESTED WERE SIGNED BY STALIN, MOLOTOV AND OTHER PARTY OFFICIALS

30,000 ARMY LEADERS WERE DISCHARGED BETWEEN 1937-39

IN 1933 ALONE, 45,755 ESCAPED THE GULAGS

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“AS A POLITICAL ADVERSARY, HE WAS TO SHOW NO MERCY OR RESPECT FOR OPPONENTS OR COMRADES ALIKE”
**Making the Man of Steel**

**Stalin’s Shifting Alliances**

**Semyon Budyonny**
A cavalry commander, close political ally and hero of various campaigns, he enjoyed the ongoing patronage of Stalin despite being made a scapegoat for a number of the dictator’s poorer military decisions. Stalin knew his importance as a figurehead and Civil War hero, and used this to his advantage to help boost his own image.

**Leon Trotsky**
Out-maneuvered by Stalin in the power struggle after Lenin’s death, Trotsky was a constant critic of Stalin’s version of socialism. His ability to rally support made him a threat, and eventually Stalin was able to oust him from office and force him into exile. Stalin is thought to have arranged his famous assassination with an ice pick in 1940.

**Vladimir Lenin**
The true father of the socialist revolution in Russia, Lenin was in many ways a threat to Stalin. They did spend a considerable amount of time together, and Lenin valued his contribution, but his reservations about Stalin’s ability to lead left him angry. After his death, Stalin set about reinventing his relationship with Lenin, painting himself as the true and chosen successor.

**Kliment Voroshilov**
Having met as young men, the military commander had the honour of being portrayed on propaganda posters beside Stalin during WWII as a united front against the aggressor. He was blamed for a number of military blunders, but never to the point of being the victim of Stalin’s paranoia or involved in any of the military purges.

**Harry S Truman**
It was Roosevelt with who Stalin had originally negotiated as an ally, but it was his successor, Truman, who was to become the focus of Stalin’s mistrust of the West and the creation of the standoff between two ideologies. This was done through the establishment of the Eastern Bloc and the beginning of the Cold War.

**Vyacheslav Molotov**
An ‘Old Bolshevik’ like Stalin, he enjoyed good relations with the dictator as he rose through the ranks of the party. The non-aggression pact with the Nazis was named after him, having been the prime signatory. He fell out of favour with Stalin in 1949, but remained loyal and was outspoken against ‘destalinisation’ by the regime after the dictator’s death.

**Leonid Brezhnev**
Although they never met, Stalin is known to have never fully recovered from being betrayed by his fellow dictator with the German invasion of Russia in 1941. It was a fatal error of mistrust, and much against his character, but it would lead to his opportunity for revenge and the expansion of the Soviet empire.

**Sergei Kirov**
As a popular regional politician, Kirov had benefited from Stalin’s friendship and patronage for many years. In 1934, supporters of Kirov voted against Stalin at the party conference. Soon after, Kirov was assassinated, and many suspected Stalin had arranged it, although it was never proven. This led to the Great Purge, with many politicians, public figures and their families being slaughtered.

**Mikhail Kalinin**
A loyal ally of Stalin, he also had good reason to hate him. He was aware of atrocities, but helped mislead the people by keeping silent. Stalin had his apartment monitored by the secret police, and when his wife spoke out against Stalin she was tortured and imprisoned for 15 years while Kalinin did nothing. He retired and died of cancer in 1946.
COLLECTIVE MISERY AND DESPAIR

“We have fallen behind the advanced countries by 50-100 years. We must close that gap in ten years. Either we do this or we’ll be crushed.” This was Stalin speaking in 1931, three years after the implementation of the first of his ‘Five Year Plans’ that would, he predicted, be the turning point for the Soviet Union. All citizens would have plentiful food from a collectivised agricultural program; rejuvenated Soviet industries would be the beating heart of the nation and the envy of the world, and the Soviet Union would see increased sales and exports, to the benefit of all.

By setting out such plans, Stalin was contradicting earlier policies of the Communist Party, and in particular Lenin - universal and equal ownership by all, moving away from the idea of serfdom of the peasants, that symbol of oppression and inequality. As a result, agricultural land had been distributed to those working the land. But for Stalin this caused a number of problems. Land needed to be more readily planned for the use of more modern machinery such as tractors, which would lead to higher production. In a very basic rural economy this was not the case. Also, the slightly more affluent peasants, known as kulaks, supposedly abused the idea of equality and turned it into a type of capitalism from which they apparently benefitted more than others.

As with many other policies, Stalin and the rest of the Politburo agreed on the principal, but not the solution. In order to impose collectivism on agriculture, Stalin set about physically removing kulaks from the land and either imprisoning them, executing them or placing them in labour camps. Grain was confiscated, forcing the peasants to stockpile for their own use and for sale on the black market in order to survive. They resented being moved off their land into collective farms and working for the state with seemingly impossible production targets. This was the face of communism they had not bargained for.

By March 1930, more than half of the peasantry (a larger proportion in the agriculturally rich southwestern region of the Soviet Union) had been forced to join collective farms. They had become serfs once again in all but name. However, many resisted, slaughtering their livestock or tending less land rather than give it up to the collective. As a result of this non-cooperation, production was at an all-time low. Famine ensued in large areas such as Ukraine, where up to 3.5 million died of starvation.

Stalin’s policies towards greater industrialisation were just as unfair to its workers. Such a vast nation could call on massive resources of people and raw materials, and productivity of such things as coal and pig iron rose dramatically, but at a price. The very notion of happy workers toiling for the good of the state was far from the truth. Wages were on the whole very poor, working conditions dreadful, and with the introduction of a 16 hour working day for some, it was nothing short of slave labour.

In fact, many from the labour camps were drafted in to boost production, unpaid and living in squalid conditions. Added to this the ability to be sacked for only missing one day’s work, it would take an invasion and war to galvanise the people into setting aside their own concerns and propping up the great industrial powerhouse of the Soviet Union that was shown to the world.
“Thank you, comrade Stalin” These were the words the dictator wanted on everyone’s lips. In order to fulfil his promise as the rightful leader of the Soviet people, Stalin had to ensure that what the people saw and what the people thought fitted this premise. To do this he had to ensure that everything about him, his beliefs and his policies past and present, were either reinvented or distorted to such an extent that there could be no questioning of his credentials and his right to lead the people. There were a number of ways this could be done effectively, and he set up a magnificent machinery of propaganda to fulfil his goals; one that was so organised and so effective that allegedly, Adolf Hitler himself was envious and regarded Stalin as the ultimate genius of propaganda and the creation of a cult of personality. His personal life, elimination of fallen opponents from official records, tampering with documents, false accusations to discredit opponents, his affection for his people, his role in the revolution and the Communist Party - all of these were re-worked in order to fit the template for a trusted, caring, loyal, loving leader who only had the interests and welfare of every Russian citizen in his heart. Nothing could be further from the truth.

The Power of Propaganda

“A Flawless Leader”
Following an attack of smallpox as a young child, Stalin’s face was badly pockmarked, but once he was able to exercise his absolute power, part of the process he ordered to be undertaken for ‘cleansing’ his past was to retouch any photos from his youth so as to present him as a healthy, passionate socialist with a clear complexion.

“Towering Figure”
Depending on different accounts, the estimates of Stalin’s actual height vary from between 5ft 4in and 5ft 6in, but this still left him in dire peril of being towered over by rivals and subordinates alike. Most of the time he would wear shoes with added height to the soles and heels, or stand on a raised box when attending speeches and rallies.

“Father of the People”
Stalin’s slick propaganda machine proved able to promote his image as a caring ‘father’ to his people, and children often featured in his public appearances and in his posters. In reality, his behaviour towards his family was cold: as a young man he sent his children to live with relatives while he pursued his political ambitions, and even refused to negotiate the release of his own son as a Nazi prisoner of war.

“Global Image”
Such was the image of Soviet Russia that he managed to project abroad that in 1939 and 1942, Stalin appeared on the front cover of Time magazine as ‘Man of the Year’. This is, of course, in complete contrast to the realities of his cruel regime, but the defence of Stalingrad during WWII may have influenced the judgment as second time.

“Pure Revolutionary”
It is generally acknowledged that Stalin’s role in the revolution was less significant than he would have his people believe, and so documents were changed, photographs doctored and histories rewritten to elevate him to a prime player alongside Lenin in the overthrow of the old regime and the new dawn of socialism. A rewritten History Of The Communist Party sold 40 million copies.

“A Russian Leader”
Georgia had always been a rural, mountainous outlier. Filled with bandits, blood feuds and illiterate peasants, Russians often looked down on their southerly neighbour. Stalin was aware of this, and in an attempt to be taken more seriously, changed his distinctly Georgian name (Iosif Dzhugashvili) to the more Russian-sounding Stalin. However, he still spoke with a thick Georgian accent, which he was incredibly insecure about.

6 Stalin Myths Busted

Despite rarely seeing his own children, Stalin showed himself to be a family man...
Joseph Stalin

FIGHTING FASCISM IN WORLD WAR II

Stalin had always been more focused on what was happening inside Russia than outside. He had disagreed with Lenin’s view that the proletariat should rise across Europe and the world in a socialist revolution. At the start of World War II, Stalin's gaze was firmly set on Russia's own doorstep and the acquisition of disputed territories, such as parts of Poland, the Baltic States and Romania. In the far east of the country, Red Army troops had already clashed with Japanese troops looking to expand their own territory. But in 1939 the intention was that of conciliation and compromise. The Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact was to seal a non-aggression pact between the Soviet Union and Nazi Germany. Soon after, Germany invaded Poland, with Soviet troops then entering the east of the country. Hitler now had the neutralisation of the Soviets, Stalin had disputed territories and no trouble from the Nazis.

Between 1939 and 1941, the Red Army had almost doubled in size following the mass purges of the 1930s. But the quality of the troops was poor, as was the leadership, which was almost completely new following Stalin's manic purging of its ranks. Despite this, and despite warnings to Stalin from both the British and the Americans, the Soviet Union was completely unprepared as Hitler ignored their pact and his forces swept into Russia in August 1941 in a breathtaking blitzkrieg. Within a few short months, most of the Red Army had been either captured or killed. The Germans had moved into Ukraine and Belarus, and artillery surrounded Leningrad. Stalin’s response had initially been slow and unprepared, but then the industrialisation of the Soviet Union so dear to his heart began to take effect, and its output was very soon as good as, if not better than, the German war effort. Moving factories away from Nazi attack, the Red Army was now being supplied more efficiently, but Stalin still felt it necessary to issue official orders that if any man was captured he was a traitor, and that suicide was better than capture.

After the initial rapid successes of the Germans, things were set to change. As with incursions into Russia by previous armies, supply lines were stretched, and the Russian winter was always a deciding factor. In order to put a stranglehold on Moscow and prevent any movement of oil via the Volga River, the Germans knew that they had to take Stalingrad – a decisive turning point of the campaign, and perhaps even the war.

Despite the constant bombardment by the Luftwaffe, Stalin had resolutely stayed in Moscow. “There is no land for us beyond the Volga” he declared, even issuing a chilling order to the defenders of the city: “Not one step back”, he told them, and under the Stalinist regime there was no hidden meaning. Stalingrad authorities urged troops and civilians alike to “turn every block of flats, every street into an unwinnable fortress.”

With sheer grit and determination, the Soviet forces and the people of Stalingrad dug in. Amid constant air attacks, fighting was bloody and often hand-to-hand as each building and street was taken and retaken. The Soviet resistance was formidable and unrelenting, leaving the Germans at a loss as to why their supposedly superior forces could not succeed. Soon, the Soviets gained the upper hand. The Germans were stretched and supplies were slow. They had tried to fight on two fronts by attempting to secure Azerbaijani oil to the south. Their forces began to crumble, and in a matter of
days over 90,000 German troops had been captured. But the cost had been high, with tens of thousands killed and a city virtually flattened to the ground.

This gruesome turning point was to lead to a series of events which set the tone for European politics for generations to come. A revitalised Soviet army had a weakened Nazi threat on the run. Stalin allied with Britain and the United States, and eventually the war turned into a race to Berlin. The Soviets won this race, managing to acquire much territory and influence along the way. Stalin's inherent distrust of the West manifested itself in the buffer zone of countries now under his control and influence, thus creating the Eastern Bloc. The ideological standoff and the desire for land and control that was to culminate in the Cold War had begun.

The years after the war saw the Soviet Union continue to influence world politics, with Stalin overseeing the detonation of the Soviets' first atom bomb, and his influence in North Korea, by urging them to invade the South and cause the Korean War. Stalin's purges and executions, though the initial phase was over, continued right up to his death in 1953. His successors (most notably Khrushchev) did all they could to erase his legacy, as he had done for so many others, but it is the courage and resilience of the Russian people during World War II that is the legacy that should always remain.
HAMPTON COURT
A Home Fit For a King

From the turbulent reign King Henry VIII to the glitz and glamour of the Georgians, explore the long history of this royal palace

Written by Jessica Leggett
Over five centuries since it was first built, Hampton Court Palace has stood the test of time. It was at the centre of royal scandal, passion and power as successive monarchs indulged in excess and intrigue within its walls - and it witnessed some of the biggest upheavals in English history.

Hampton Court began life as a humble medieval manor, leased in 1494 to Sir Giles Daubeney, a year before he became Lord Chamberlain to King Henry VII. It was located in the countryside but ideally connected to London through the River Thames. He added a few additions to modernise the building, including a new kitchen, courtyard and gatehouse.

In 1514, the lease for Hampton Court was taken by Thomas Wolsey, King Henry's VIII's most trusted adviser. The following year, Wolsey began converting the manor in anticipation of his appointment to the Cardinalate by the Pope, turning it into a home befitting the second most powerful man in England. No expense was spared as he sourced the best materials, such as costly painted red brick, to build his new palatial home.

Throughout the next decade, the Cardinal continued to lavishly decorate Hampton Court. He even understood the importance of symbolism, choosing to include terracotta roundels of Roman Emperors on the walls, to reflect his role as Cardinal and his relationship with Rome. Hampton Court was clearly a representation of Wolsey's ambition and power, and it wasn't long before his opulent taste caused whispers to circulate that the Cardinal's home was even greater than those belonging to the king.

Indeed in 1523, Henry's old tutor, John Skelton, famously wrote "the king's court should have the excellence... but Hampton Court hath pre-eminence!"

But Wolsey was no fool. Quick to appease Henry, the Cardinal claimed that he was building the magnificent palace for him, with the king becoming a regular visitor there.

However, despite Wolsey's flattery, Henry jealously coveted Hampton Court. When the Cardinal failed to secure Henry an annulment for his marriage to Catherine of Aragon, the enraged king stripped him of his offices and seized his property, including Hampton Court, in 1529. With Wolsey's glorious home finally in his possession, Henry sent his own builders in to continue the renovation work - a year later, he sent his first letter threatening to break with the papacy in Rome from the palace.
Hampton Court Palace

Henry VIII's love nest
The king soon expanded Hampton Court and turned it into the pleasure palace of his dreams. He built the Great Hall, where sumptuous banquets were held for hours on end. A keen sportsman, Henry installed a jousting arena in the grounds of the palace as well as a real tennis court, which remains one of the oldest sporting venues in the country. He also made other additions, including the Privy Gardens and the Pond Garden, the latter of which seemed to hold freshwater fish to feed Henry's court.

Inside, Henry filled the walls of Hampton Court with his vast and expensive art collection. The palace was truly the pinnacle of royal glamour, as the king and his courtiers spent their days indulging in food, drink, sport, gambling and dancing. But aside from the fun, Hampton Court also witnessed some of the most pivotal moments of Henry's turbulent reign and his personal life, considering that all six of Henry's wives visited the palace.

Traces of Henry's wives can still be seen inside Hampton Court. Before his bitter annulment from Catherine of Aragon, which was finalised in 1533, Henry's marriage was, in fact, a happy one. Some of the palace's stonework features the pomegranate seed, Catherine's royal emblem, alongside the Tudor rose. To have incorporated their emblems in such a permanent way indicates that the king must have believed his relationship with Catherine would last for a lifetime. Although this was not to be, Henry's first marriage did last longer than his other five put together.

As a tribute to his second wife, Anne Boleyn, Henry spent three years rebuilding the Great Hall. Her initials were carved into the wood, entwined with Henry's, as a symbol of their love and partnership. The king also included a magnificent vaulted ceiling with little figurines incorporated into it. Known as 'eavesdroppers', they were a reminder to the courtiers that the king could hear everything - there was no such thing as a secret at Hampton Court.

After Anne's unceremonious downfall in 1536, Henry demanded that all traces of her be destroyed, including her emblems at Hampton Court. In their haste, the workers failed to remove every example of Anne's presence in the palace, including a wood carving of her initials in the Great Hall. An example of Anne and Henry's initials, surrounded by lover's knots, also survives in the gateway between the Base Court and the Clock Court. Today, it is popularly remembered as Anne Boleyn's Gateway.

The day after Anne was beheaded, Henry became engaged to his third wife, Jane Seymour. In honour of her, the king decorated the ceiling of the Great Watching Chamber. Beautifully gilded, the ceiling features Jane's personal badge, of a phoenix rising out of a castle with roses. It proved to be lasting testament of the king's love for Jane, who sadly passed away at Hampton Court after giving birth to their long-awaited son, Edward, in 1537. Henry allegedly ordered for Jane's heart and lungs to be buried behind the altar in the Chapel.

A symbol of Spain, Henry had pomegranates carved into the Great Hall for Catherine of Aragon

Only two emblems of Henry and Anne's initials have survived, thanks to the workers who missed them by accident

Jane Seymour's sigil on the ceiling of the Great Watching Chamber

Hampton Court's Great Hall was renovated by Henry VIII and Anne Boleyn

1863 newspaper sketch of a concert held in the Great Hall

Hampton Court palace was King Henry VIII's favourite royal residence
AH o m eF i tF o raK i n g

Royal at Hampton Court, where Edward had been baptised just over a week before her death. Although this remains uncertain, Jane did lie in state at the chapel before her funeral. It is said that her ghost still haunts the palace, searching for her son on his birthday.

The king mourned his beloved Jane for three years before marrying again, this time to Anne of Cleves. The match was a complete disaster and after six months, the marriage was annulled, with Henry signing the papers at Hampton Court. That very same year, in 1540, he married his fifth wife, Catherine Howard. The ceremony was held at the palace and Catherine was also proclaimed queen there.

But soon, rumours surfaced that Henry’s young wife had been engaging in illicit affairs and they reached Thomas Cranmer, the Archbishop of Canterbury. After his investigations uncovered evidence of her pre-marital sexual behaviour, Cranmer decided to inform the king. One fateful morning, Henry entered the Chapel Royal and found Cranmer’s letter waiting for him. Containing all of the details of Catherine’s salacious activities, it left an enamoured Henry blindsided.

The king initially refused to believe the allegations until Catherine’s lover, Thomas Culpepper, admitted to the extramarital affair. Furious, Henry’s denial turned to rage, and he ordered Catherine’s arrest. Terrified, the queen supposedly broke free from her guards and ran down the gallery to the chapel, where she believed the king was at prayer.

Catherine pleaded for her life, but her cries fell on deaf ears. In February 1542, she was executed. Ever since, it has been claimed that her screaming ghost can be seen in what is now known as the ‘Haunted Gallery.’

“King Henry VIII’s Kitchens

It is no secret that King Henry VIII was a man who loved his food. He renovated the original 15th century kitchen at Hampton Court to make it twice the size, so that it could accommodate the appetites of the king and his large court. The walls were whitewashed frequently, to keep the kitchens as bright as possible while the staff toiled away day and night to produce food for the palace. Meals consisted of spit-roasted meat, pies, fish, fruits and sweet treats, all washed down with wine, ale and beer, twice a day.

There were 200 cooks employed at Hampton Court
up to 800 courtiers needed feeding
600,000 gallons of wine were consumed at the palace per year

Per year, the court ate
8,200 sheep
2,300 deer
1,870 pigs
1,240 oxen
760 calves
53 wild boar
in addition to other meats

‘It has been claimed that Catherine Howard’s screaming ghost can be seen in what is now known as the ‘Haunted Gallery’’
The King's Staircase

The grand staircase leads to King William III's State Apartments. The king commissioned the Italian artist Antonio Verrio to create the illusion of a magnificent Roman hall.

The Chapel Royal

The church has been in continuous use for over 450 years. The royal family have their own private pew that overlooks the main congregation.

The Great Hall

England’s finest medieval hall hosted magnificent royal banquets and doubled as the staff canteen. The walls are hung with Henry’s finest tapestries, such as the Story of Abraham.

The Kitchens

These enormous Tudor kitchens served over 1,200 meals a day! Meat of various kinds was always on the menu, and ‘spit boys’ would roast large quantities in the huge fireplaces.

The King's Staircase

The grand staircase leads to King William III’s State Apartments. The king commissioned the Italian artist Antonio Verrio to create the illusion of a magnificent Roman hall.
The Guard Chamber
On the walls are 2,845 pieces of weaponry and armour arranged by King William III's gunsmith. Yeomen of the Guard kept watch at the door.

The Presence Chamber
The official throne room of the palace, courtiers were expected to bow to King William's throne as they passed, even if he wasn't present.

Base Court
The first courtyard that visitors passed through was home to dozens of courtiers' lodgings. Each had its own fireplace and a garderobe (toilet).

The Georgian Apartments
Built on the site of the Tudor king and queen's apartments, this was where George and Caroline, Prince and Princess of Wales, slept, ate and entertained in extravagant Georgian style.
From playhouse to prison

After Henry’s death in 1547, the use of Hampton Court declined under his successors, as they preferred their other royal residences. In 1554, Mary I had her honeymoon with Philip II of Spain at Hampton Court, and she returned a year later when she falsely believed that she was pregnant. Her sister, Elizabeth I, also spent time at the palace but it was one of her least favourite palaces – she fell ill with smallpox while staying there and almost died.

Hampton Court continued to be neglected under the early Stuarts. That said, King James I spent a little time at the palace but it was one of her least favourite palaces – she fell ill with smallpox while staying there and almost died.

Hampton Court continued to be neglected under the early Stuarts. That said, King James I spent a little time there and he notably watched Shakespeare’s Macbeth and Hamlet in the Great Hall, performed by the Bard’s acting company in 1603, during James’s first winter as King of England. One year later, he organised the innovative Hampton Court Conference, which resulted in the publication of the King James Bible in 1611.

His son, King Charles I, was an avid art collector and he housed much of his collection at the palace, just as his predecessor Henry had once done. However, after the Parliamentarians defeated him in 1646, during the English Civil War, Charles’s artistic palace was turned into a gilded prison as he was placed under house arrest at Hampton Court. He attempted to escape, fleeing through the Privy Gardens, but his plan was foiled and he was soon recaptured. Three years later, the king lost his head – and Oliver Cromwell, turned Hampton Court into his quiet haven away from London.

Following the restoration, King Charles II commissioned the Long Water canal at the palace in 1662, for the arrival of his Portuguese bride, Catherine of Braganza. The couple also honeymooned at Hampton Court, where boats shaped like swans sailed up the canal in celebration. Despite his romantic gestures for his wife, Charles also installed one of his mistresses, Barbara Villiers, at Hampton Court along with their illegitimate children.

Stuart restoration

The palace was left relatively untouched until the reign of William III and Mary II, who brought Hampton Court back to the forefront of royal life. The couple had succeeded to the throne in 1689 following the Glorious Revolution, which saw them depose Mary’s father, King James II. They needed to build a strong foundation for their reign, and their thoughts turned to the old Tudor palace. Hampton Court quickly became their new passion project. They wanted to transform it into a grand and intimidating palace to rival the palace of Versailles, the magnificent home of King Louis XIV of France – William’s long-term enemy. They planned to demolish the palace and rebuild it in the fashionable baroque style, commissioning Sir Christopher Wren to oversee the renovations.

Unfortunately for Wren, it was clear that there was neither the time nor the money to achieve William and Mary’s vision. Forced to rethink, Wren rebuilt the king and queen’s apartments and created the Fountain Court. Eager to finish quickly, Wren pushed the project to its limits, resulting in the collapse of the south side of the palace.

Between 1689 and 1694, the co-monarchs spent a total of £13,000 – the equivalent of over £13.5 million in today’s currency.
A Home Fit For a King

"A statement of Tudor magnificence and royal power"

Historian, author and co-chief curator of Historic Royal Palaces Tracy Borman reveals why Hampton Court has captured our imagination

Which era of the palace’s history would you most like to visit?

It has to be the Tudors. Hampton Court was one of Henry’s favourite palaces, and it is easy to see why. The magnificent state rooms, exquisite chapel, vast courtyards and the largest kitchens complex in the world made it unique as a statement of Tudor magnificence and royal power. Even five centuries later, you can still capture the atmosphere of the original palace as you walk in the footsteps of Henry, his wives, children and courtiers.

Why does Hampton Court have such an important place in ‘British history’?

There are so many ‘history where it happened’ moments. It was here that Henry VIII first decided to break with Rome, sparking the English Reformation. His precious son and heir Edward was born here, and his mother (Henry’s third wife) Jane Seymour died in the palace a few days later. It was here that wife number five, Catherine Howard, was arrested on suspicion of adultery – which was treason in a royal wife. Later in the period, Mary Tudor suffered the humiliation of a phantom pregnancy while staying at the palace, and her half-sister Elizabeth almost died here early in her reign. And that’s just the Tudors!

You’ve published numerous works on the Tudors. How has Hampton Court Palace inspired your writing?

I am so lucky to work in the very places that I write about, both in my non-fiction books and novels. Being able to immerse myself in the spaces – especially those ‘behind closed doors’ – has been so inspiring. Even though there have been numerous excellent guides written about the palace, it’s only when you walk along the corridors, stand and marvel at the Great Hall or take a peek into the private apartments that you really get a sense of what it must have been like for those who lived and worked here in the Tudor and Stuart period.

Why were some monarchs more enamoured with Hampton Court than others were?

For some of the monarchs, the palace held less positive associations. A notable example is Elizabeth I, who contracted smallpox while staying at Hampton Court in 1562. It was one of the deadliest diseases of the age and the young queen was so convinced she would not survive that she summoned her confessor. Little wonder that she didn’t care to visit the palace very often after that. The palace is most closely associated with the Tudors, but it enjoyed a new lease of life under the Stuarts, thanks to William and Mary deciding to embark upon a hugely ambitious programme of rebuilding in 1698. In so doing, though, they demolished half of the Tudor palace. I’m just glad they left the other half intact!

Why do you think Hampton Court continues to appeal to us today, over 500 years since it was first built?

I think it is the sheer scale and magnificence, but also the fact that visitors can explore the ‘below stars’ areas too and thus get a real sense of what the palace was like for monarchs and servants alike. There really is something for everyone here: from our newly refurbished Tudor Kitchens, which evoke all the sights, smells and sounds of Henry’s day, the splendour of the State Rooms, the expansive and beautiful gardens, and for younger visitors the Maze and Magic Garden. There’s enough to keep young and old amused for several days, let alone a single visit!

You must spend a lot of time at Hampton Court! What do you love most about the palace?

I do indeed – and I often have to pinch myself about that fact. As a Tudor historian, it’s pretty much a dream come true working here. It’s very difficult to choose just one favourite feature because there are so many, but I think it has to be the lantern-lit corridor that runs from the Tudor Kitchens up to the Great Hall. It is so atmospheric, and I love to imagine all the Kitchen’s staff and servers racing to and fro with platters of roasted meats, elaborate sugarwork sculptures and other delicacies to delight the courtiers above.

Tracy Borman’s debut novel, The King’s Witch, is available now for £17 from Hodder and Stoughton.
But while making their mark on the palace, the Georgians turned it into battleground for power. George I liked to spend his summers back home in his native Hanover, leaving his son and his daughter-in-law, Caroline, to represent him in Britain. In his absence, the young couple developed a glamorous court at the palace that eclipsed the king’s, forcing him to build a bigger, better court of his own. Hoping to outshine his son, he refurbished the real tennis court in 1718 and converted the Great Hall into a theatre.

After George’s death in 1727, the Prince of Wales ascended the throne as King George II. The new king and queen loved to throw parties at the palace. They renovated their own apartments and in 1734, Caroline invited the architect and designer, William Kent, to decorate the plain walls of the queen’s stairs. He created a Roman-style mural, comparing Caroline to the glorious Britannia.

However, the couple’s love for the palace soured as they fought with their own son, Frederick, Prince of Wales. Their relationship had never recovered from the separation they had endured, as George I had insisted that Frederick remain in Hanover as their family representative, while his parents moved to England. The prince openly rebelled against his parents, developing his own faction at court.

Frederick finally crossed the line in 1737. His wife, Princess Augusta, was pregnant with their first child and she went into labour in the middle of the night while staying at Hampton Court. To prevent his parents from being present at the birth, Frederick bundled his poor wife into a carriage bound for St James’s Palace. The birth was traumatic, as the palace hadn’t been prepared for childbirth, and the 16-mile carriage ride was bumpy – although luckily both Augusta and her baby daughter survived.

Infuriated by his son’s behaviour, George banished Frederick and his family from court, as well as anyone who was known to associate with him. The incident clearly ruined George’s fondness for Hampton Court, as he didn’t stay there again after 1737, when his beloved wife Caroline died. In fact, George and Caroline would be the last monarchs to use Hampton Court as their residence. So, to make use of the palace, he turned it into ‘grace and favour’ accommodation for aristocrats in dire financial straits. Usually, they were widows who found themselves impoverished upon their husband’s death. To say thank you for their husband’s service to the King, they were given a rent-free apartment to live in. The apartments were damp and cold, but retained a sense of their old glamour.

George II’s grandson and successor, King George III, despised the palace. It is rumoured that his hatred for Hampton Court stemmed from a childhood incident, when he was allegedly struck by his grandfather at the palace. Whatever happened, George III absolutely refused to stay there, although he did hire Capability Brown as the master gardener in 1764.

**Victorian attraction**

Aside from the odd few ‘grace and favour’ residents, Hampton Court remained otherwise unused for almost a century before the reign of Queen Victoria. In 1838, she decided to open the palace and gardens up to the public for the very first time. Visitors flocked from all over the country, as the ghoulish tales of ghosts that haunted the palace enthralled the Victorians.

The arrival of the nearby railway in 1849 made it even easier for the public to visit for the day and by 1881, over ten million people had gone to Hampton Court. This was much to the distaste of the ‘grace and favour’ occupants, who complained of drunkards in their once-deserted garden.

Since the 20th century, visitors from across the globe have been transported through time as they tour the regal hallways of Hampton Court Palace. Listed as a Grade I building in 1952, today it boasts new attractions that immerse the public in its decadent and tumultuous history at the heart of the English monarchy.
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The campaigns for civil rights that began in 1954 and led to the legislative victories of the 1960s produced two images of leadership. Martin Luther King Jr advocated the assertion of equal rights in law, voting and education for black Americans. Malcolm X saw the struggle for black American rights as a global one, and advocated separatism, the creation of a separate black economy and sovereignty. Both of these strategies had roots in 19th- and early 20th-century history, in the rivalry between William Edward Burghardt (WEB) du Bois and Marcus Garvey.

The Northern states won the Civil War but the end of slavery did not lead to the end of discrimination. In the Southern states, ‘Jim Crow’ laws segregated blacks from whites. In the Northern states, including the cities to which Southern blacks migrated in search of jobs and equality, discrimination continued through informal racism.

Du Bois was born in 1868 to a family who had been ‘free blacks’ during the era of slavery. He grew up in the farming town of Great Barrington, Massachusetts, and attended a racially mixed school. When he left, he was granted the honour of delivering the valedictorian, or farewell, speech on behalf of his entire grade. Du Bois then moved south to attend the predominantly black Fisk University in Tennessee. There, he began to see the extent of the Jim Crow laws, and the open racism and violence that accompanied them. The experience shocked him, and he returned to Massachusetts to devote himself to the struggle for equal rights.

In 1895, Du Bois became the first black man to obtain a PhD from Harvard. His dissertation, on ‘The Suppression of the African Slave Trade to the United States of America, 1638-1870’, was one of the first works on the subject. By the turn of the century, he had returned to the South as a professor at Atlanta University in Georgia. He had established himself as a rising black intellectual, which brought him into conflict with another eminent American black thinker of the time, Booker T Washington.

Washington had been born a slave in the mid-1850s, and worked in a salt mine and as a domestic servant before obtaining an education at the Hampton Institute, one of the first all-black schools in the United States. As the leader of the Tuskegee Institute in Alabama, an all-black vocational school, Washington practised his belief that Southern blacks, like Southern whites, needed agricultural and technical training if they were to survive in the industrial economy. Washington believed that if blacks could obtain economic independence and demonstrate their practical value to their white neighbours, then the Southern whites would grant them civil equality.

Washington’s strategy was dubbed by WEB Du Bois as the ‘Atlanta Compromise’, after the Georgia capital where Washington had announced it in 1895. Washington’s numerous white supporters, among them many Southern politicians and President Theodore Roosevelt, praised this strategy as restrained and patriotic. His critics, Du Bois included, claimed that this policy accommodated to an unacceptable system. Washington, they said, deferred the difficult and necessary political campaign for civil rights to an unspecified future.

The 1899 lynching of Sam Hose in Georgia by a mob of up to 2,000 whites reconfirmed Du Bois’ conviction that urgent action was required. Hose was tortured, hanged and then burned. Du Bois, walking to a meeting with a sympathetic
newspaper editor, saw Hose’s scorched knuckles on display in an Atlanta shop window. He turned around and cancelled his meeting in shock and horror. In 1903, Du Bois published the essay collection *The Souls of Black Folk* - a watershed in African-American literature, and a repudiation of Washington’s accommodationist strategy.

“The Problem of the 20th century is the color line,” Du Bois wrote, “the relation of the darker to the lighter races of men in Asia and Africa, in America and the islands of the sea.” All blacks, but especially Southern blacks, needed both legal equality and the social equality that came from education. Washington’s Atlanta Compromise was a strategy for ‘conciliation’. It would continue “the old attitude of adjustment and submission”, and regardless of whether it persuaded Southern whites to grant legal

“Hose was tortured, hanged, and then burned. Du Bois [later] saw Hose’s scorched knuckles on display in an Atlanta shop window”

**Forgotten early Civil Rights Heroes**

**Edward Wilmot Blyden**
Born in the Danish West Indies (now the US Virgin Islands), Edward Blyden was a teacher, politician and ‘the father of pan-Africanism’. In 1850, after American colleges had refused his application to study as a minister, he moved to Liberia, where he served as secretary of state.

**Prince Hall**
Prince Hall claimed to have been born of African parentage in England in the mid-1730s. Brought to Boston as either a servant or a slave, he trained as a tanner and eventually secured his freedom. In the 1770s, he was part of a free black group that petitioned the Massachusetts Senate for their return to Africa. Soon afterwards, however, he rallied blacks in support of the American Revolution.

**Martin Delany**
Martin Delany was born to an enslaved father and a free mother, and he grew up with his mother’s free status. In Pittsburgh, he became an advocate for creating a ‘Black Israel’ in East Africa, a campaigner for abolition, and a founding theorist of black nationalism. Accepted to Harvard Medical School and then expelled after white students protested, he became the only black major in the Union army.

**Booker T Washington**
Booker T Washington came from the last generation of black leaders to be born into slavery. In the 1890s, he became the dominant voice in the American black community. Though his Atlanta Compromise was discredited by Du Bois, Washington was an inspiration to both Du Bois and Marcus Garvey.

**Fredrick McGhee**
Born a slave in Mississippi, Fredrick McGhee became one of America’s first black lawyers and he laid the cornerstones of the modern Civil Rights Movement. In 1905, he cofounded the Niagara Movement, whose campaign led to the founding of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People in 1909.
equality, it would create a new subjection, this time purely economic.

Drawing on his experience at Harvard and Atlanta, Du Bois advocated the training of a black elite, a ‘Talented Tenth’ who could pursue “the loftiest of ideals” and strive for “culture and character” rather than economic subsistence. In the Southern states, he said, blacks and whites were segregated, and the police and the judicial system functioned as “a means of re-enslaving the blacks”. If blacks were to obtain equality in law and opportunity, they must cultivate their own educational, political and spiritual resources. In 1905, Du Bois and several other young African-American campaigners founded the Niagara Movement, built on principles explicitly rejected the Atlanta Compromise.

Events vindicated Du Bois’ criticism of Washington’s approach. In 1906, President Roosevelt dishonourably discharged 167 black soldiers in response to the Brownsville Affair, in which the white residents of Brownsville, Texas, had rioted against the presence of black soldiers. Soon afterwards, between 25 and 40 black Americans were murdered by white mobs in Atlanta. The Compromise, Du Bois wrote, in A Litany at Atlanta, was over.

The consensus among black activists now swung towards campaigning for equal rights, free votes and educational opportunity. In 1910, Du Bois moved to New York and began working as the director of publicity and research for the organisation that would lead the next phase of the campaign – the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP). In this office, he led campaigns against lynchings, the segregation of the US Army and DW Griffith’s 1915 film The Birth Of A Nation, which portrayed the Ku Klux Klan as patriotic defenders of American values.

Du Bois had always seen the ‘colour line’ as a global problem. In The Souls of Black Folk, he had analysed the “double consciousness” of American blacks as a harmful psychological split between black and American identities. Healing this division required not just equality in American law and society, but also the strengthening of links with other nonwhite populations - and the embracing of anti-imperial and socialist politics. As early as 1900, he had attended a Pan-African conference, organised in London by Haitian and Trinidadian campaigners. In 1919, while in Paris gathering information on discrimination in the US Army, Du Bois attended the inaugural Pan-African Congress.

In the early years of the 20th century, Du Bois had outflanked the older Booker T Washington, by advocating immediate legal equality rather than economic integration and accommodation to the existing order. Now, Du Bois found himself accused of not being radical enough. His new, and younger, rival was Marcus Garvey, the Jamaican-born proponent of black separatism, who led the ‘Back to Africa’ movement.

Ironically, Booker T Washington’s vision of black economic independence was one of the inspirations of the Universal Negro Improvement Association (UNIA), which Garvey founded in 1914. Two years later, Garvey was in America, soliciting funds for a Jamaican technical institute in the style of Washington’s own Tuskegee Institute. Yet Garvey shared none of Washington’s accommodationist politics. Nor, though he shared Du Bois’ conviction that the problems of black Americans were also global ones, did he share Du Bois’ hopes that the equalities of law and socialism would cure racist attitudes among whites.

In the 1920s, the UNIA claimed to have 6 million members. Garvey had survived an assassination attempt and launched a programme to modernise the infrastructure of Liberia, the West African state established by ex-American slaves, and which Garvey wanted to turn into a model black state. He had also created the Black Star Line, a shipping line intended to help build up economic links between
Africa and the rest of the world, and to export skilled and committed American blacks to Liberia.

Du Bois, whose NAACP magazine *The Crisis* was the biggest black publication in America, praised the spirit of the Black Star Line but called Garvey “the most dangerous enemy of the Negro race in America and the world”. The FBI agreed and prosecuted Garvey for using an image of a ship not owned by the Black Star Line on a brochure soliciting funds for it. In 1922, Garvey was sentenced to five years in prison and the Black Star Line went under. In 1927, President Calvin Coolidge ordered his deportation to Jamaica. Garvey would eventually die in London 13 years later in 1940.

Meanwhile, Du Bois rose to ever-greater eminence. He enthused about the flourishing of the arts among the growing black population in New York City - the 'Harlem Renaissance' - and moved between the university and left-wing politics. While his strategies for civil rights in America became the mainstream ideas of the 1960s movement, his international perspective and his political views remained subjects of controversy. He died in Ghana in 1963, aged 95.

Du Bois was more socialist and pan-African in his politics than Martin Luther King Jr - and less Christian, too. Malcolm X shared much of Garvey’s separatism and back-to-Africa philosophy. But regardless, King and Malcolm X, the universalist and the particularist, marched in the lineage of Du Bois and Garvey.
From the 8th century CE, while Europe descended into the Dark Ages, the Islamic world excelled at philosophy, science and mathematics. Known as the Islamic Golden Age, this era coincided with the rise of the Abbasid Caliphate, which ruled most of the Muslim world from Baghdad, in what is now Iraq, from 750 to 1258. Centrally located between Europe and Asia, Baghdad became a hub for trade and the exchanging of brilliant ideas. The city’s scholars translated Ancient Greek and Roman writers into Arabic, as well as texts from Persia, India and China. However, rather than simply preserving or imitating these great works, Islamic thinkers expanded on them, making incredible advances and spreading this knowledge throughout the Muslim world - all the way from modern-day Pakistan to Moorish Spain.

The Islamic Golden Age gave us many concepts that we take for granted today. For example, most mathematical and scientific words beginning with ‘al’ indicate an Islamic origin, so algebra, the star Algol and chemical compounds like alkali and - perhaps surprisingly, considering it is generally considered haram (‘forbidden’) for Muslims - alcohol. Even the way we count is thanks to Muslim mathematicians. The Romans had no value or symbol for 0; this was invented in India and spread west by Islamic mathematicians. The English word ‘zero’ also comes from the Arabic ‘sifr’ (from which we also get the word ‘cipher’).

The Golden Age was brought to an end after 500 years by Genghis Khan’s grandson, Hulagu Khan. The Mongol sacked Baghdad, killed the Abbasid Caliph Al-Musta’sim and burned down the city’s great library and scientific buildings. However, much of the knowledge of this era survived in the wider Islamic culture. From the 11th century, Moorish scholars began translating much of this work from Arabic into Latin so Europeans could understand it. Here, we celebrate ten intellectuals whose impact on the world is still being felt 1,000 years later.
Abū Bakr 573–634

The caliph who commissioned the Qur’an

Also known as al-Siddiq, Abū Bakr was the Prophet Muhammad’s trusted companion. After the founder of Islam’s death, Abū Bakr was appointed the first caliph – the chief Muslim civil and religious ruler. During his brief reign from 632–34, he suppressed tribal politics and religious uprisings to bring central Arabia under Muslim control. Under his rule the Muslim conquests of Iraq and Syria began, but his greatest contribution to Islam far exceeds territorial gains.

Most non-Muslims don’t realise that the Prophet Muhammad did not write the Qur’an. The story of its revelation is that when the Angel Gabriel (Jibril in Arabic and yes, the same one from the Bible) visited the Prophet, Muhammad had to memorise what he was told. In turn, Muhammad relayed the holy word to crowds, and his followers were also expected to commit the knowledge to memory. However, Abū Bakr understood that his empire was far too large to spread the word of the Prophet through oral tradition alone. Worse still, the death of several Qur’an reciters at the Battle of Yamama risked parts of the sacred scripture being lost entirely. As a result Abū Bakr had Muhammad’s revelations formally written down and codified shortly before he died, producing the cornerstone of Arabic literature.

Abū al-Qāsim 936–1013

The greatest surgeon of the Middle Ages

Al-Qāsim lived in Al-Andalus, a region that today is central and southern Spain. It is a reminder of how far-reaching the Islamic caliphate was. It was here that al-Qāsim practised new forms of medicine and his findings are preserved in his masterwork, Kitab al-Tasrif, a 30-volume encyclopaedia of medical information, experiments and practices. Al-Qāsim was not only the first to observe that haemophilia was hereditary (along with other breakthroughs in medicine), but he also designed new surgical instruments, including ones to remove debris from the ear and nose and another to inspect the interior of the urethra and remove kidney stones.

At a time when head wounds were left to self-heal or degenerate, al-Qāsim was interested in treating them. One of his most impressive feats was to remove fluid from the brain with no resulting infection, a challenge even to modern doctors. His practices were concurrent with the time in Anglo-Saxon England when bloodletting was common and, if the patient bled too much, the wound might even be blocked with horse-dung.

That’s not to say everything he wrote would make medical sense now. In the Kitab al-Tasrif there’s a section about cosmetics and makeup, which allegedly argues (in his own words) that these are the “medicine of beauty”.

As the Prophet dies, Abū Bakr (in blue bending over him) mourns for his friend

Wounded crusader knights would request Muslim doctors as they were more knowledgeable

Al-Qāsim once hung meat in different parts of town to see where germs spread

Al-Qāsim’s work

A Latin version of al-Qāsim’s work
Medieval Middle East

Jabir ibn Hayyān

This Persian alchemist put experimentation at the heart of research

Jābir was an inventor as well as a chemist

The Persian polymath Abū Mūsā Jābir ibn Hayyān has nearly 3,000 treatises, texts and articles credited to him, on topics ranging from music and medicine to grammar and geometry. This is a suspiciously large body of work, and some modern scholars think only about half of those accredited to him are actually his. Even so, it’s a sign of Jābir’s influence and standing that these other works were assumed to be his as well.

Jābir is regarded as the father of Arabic chemistry, in which he showed surprising scientific rigor. Jābir invented over 20 types of laboratory equipment (including the alembic and retort), described specific processes to distil wine and sulphuric acid, and began classifying elements into different categories, arguably foreshadowing the periodic table. Most significantly of all, he emphasised the importance of experimentation in his scientific research.

After Jābir’s death, a mutilated version of his work was published in Europe under the Latinised name of Geber. Called the Summa Perfectionis Magisterii (The Sum of Perfection), the book became the most famous book on alchemy of the Middle Ages. While Jābir certainly tried to find the philosopher’s stone - a mythic compound that could bestow eternal life - the father of Arabic chemistry was in another league to the many mystics and charlatans that have invoked his name ever since.

This 1983 stamp from the USSR depicts Al-Khwārizmī

Al-Khwārizmī

The mathematician who reached for the stars

Around 820 CE, Muhammad ibn Mūsā al-Khwārizmī was appointed as the astronomer and head of the Library of the House of Wisdom in Baghdad. It was the equivalent nowadays of receiving both the Nobel Prizes for Literature and Physics at the same time. However, it is his book The Compendious Book on Calculation by Completion and Balancing that elevates his status to the likes of Euclid in terms of mathematical prowess. In it he presents a systematic solution to linear and quadratic equations, the first person to do so. It was the power of Arabic numbers rather than Latin numerals that allowed far more complex mathematics to develop, which helped in the study of other areas of science. Another of his texts, Astronomical Tables, proved to be a turning point in Islamic astronomy. Prior to Al-Khwārizmī, Muslim astronomers had only translated the works of others, but now they made their own discoveries.

Over 100 stars in the sky have Arabic names, including many of the brightest ones

"Now they made their own discoveries"
The writings of the Romans and Greeks were not preserved in Latin by the church and then rediscovered in the Renaissance. In reality, many of these masterworks of philosophy, mathematics and science were translated by Muslim scholars and spread throughout the land. The European translations were actually from the Arabic, not from the original Greek and Latin.

One of the most prolific of these Arabic scholars was Al-Fārābī, also known as Alpharabius and Avennasar in the West. Not only did he translate texts, he wrote treatises on them, often building on concepts, most notably Aristotle’s. He could even be said to be a Neo-Platonic. He wrote philosophical treatises in the East at a time when intellectual activities in the West consisted largely of copying of the Gospels. To learned Islamic scholars, Aristotle was referred to as the ‘first teacher’, such was the standing of this pagan thinker in the Muslim world. As a result of his work based on Aristotle’s concepts, Al-Fārābī was nicknamed ‘the second teacher’.

“He wrote treatises, often building on concepts, most notably Aristotle’s”

Al-Khalīl ibn ʿAḥmad
718–786
The author of the first Arabic dictionary

Al-Khalīl was a man who studied the Arabic language and was instrumental in standardising it. This is important, because while Latin was the lingua franca of Medieval Europe, Arabic was the common tongue of the Middle East. But regional variations were widespread, which could cause confusion. Full name Abū ‘Abd al-Rahmān al-Khalīl ibn Ahmad al-Farāhīdī al-Azdī, the philologist’s work resulted in the first Arab language dictionary (possibly the first dictionary ever) about 1,000 years before Samuel Johnson wrote his famous compendium of English. Al-Khalīl’s rhythms and rules have since set the standard for the pace of the Arabic language and of Arabic poetry too.

Al-Khalīl was so important to regulating the language that he became a household name across the Arab world in his own lifetime. However, he had other talents and was well versed in astronomy, mathematics, Islamic law and musical composition. He also wrote a book on cryptography, the study of codes and ciphers. Encryption had been used to hide the meaning of messages since the time of the Ancient Greeks, but it may have been thanks to ‘modern’ Islamic mathematics and numbers that codes were able to make a leap forwards in terms of complexity. It is small wonder then that Al-Khalīl is widely regarded as the outstanding genius of the Muslim world.
Lubna of Córdoba

10th century

The genius slave girl

Lubna of Córdoba had it very tough. As a slave living in Al-Andalus, she was probably a non-Muslim because the Qur'an forbids making slaves of Muslims. While it was standard practice to have slaves convert to Islam, making it a bit of a hypocritical situation, nobody seemed to notice for about 1,000 years. On top of her lowly status as a slave, being a woman meant she had far fewer rights than her male counterparts. So with this incredibly harsh start in life, it is amazing that she became Caliph Al-Hakam II’s poet, scribe and secretary. She could only have achieved this with self-taught reading and writing skills because slave girls didn’t receive schooling.

Lubna’s first love was always books and learning, which led to her role as the head of the Royal Library of Córdoba, one of the largest libraries in the world at that time. By ensuring a regular supply of new acquisitions, the library had around half a million texts, books and manuscripts when she died. According to a contemporary scholar, “There were none in the Umayyad palace as noble as her.” Little more is known about her.

Avicenna 980–1037

The prolific Persian polymath

Ibn Sīnā, or Avicenna as he’s known in the West, was a physician, astronomer and writer. In his lifetime he is thought to have written around 450 works, of which about 240 have survived. In his philosophical pursuits Avicenna pondered the biggest question: what is the nature of our being? He broke this down between essence (Mahiat) and existence (Wujud). In his search for truth he quotes Socrates, Plato and Aristotle, which led to criticism from some quarters about his reliance on non-Muslim thinkers. He ignored their grumbles.

Then there is his rather misleadingly titled text, The Book of Healing, which has nothing to do with medicine. Divided into four parts, it covers logic, natural sciences, mathematics (including arithmetic, geometry, astronomy and music) and metaphysics. Nonetheless, Avicenna is best remembered as a physician. He wrote a five-volume medical encyclopaedia called The Canon of Medicine, which suggested a concept of germ theory about 1,000 years before it became accepted by the medical establishment. The book became a standard text in the Islamic world and Europe up to the 18th century.

Muslim doctors discovered that blood circulated around the body 400 years before the West
Ibn al-Haytham was nicknamed the ‘second Ptolemy’ by Europeans.

Ibn al-Haytham

c. 965–c. 1040

The scientist who had a keen eye for detail

Ibn al-Haytham's fields were mathematics, astronomy and physics. He believed that a hypothesis must be proved by observable results from experiments based on confirmable procedures and/or mathematical evidence. This is exactly how science works and is now simply called the 'scientific method', but Ibn al-Haytham identified it about 500 years before Renaissance scientists.

Another hugely influential work is his huge treatise on optics, *Kitab al-Manazir* (Book of Optics). At the time there were two different theories about how light and the eye worked. He showed through experiment that light travels in straight lines and that the eye works with light falling on it. He also invented a type of camera obscura, the theory of which already existed in China but had yet to reach Europe.

Ibn al-Haytham also wrote a book titled *Doubts about Ptolemy*, which was a scientific dissection and rebuttal of some of his works. Ibn al-Haytham was peer reviewing, carrying out scientific methods and learning from observations. It’s hard not to argue that he was the world’s first proper scientist.

Ibn Battuta

1304–c. 1368

The explorer with the world at his feet

When it comes to great explorers, Marco Polo and Christopher Columbus come to mind, but both of these men's travels pale in comparison to the life of Ibn Battuta. His years of travel were summarised in his book *A Gift to Those Who Contemplate the Wonders of Cities and the Marvels of Travelling*. In it he describes how he got the travel bug on his pilgrimage (hajj) to Mecca when he travelled from Morocco to modern-day Saudi Arabia, a trip that should have lasted about a year and a half. He would not return home for a quarter of a century.

After completing his pilgrimage, Ibn Battuta toured Egypt then the Middle East, seeing Baghdad when it was still a shadow of its former self following its destruction at the hands of the Mongols some 70 years earlier (this event is often seen as the end of the Islamic Golden Age). From there he continued eastwards through Persia, eventually reaching China. He also visited the Philippines, Indonesia, Vietnam, India and the African Horn. Later in life he went west into Spain. It is estimated he travelled about 75,000 miles in his lifetime.

Moorish Córdoba had streetlights and running water supplied by aqueducts

Ibn Battuta surveyed the ruins of Ancient Egypt, as shown in this 19th-century engraving.
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Enduring a life of physical and emotional pain, this iconic Mexican artist reinvented herself through her surreal portraits.

Written by Philippa Grafton

Her cheek pressed against the cool glass of the window, little Frida Kahlo gazed wistfully at the outside world. Confined to her bed to recover from a severe bout of polio, Frida had been deemed too fragile to step outdoors—and in her solitude, she found herself longing for a friend. She pulled her head back and exhaled on the windowpane. If she couldn't see her own friends, she'd just have to make up her own. Raising a frail finger, she drew a door in the misted glass and slipped through it. Walking across a field, she reached a small dairy shop—Pinzón—and clambered through its letter 'O' into the innards of the Earth. Here, she stood face-to-face with a girl, beaming.

In young Frida's make-believe world, her imaginary friend waited for her daily. Endlessly joyful and lively, this imaginary friend was the polar opposite of the sickly six-year-old that created her. Where Frida was morose, her friend was happy; where Frida limped and struggled with her ailing right leg, her friend danced. It was in this fictitious land where Frida felt most happy.

Born in 1907 to Guillermo Kahlo and his second wife, Matilde, Frida was the third of four daughters born to the couple. A photographer by trade, Frida's German father had emigrated to Mexico in 1891 after a severe epileptic fit and disagreements with his stepmother put a swift halt to his education in his homeland. Having been consigned to her bed for months after contracting polio at the age of six, Frida grew close to her father, whose shared experience of severe illness bonded the two. While Frida recovered, Guillermo shared his passion for creativity and philosophy with her, and once she was strong enough, he encouraged her to take up sports to strengthen her right leg, which was stunted and skinny as a result of polio.

Despite starting her education later than her peers, by 1922 Frida was one of 35 girls that had been accepted into the National Preparatory School, an elite academy of 2,000 students. The school's headteacher claimed the young girl was the leader of a "band of juvenile delinquents who raised such uproars in the school that [he] had considered quitting his job". While she may have been mischievous, Frida also thrived academically and harboured dreams of becoming a doctor.

But while Frida's formative years began to mould her, Mexico was in chaos. Its president, 80-year-old Porfirio Díaz, had vowed to stand down from the 1910 elections, only to backtrack and then rig the vote to ensure that he won an eighth term. In being so brash, he insulted those who dreamed of democracy in Mexico. Díaz triggered what became known as the Mexican Revolution from 1910-20, and by 1911 he had been ousted, his oppressive regime in ruins. But Díaz's successors were no more successful—power was juggled between tyrants, puppets and incapable politicians. By 1917, the Mexican Constitution was drafted, and the revolution largely slowed in the years that followed. In the ensuing years, citizens demanded the reforms promised to them by the Constitution, and the newly elected President Alvaro Obregón was seemingly the man to deliver them. Obregón instigated the rebirth of Mexican...
culture, encouraging a sense of nationalism that filtered through all walks of Mexican society. His reforms provided stability and security to Mexico’s peasants, while his left-leaning cultural endeavours meant that like-minded artists, such as the famous muralist Diego Rivera, thrived. Even after Obregón’s assassination, his successors continued his semi-socialist vision for Mexico, and Mexico rapidly became a mecca for liberal thinkers, including philosophers, artists and writers alike. For Frida, this burgeoning renaissance was the epitome of Mexican identity. She identified herself as a child of the revolution, even moving her birth year forward by three years to coincide with the Mexican Revolution.

On 17 September 1925, Frida’s life changed forever. On her way back home from school, her bus catastrophically crashed with a streetcar, leaving several people dead and almost killing Frida. The force of the impact had shattered her already feeble right leg, crushed her feet and fractured several ribs and her collarbone, as well as dislodging three vertebrae. The streetcar’s handrail had also impaled Frida, entering through her abdomen and coming out through her groin. She spent months recovering, first at hospital and later at home, confined to the same bedroom of her youth. Forced to abandon higher education, any dreams of becoming a doctor lay shattered among the debris and bodies that fateful day.

As she lay bedridden, however, Frida sought a means to keep her mind and body occupied. Having shown promise in painting before the accident, a custom-made easel was set up on Frida’s bed, with a mirror pointing towards Frida hanging above. While she recovered, she painted anything she could – self-portraits, her sisters, friends – even decorating her stifling body cast and orthopaedic corsets.

By 1927, however, Frida had recovered well. Her injuries would haunt her for the rest of her life, but soon her mind would be occupied with happier thoughts. That year, Frida joined the Mexican Communist Party, where she became acquainted with a new and elite circle of intellectuals and creatives. One of these was Diego Rivera, whose patriotic art had seen him shoot to fame and glory in the wake of the Mexican Revolution. Diego was 20 years Frida’s senior, twice married and a reputed womaniser, but Frida was smitten. It wasn’t Frida’s first brush with the famed muralist – in 1922 he had painted at her school, where the young student had allegedly remarked that she would marry him one day. The two quickly fell in love, and by 1929 the couple had wed. Diego’s work saw them travel to the United States, first to San Francisco, where Frida’s work was exhibited for the first time at the Sixth Annual Exhibition of the San Francisco Society of Women Artists, and later to Detroit and New York.

Frida never truly took to life in America. She was sickened by the wealth and appalled by the nation’s obsession with capitalism. In a letter written during her time in the US, she was “convinced it’s only through communism that we can become human”. She longed for home. In December 1933, her wish was granted. After Diego was fired from a commission in the Rockefeller Center for refusing to remove the face of Lenin from a mural, the pair returned to Mexico, with Diego’s reputation in the United States in tatters.

Frida and Diego’s marriage was the very antithesis of conventional. Back in Mexico, they lived in two separate houses joined by a bridge, and both were notorious adulterers. Despite her own infidelities, Frida was devastated to discover her husband’s affair with her own sister, Cristina. For weeks she contemplated divorce, before eventually reconciling with them both.

All might have been forgiven, but it certainly wasn’t forgotten. When the exiled Leon Trotsky and his wife, Natalia, arrived in Mexico in 1937, it was only a matter of time before Frida sought retaliation for her husband’s indiscretions. Housed in La Casa Azul – meaning ‘The Blue House’, Frida’s childhood home – Trotsky was quickly seduced by the vivacious and intelligent Frida. Their affair was brief but passionate.
For the first time, many of Frida Kahlo’s personal belongings are being exhibited outside of her homeland. V&A Museum curator Circe Henestrosa reveals what these long-forgotten treasures can tell us about the artist.

**Where were the 50 artefacts in the “Frida Kahlo: Making Her Self Up” exhibition before this, and why haven’t they left Mexico before?**

These objects came all the way from the Museo Frida Kahlo in Mexico City, where they have been since their discovery in 2004. Some of them have been included in an exhibit at the Museo Frida Kahlo curated by myself called ‘Appearances Can Be Deceiving’, which was in 2012. The V&A exhibition (until November) will include a number of self-portraits, numerous photographs, films and sound, and provide context about the political and artistic circles that Frida and Diego Rivera were at the centre of in post-revolutionary Mexico.

**What can we learn about Frida’s life from these exhibits?**

The exhibition will show some of her personal belongings such as her dresses, jewelry, make-up, orthopaedic devices and medicines, to reveal more about Frida’s life. Frida Kahlo has become a border crossing and feminist symbol, well known for her self-portraits and stylised look. This exhibition, entitled ‘Frida Kahlo: Making Her Self Up’, definitely looks to explore some of the deeper issues relating to her life.

This will be the first exhibition outside of Mexico to display her clothes and intimate possessions, reuniting them with key self-portraits and photographs to offer a fresh perspective on her compelling life story. We will present an unparalleled insight into Frida Kahlo’s life, even revealing some objects that have never been on show to the public before.

**How did Frida use make-up and fashion to craft her own identity?**

Think Kahlo’s powerful style is as integral to her myth as her paintings. It is her construction of identity through her ethnicity, disability, political beliefs and art that makes her such a compelling and relevant icon today. Her self-portraits make us remember her through her self-image. In the collection of personal belongings found at the Blue House back in 2004, we found a Revlon eye pencil called ‘Ebon’ that she used to darken her eyebrows. We also have other surviving objects, such as different lipsticks, her blush, a cigarette case and more. Her famous husband, Mexican muralist Diego Rivera, recalled his first meeting with Kahlo: ‘dark and thick eyebrows met above her nose. They seemed like the wings of a black bird, their black arches framing two extraordinary brown eyes.” They became her defining feature, alongside her moustache.

**Did Frida conform to the expectations of a Mexican woman at the time?**

Frida Kahlo is a very model of the bohemian artist: unique, rebellious and contradictory. A cult figure that continues to be appropriated by feminists, artists, fashion designers and popular culture, I think she was unconvventional, and very much ahead of her time, and that’s what makes her so relevant today. We want to show that side of Frida Kahlo, that different side of her. Kahlo never let her disabilities and personal circumstances define her. She defined who she was in her own terms. So in this show, my co-curator Claire Wilcox and I want to emphasise Kahlo’s unconventional spirit. We want to show her non-conforming ways of being that she expressed through art, dress and in her life.

**After her death, Frida was revered as a kind of fashion icon – is that a fair portrayal?**

I think she has been appropriated by feminists due to what she represents today – again intersectionality. A Mexican female artist who was disabled, looking for a place as a female artist in a highly male-dominated environment in Mexico City. Isn’t that fighting as women for the same today? How much more relevant and refreshing for our times can she be?

**Frida painted her corsets and individualised her prosthetic leg – why did she do that?**

Frida’s clothes became part of her armour, to deflect, conceal and distract from her injuries. She included them in her art and in the construction of her style as an essential wardrobe item. Her relationship to the corset was one of support and need – her body was dependent on medical attention – but also one of rebellion. Far from allowing the corset to define her as invalid, Kahlo decorated and adorned her corsets, making them appear as an explicit choice. She included them in the construction of her looks as an essential piece and as her second skin.

**Did Frida pay a price in shaping Mexico at the time?**

Frida very much incorporated a strong sense of cultural pride, following the Mexican Revolution (1910-20). She even changed her birth date to align with the start of the Mexican Revolution. She was part of the circle of intellectuals of the post-revolutionary period, the way until she passed away in 1954, her Tehuana dress, her ‘mexicanising’ her political beliefs and her will to portray herself as a Mexican artist.

Frida Kahlo. Making Her Self Up, sponsored by Grosvenor Britain & Ireland, is on at the V&A from 16 June - 4 November 2018. For more information, visit www.vam.ac.uk/FridaKahlo
Frida and Trotsky secretly exchanged love letters hidden beneath the covers of books, and the pair spoke only in English to their spouses’ bafflement – but by the end of the year, it was all over. Natalia and Diego had uncovered the truth, and after months of bitter disagreements between the men, Trotsky and his wife moved out of the Blue House in April 1939. Just over a year later, Trotsky was assassinated in Mexico.

In 1939, Frida and Diego's marital problems proved to be too much, and the pair divorced in November. Frida moved back into The Blue House, where she fondly reflected on her happy memories – in particular, recollections of her childhood imaginary friend inspired her to create The Two Fridas. But while Frida retreated from the world, her heartbreak proved the perfect fodder for her creativity, and from 1939-40 she painted some of her most acclaimed masterpieces, including Self Portrait With Cropped Hair and The Wounded Table, depicting the emotional devastation that she'd experienced at the hands of her husband.

Their separation was only temporary, however, and in 1940 Diego and Frida remarried. By this time, Frida had made a name for herself as an artist in her own right. No longer just the wife of Diego Rivera, Frida's work was in demand. But with her rise in popularity came a decline in her health. In almost constant agony and unable to stand or sit for long periods of time because of her back, Frida turned to alcohol and drugs to self-medicate. In 1945 Frida flew to New York to receive state-of-the-art surgery on her spine, but the operation was a disaster and left Frida in even more pain. This was yet more inspiration for her creativity, and arguably her most famous work - The Broken Column - expresses the emotional and physical pain that Frida suffered in the aftermath. Further surgery in 1950 failed, with multiple follow-up operations required to combat infection. Despite the crippling pain, Frida rekindled her passion for politics. She rejoined the Mexican Communist Party (having revoked...
her membership in solidarity with her husband following his expulsion from the Party back in 1929, and once again became active in voicing her socialist dreams for Mexico through her art. In 1954, Frida painted *Self Portrait With Stalin*, an ode to the communist leader who had ordered the assassination of Trotsky over a decade before.

In 1950, Frida took another turn for the worse, and she was diagnosed with gangrene in her right foot. In spite of her failing health, Frida was determined to continue working. The following months were tumultuous, with Frida in and out of hospital, or confined for months on end to bed rest. When her 1953 solo exhibition launched at the Contemporary Art Gallery of Mexico in April, her doctors had expressly forbidden her to attend, insisting that she remain in bed. Famously, she obeyed their orders by having her four-poster bed transported into the gallery.

Frida never recovered from the past decade of illness, and in August 1953 her right leg was amputated at the knee. In the face of such trauma, Frida seemed defiant, determined to exude power and strength to the very end - but behind the curtain another scene was unravelling. With her health rapidly deteriorating, Frida spiralled into depression. In February 1954, Frida wrote, “They amputated my leg six months ago. It seemed to me centuries of torture and at times I nearly went crazy. I still feel like committing suicide. Diego prevents me from doing it in the vain belief that maybe he will need me. He has told me so and I believe him. But I have never suffered so much in my life. I’ll wait a while.”

Less than six months later, Frida was dead. Though officially recorded as a pulmonary embolism, it’s thought that she committed suicide by overdose. Her last diary entry reveals the face that Frida hid behind a mask of bravado: “Thanks to the doctors... Thanks to the nurses, to the stretcher-bearers, to the cleaning women and attendants... I hope the exit is joyful - and I hope never to return.”

In life, Frida Kahlo’s reality was cruel and unkind; beneath the powerful and defiant facade, Frida was fragile and self-conscious of her ailing, shattered body. But in death, Kahlo has indeed returned - as an iconic figure, a champion of women, and as Mexico’s greatest artist.
The blood-splattered truth behind Britain’s underground fight club that attracted crowds of thousands – including kings and prime ministers – even after it was outlawed

Written by Paul Edwards and Robert Lock

On the morning of 17 April 1860, boxing’s first-ever ‘world title’ match took place in a field near the small town of Farnborough, Hampshire. Billed as the ‘fight of the century’, the bout was between all-American champ John Heenan and England’s reigning champion Tom Sayers.

The greatest of his generation, at 1.7 metres (5 foot 8 inches) tall and weighing 67 kilograms (147 pounds), Sayers had managed to punch his way up into the heavyweight division. Here he demolished his lumbering opponents through a combination of incredible skill and tenacity. However, that was in the 1850s, and ‘Brighton Titch,’ as Sayers was nicknamed, was now 33 – old even by modern boxing standards. In contrast, Heenan was in his mid-twenties and at the height of his powers.

He was about 1.9 metres (6 feet, 2 inches) and 43 kilograms (95 pounds), with an apparently lethal left hook. Known as the ‘Benicia Boy,’ Heenan grew up in New York State, but learned to fight in California, where he worked as an ‘enforcer’ for a San Francisco gang, before taking up the sport. Still, Heenan’s training had been sporadic – unlike Sayers – and he didn’t have the old pro’s experience to fall back on.

The title fight gripped the imagination on both sides of the Atlantic. As Harper’s Weekly put it: “The bulk of the people in England and America are heart and soul engrossed in a fight compared to which a Spanish bull-bait is but a mild and diverting pastime.” Meanwhile, in Britain, the Manchester Guardian observed that “no puglistic contest ever decided has excited so great an interest, both in this and other countries.”

When the two men were called to the ‘scratch’ at 7.29am, you couldn’t see the green grass of the field for the packed crowd that filled it. The two fighters stood in the middle of a small, roped-off area, stripped down to their waists, but they didn’t don gloves – this was a bare-knuckle battle.

A former chapel, known as The Ring in Southwark, London, was a popular Victorian boxing venue.
Both gladiators tore strips out of each other early on: Sayers was forced to fight one-handed when he injured his right arm, while Heenan was half blinded due to a swollen eye. Nonetheless, the pair duked it out for a staggering 42 rounds. Each severely bloodied and battered, they fought till for tat for two hours and 27 minutes. However, before either champion could land a winning blow, the police arrived, wielding their truncheons, to stop the fight.

Bare-knuckle boxing was illegal, as it had been since it gained popularity in the early 18th century. However, the fights were regulated by the semi-respectable British Pugilists’ Protective Association, reported on in the sport section of newspapers, and drew large crowds, including the great and good. The Heenan vs Sayers clash has been heavily mythologised: various stories claim parliament shortened its hours so Prime Minister Lord Palmerston could attend, that novelists Charles Dickens and William Thackeray were both forced to flee the police along with the rest of the audience, while Queen Victoria sat in her palace waiting for news of the result. So how did bare-knuckle boxing come to gain such an allure in the British imagination, and why then did it disappear?

Birth of Boxiana

The first recorded prize fight in Britain took place in January 1681, with regular matches being staged at the Royal Theatre in London by 1698. However, it is perhaps too generous to call these clashes ‘sport’. While we might consider the Sayers and Heenan bout ultra-violent by modern standards, they at least followed set rules. During and leading up to the 18th century, the only aim was that you had to defeat your opponent – by any means necessary: Wrestling was allowed, so a man could grab and throw his opponent, then jump on and beat him while he was down. Fists were the primary weapon, but fighters would also wield swords, cudgels or quarterstaffs. Outside of the more sophisticated theatres, they would often face each other in an ill-defined ring formed by the crowd, which would be constantly moving as eager fans pressed in or stepped back to avoid being hit. The pair would beat each other to the point where either of them could no longer carry on. The only aspects that we would really recognise – beyond the fighters – was that there was an umpire to adjudicate on who won if both contenders were badly beaten, and that each man had a second, what we would call a cornerman today, who could throw in the towel for their fighter to rescue them while forfeiting the match to the other man.

James Figg was England’s greatest champion in this era. Born in Oxfordshire around 1695, probably to a poor farming family, Figg is said to have only lost one fight in a career that encompassed over 270 fights. Figg claimed he only lost because he was ill, and indeed he defeated the victor, Ned Sutton, in a rematch. Figg was even considered famous enough to be painted by William Hogarth on trading cards.

However, Figg got ahead in this anything-goes age because he was technically skilled. The Marquis de Bretagne noted that Figg, “handles a broad sword [sic] with the greatest dexterity of any man alive.” By 1714, Figg had moved to London to study with the Company of Masters of the Science of Defence, a guild dating back to Tudor times that trained members to fight proficiently with rapier, quarterstaff and, of course, broadsword. Figg qualified as a ‘master’ in under a year. While training, Figg also fought at a fair in Southwark. He would lure crowds to his booth by declaring: “Here I am, Jemmy Figg from Thame – I will fight any man in England!”

In 1719, Figg opened an ‘academy of arms’ just off Oxford Street. Here, he taught pupils – from aspiring
professional prize fighters to gentlemen about town – new techniques, adapting what he knew from the art of swordplay for boxing, including how to block and cross-punch.

While Figg raised the quality of the sport, it was one of his students, Jack Broughton, who laid down the rules. Like Figg, he fought at a fairground, but was profoundly affected when he accidentally killed his opponent, George Stephenson, in 1741. When Stephenson – who was another student of Figg’s – fell and didn’t get up, Broughton is said to have cried, “Good God. What have I done? I’ve killed him. So help me God, I’ll never fight again.”

He didn’t keep to this oath, but two years later he opened Broughton’s Amphitheatre and changed boxing forever. The new proprietor outlined seven rules, which he taught to his students and insisted upon being followed in every fight. These still allowed wrestling moves and even hair-pulling, but the weapons were removed and contenders were forbidden to hit a man when he was down or when he was on his knees. Broughton also insisted that a “square of a yard” be chalked in the middle of the stage; when a man was knocked down, he would have half a minute to return to the mark with the help of his second, or be declared defeated. While he only intended to govern bouts taking place in his own ring, the Broughton Rules, as they became known, were quickly adopted by other venues and continued to guide the sport for the next 100 years.

Regency Royal Rumble

In 1750, an Act of Parliament reaffirmed that prize fighting was illegal. The courts would charge contenders with affray or assault, while spectators ran the risk of being classified as disorderly assemblies. The law continued to be widely flouted, but its reiteration may have had something to do with the temporary decline in interest among the gentry. The sport was also beset by corruption at this time, with fight after fight being thrown. Jack Slack, a savage fighter and grandson of James Figg, is credited with being the first known person to fix a fight. He is believed to have paid off better fighters to lose in other matches to stop top contenders challenging his title. After losing it anyway to William Daniel Mendoza holds his opponent in a headlock
No Holds Barred

Top 5 Prize Fighters

These boxers, without doubt, were the real superstars of their day

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Tom Cribb
5 July 1781 – 11 May 1848

Born in Bristol to a coal worker father, Tom Cribbs began his career in 1805. It may be debatable whether he would have gained as much prominence if it were not for his two fights against the ‘Black American’, Tom Molineaux. His defining bout was the Molineaux rematch of 1811 in front of 20,000 fight fans, such as the popularity of the sport. He’s still much loved in his home city of Bristol.

Daniel Mendoza
2 July 1784 – 3 September 1836

Molineaux’s exact date of birth is unknown, because he was born a slave on a Virginia plantation. However, he became known for fighting other slaves there, and after victory upon victory he was granted his freedom. Two very notable fights against Tom Cribb in 1810 and 1811 at Thistleton Gap in the East Midlands saw 20,000 people witness his defeat of Tom Cribb. He died in Galway in 1838.

William Perry
21 March 1819 – 15 January 1851

Known as the ‘Tipton Slasher’, he became Heavyweight Champion of England in 1850 after beating Tom Paddock. Soon after this, he suffered a controversial defeat to Henry Broome on a referee’s decision. Later he regained the coveted title, before eventually losing it to Tom Sayers in 1857. He was born with a severe deformity in his left leg that impacted his walk, which led some people to refer to him as ‘K Legs’.

John Gully
21 August 1781 – 9 March 1862

Another Bristolian, in his early years he was imprisoned in a debtor’s institution, but later became a prize fighter. The Duke of Clarence (later King William IV) witnessed his brutal 64-round fight against Henry Pearce in 1805. In the latter half of his life, he was an entrepreneur and race horse owner. He also became a politician, and sat in the House of Commons as the MP for Pontefract from 1832 to 1837.
chalk some of this nationalism up to the fact that Egan was writing during the Napoleonic War, but boxing’s hold upon the British imagination is evidenced in the many idioms taken from the sport that entered the English language during this period. Phrases such as ‘start from scratch’ (to start over from the beginning), and ‘not up to the mark’ (not up to the necessary level) may refer to the line that was scratched in the dirt to divide the ring. It’s said the term ‘draw’, meaning a tied score, derives from the stakes that held the rope surrounding the ring; when the match was over, the stakes were ‘drawn’ out from the ground. These stakes might also be the basis behind the monetary meaning of stakes. In early prize fights, a bag of money, which would go to the winner of the bout, was hung from one of the stakes – thus high stakes and stake money.

The Regency era (1811-20) proved to be a golden age for bare-knuckle boxing, producing a constellation of superstars, including Tom Belcher, Tom Cribb, John Gully, and Bill Richmond – another former slave who spent most of his career in Britain. However, it was the year of Queen Victoria’s coronation, 1838, that saw bare-knuckle boxing take a step forward. The London Prize Ring rules – also called the London Rules for brevity – were quickly adopted on both sides of the Atlantic, introducing a larger 7.3-metre (24-foot) ring enclosed by rope, declaring that fallen fighters should be able to return to the mark unaided or forfeit the match, and forbid butting, gouging, hitting below the waist and kicking as fouls.

KO in the UK
After the police interrupted Sayers and Heenan’s fight for the world title in 1860, there was a dispute over who actually won. Officially, the referee declared it a draw, but Heenan demanded a rematch. This never happened, instead the pair both received a championship belt and split the ‘purse’ of £400 – over £20,000 in today’s money. When Heenan returned to the United States he was given a hero’s welcome anyway and 50,000 New Yorkers came out to welcome him.

Meanwhile, Sayers fans raised £3,000 so that the veteran fighter could retire. However, the next five years didn’t go well for him. Sayers divorced and had several other acrimonious break-ups, suffered from diabetes and tuberculosis, made a failed investment in a circus, and developed a drinking problem. He died living above a shop on Camden High Street at the age of 39. What was left of Sayers’ still sizeable

Very little is known about women’s boxing during the 19th century, perhaps because it was seen as a sideshow and not reflective of the way men went about their fights. Some of these tough women fought bare chested and, by some illogical reasoning, wore long dresses down to the floor to hide their modesty. Many prostitutes also took part in the matches. Usually the women would fight with a coin in each hand, and the first to drop it would be deemed the loser.

The first recorded fight between two females took place in 1722 near what is now, Oxford Circus between Elizabeth Wilkinson and Martha Jones. Wilkinson won the contest and was considered to be the first female champion, and she fought fully clothed, so the audience would take her more seriously. Wilkinson would have been born around 1700, but the details of her birth cannot be proved with any certainty. However, it seems she became a very formidable fighter not only with her fists, but also with a dagger, cudgel and quarterstaff. Elizabeth went on to marry a pugilist named Stokes, who fought in James Figg’s boxing booth and eventually set up her own booth to rival Figg’s.

In 1722 she handed out a challenge to Hannah Hyfield of Newgate Market. It was usual for women’s fights to last between 20 minutes and an hour, and Elizabeth’s strength and fitness far exceeded the low expectations of female stamina at the time. Elizabeth Wilkinson Stokes, as she became known, had a close rival in Mary Welsh (who, ironically, was Irish). The two women fought, along with their husbands, forming ‘mixed-doubled’ pairs. From all accounts it seems Welsh won the battle, although this cannot be proven with any certainty.
No Holds Barred

In 1867, the Marquess of Queensberry endorsed a new set of rules for boxing. Though actually written by a Welsh sportsman named John Graham Chambers, the most important detail of the Queensberry Rules was the biggest change to the sport since Jack Broughton laid down the law in 1743. It demanded that all fighters wear padded boxing gloves.

While bare-knuckle fighting didn’t end overnight, Jem Mace was quick to see that the writing was on the wall. Changing his tactics, the former English heavyweight champion defeated the formidable Bill Davis in Virginia City, Nevada, under the Queensberry Rules in 1876. The last bare-knuckle fight took place on British soil in 1885 between champion Jem Smith and Jack Davis. Smith won easily, but few witnessed the spectacle.

The Queensberry code came into force in the United States and Canada in the late 19th century, with the last recognised bare-knuckle encounter taking place on 8 July 1889, between Jake Kilrain and John L Sullivan. Fought using the London Rules, this contest ran until an incredible 76 rounds, when Kilrain’s second threw in the sponge, saying his man would die if the bout went on any longer. With that, bare-knuckle boxing was served its final KO.

No Holds Barred

The fates of two men signalled the shift in bare-knuckle boxing’s fortunes

fortune was spent on an extravagant funeral. Some 100,000 people took part in his procession as Sayer’s loyal mastiff dog, Lion, wearing a crepe ruff, led his coffin to Highgate Cemetery.

In some ways, the fates of the two men signalled the shift in bare-knuckle boxing’s fortunes in the two countries. Corruption once again emerged in the British sport, with more fights being rigged. Meanwhile, Victorian moralists decried bare-knuckle boxing for its violence. Seizing on growing popular opinion, Parliament increasingly penalised the game in such a way that every fight fan or fighter would be arrested and dealt with accordingly if caught in the act of promoting or supporting a prize fight.

After Sayer, Britain still produced a few acclaimed bruisers, most notably Tom King and Jem Mace. Facing growing persecution at home and the promise of greater cash prizes abroad, these fighters increasingly went to the US. The sport was illegal there too, but the law varied state by state, and in some places it was quite lax. Mace courted the fame the sport brought in the US, where he continued to fight until he was well into his 60s.

In 1882, rising Boston talent John L Sullivan beat Irish-born Paddy Ryan in a highly publicised bout in Mississippi City. The New York Times claimed some $300,000 was wagered across America on the fight, while telegraph circuits surged to deliver blow-by-blow accounts to eager fans that filled the streets. At last, it seemed America had embraced prize fighting and the spiritual home of the sport had finally moved across the Atlantic. However, at this point the sport’s days were numbered all around the world.

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Or was it? That was the case until this June, when the first legal bare-knuckle boxing match was held in the US – almost 130 years since the last match. Arnold Adams and DJ Lindermann met for their showdown in the prairie city of Cheyenne, Wyoming. 2,000 fans crammed into the converted ice rink, and after a gruelling set, Arnold Adams won. Other states are now looking to legalise the fights.

With bare-knuckle boxing poised to get back in the ring once again, it’s all the more important to recall the working-class origins of the bloody sport.
Calling all photographers around the world! The second-ever Historic Photographer of the Year Awards is now open! Following the huge success of last year’s Awards, All About History has partnered with the competition once more to celebrate the very best historic places and cultural sites across the globe. Whether it’s of an iconic landmark or a far-flung forgotten ruin - we want to see your pictures!

While only one overall winner will take home the £1,000 cash prize, several new specialist categories have been added to the Awards 2018, including Ancient History, English History and Short Filmmaker of the Year.

Judging all entries will be a panel of experts, including historian Dan Snow, All About History’s James Hoare, Richard Everett, chairman of The Association for Historical and Fine Art Photography, Duncan Wilson, CEO of Historic England, and Mike Lewis, CEO of online travel guide Trip Historic.

Judge Dan Snow said: “Exploring the history around us opens our eyes to the wonders that sit on our doorstep. Last year’s awards were a testament to that experience. The quality of those entries was not only astounding but it also highlighted a host of incredible historic places from across the globe. And with this year’s awards getting bigger and better, there’s never been a more exciting opportunity to get out exploring and photograph those remarkably inspirational locations from the past.”

Looking ahead to another exciting year of the Awards, All About History Group Editor-in-Chief James Hoare explained: “I was completely stunned by the quality of photography on offer last year - some of the issues of shifting memory and meaning those images raised are pivotal to our role as historians. I am giddy at the prospect of seeing even more incredible photographs to provoke, debate, and inspire deeper understanding of all of our world’s shared heritage.”

Entries will be judged on originality, composition and technical proficiency alongside the story behind the image and its historical impact.

This competition is open to everyone, it doesn’t matter where in the world you live, or what skill level you are as a photographer you are – you just need the passion.

To enter, all you have to do is upload one or more photos of a historically significant place to photographer.triphistoric.com between now and 30 September. The winners will be announced at a glitzy awards ceremony to be held in November.
There were many megalomaniac rulers in the ancient world, but only one allegedly tried to make his horse a consul. That honour is bestowed upon Gaius Julius Caesar Germanicus, better known as Caligula, who was the third emperor of Rome from 37 to 41 CE. Only on the throne for four years, it’s a wonder he made a mark at all - nonetheless, his reputation precedes him. It’s said that Caligula was insane and led a reign of terror, before being assassinated. But is that a fair assessment?

Caligula wasn’t always destined to rule. While he was descended from the great Augustus through his mother, his family fell from grace during Tiberius’ reign. His mother and brothers were all accused of treason, dying in prison or exile. Caligula, meanwhile, was shielded by his protective grandmother until the death of Sejanus, Tiberius’ lethal right-hand man, in 31 CE. A year later, Caligula had got back in Rome’s good books and moved in with the aging emperor. He had even been named heir along with his cousin, Tiberius Gemellus, who was the emperor’s natural grandson. It was here that Caligula was over indulged.

Living on the sunny island of Capri, he got a taste for the excess that his guardian enjoyed. Suetonius wrote of their sadistic fun, going as far as saying that “even in those days Caligula could not control his natural brutality. He loved watching tortures and executions.”

But there’s a very real problem with using Suetonius as an accurate source for Caligula. While the Roman historian is known for his Twelve Caesars, a series of books about Rome’s rulers from Julius Caesar to Domitian, it was filled with gossip and hearsay. It also doesn’t help that Suetonius was writing almost 100 years after Caligula’s rule, during the reign of Hadrian.

The test of Caligula’s character would come at the death of Tiberius in 37 CE. Now 25 years of age, Caligula was thrust into the spotlight as co-emperor with his cousin – until Gemellus’ suspicious death. While some argue that Caligula had nothing to do with it, the opposition is much stronger. How could he not resist getting rid of the man who stood between him and total power of one of the greatest empires the Mediterranean had ever seen? Whatever happened, Caligula was now alone at the top.

At first, the people loved him. The murderous Tiberius hadn’t exactly been popular, and a new, youthful emperor was a welcome change. He abolished the detested treason trials, recalled exiles and gave his praetorian guard - essentially the emperor’s bodyguards - a nice bonus. He entertained the masses with gladiator matches and chariot races, rebuilt temples and spent huge amounts of money on new buildings. But then he took it a little too far when he requisitioned hundreds of merchant ships. Why? To build a two-
Defining moment
A New Home
After years of being sheltered by his grandmother during his family’s fall from grace, Caligula made his home on the island of Capri living with Emperor Tiberius. The ageing tyrant ruled Rome remotely from the pleasure palace of Villa Jovi (‘Villa of Jupiter’) in his final years, where he was said to also have indulged his most depraved vices, from debauched sexual acts to torturing his enemies.
31 CE
mile floating bridge across the Bay of Naples – and then gallop back and forth on it on his horse, of course. As a result, there were no boats left to transport grain into Rome, so the capital allegedly suffered a food shortage. While some historians think there’s no way this can be true, there is archaeological evidence of pleasure barges built for Caligula. The boats were filled with marble decor, statues and mosaics. However, the remains of these barges were unfortunately destroyed by fire during World War II.

Things only got worse. It was easy for everyone to see that Caligula was a bit unstable. Within six months of becoming emperor, he had suffered an illness that nearly took his life. Historians today are divided on the cause – it was perhaps epilepsy or maybe a breakdown – but most agree on the outcome. Whatever happened to him during his sickness, it was his actions from this point on that would earn him his reputation as nothing short of a bloodthirsty madman.

Like any other Roman leader of the early empire, he led his troops in battle, this time heading for the Rhine and as far north as the English Channel. But Caligula didn’t necessarily make them do real battle – according to Cassius Dio, he had the war trumpet sounded and then forced them to gather shells in their helmets. Not even the Romans could explain such bizarre behaviour.

Battle was a mainstay of Roman life, as each emperor (perhaps with the exception of Antoninus Pius) would fight to attain glory, but it has been argued that Caligula led meaningless campaigns in Germany just to say that he’d won battle. He also continued the Roman policy of hostility and intolerance towards the Jewish population in Judaea. And things got worse for them when they refused to worship him as a living deity. Caligula reportedly ordered that a colossal statue of himself be put inside the Temple of Jerusalem, but he was fortunately talked down from the idea.

“Whatever happened during his sickness, it was his actions from this point that would earn him his reputation as a bloodthirsty madman”

Just when you think the madness will finally stop, when you’re sure that by now the powerful Roman Senate would have had enough of Caligula, it keeps going. Perhaps the most famous story associated with Caligula regards his horse, Incitatus. That horse received things that many Roman citizens could only dream of – an ivory manger, a jewelled collar and even supposedly a house. Caligula was certainly a man of excess, and Incitatus was said to have been fed a mixture of rolled oats and gold flakes (which is probably untrue).

The story goes that Caligula loved Incitatus so much that he decided to make his equestrian companion consul, an elected official just below the emperor. It was the epitome of insanity, arguably the main thing that comes to mind today when you mention Caligula’s name – and it was probably a lie. This particular tale was put forward by Roman author Cassius Dio, who like Suetonius, was writing years later. Having said that, historian Aloys Winterling argued that if it did actually happen, it was because Caligula was mocking his Senate. In Caligula: A Biography, he puts forward the idea that the emperor was emphasising that a consul’s job was so meaningless that a horse could do it.
Herein lies the problem with studying Caligula, and many other Roman emperors: we can't back up some of the sources we have, especially those making salacious and outlandish claims. It also doesn't help that things like mental illness weren't necessarily recognised in the ancient world, and certainly not seen as they are today. It's because of this that the argument of Caligula being mentally ill is relatively recent, and with today's mindset it's difficult to refute. After all, we can't help but view history through the lens of the time we're living in.

But something that we know for a fact is that Caligula was running out of money. Despite raising taxes again (this time on things like weddings and prostitutes), his treasury was being bled dry by his extravagance and building projects, and many people were starting to lose patience with him. Plots and conspiracies popped up all over Rome, but the one that was successful was where no plot should have come from – his praetorian guard. The emperor's own bodyguards were the men who were ultimately successful in getting rid of him.

On 24 January 41 CE, Caligula was heading to have a quick bath to help get over a hangover. Down a back alley in the imperial compound in Rome, he was ambushed by a group of soldiers led by Cassius Chaerea, a soldier who had born the brunt of a fair few of Caligula's insults, and who had quite frankly had enough. He was the first Roman emperor to be assassinated, and that alone must prove his inability to rule, or at least that his people were unable to put up with his maniacal tendencies any longer. One family member who survived a quick purge of Caligula's relatives was invited to become emperor – cowering behind a curtain, it was Claudius who would come to rule next.

As we've seen, the way we view Caligula today has been undeniably shaped by historians who weren't around during his lifetime. These tales have been immortalised in books, films and plays. If you mention the emperor's name today, it conjures images of a madman with an unhealthy obsession with his horse. While parts of these tales must be true (why else would he be murdered by those paid to protect him?), we can never know how far Caligula actually went and how much he was guided by mental instability from his period of illness. But salacious rumours tend to stick much better than the little truth we do know, so he'll be no doubt be referred to - in the words of Mary Beard - as a “template of tyranny” for a long time to come. It’s probably deserved.
Bluffer’s Guide
The Affair of the Poisons
FRANCE, 1677-82

Did you know?
La Voisin nicknamed the arsenic-based poison she sold customers to murder their wealthy relatives with ‘inheritance powder’

Timeline
FEBRUARY 1677
After being arrested, fortune-teller Magdelaine de La Grange claims she knows of a plot against the king and other high crimes, sparking La Reynie’s investigation.

APRIL 1679
Louis XIV sets up a tribunal to try those suspected of trafficking in magic or poison, held in the bowels of the Arsenal, a royal munitions warehouse.

22 FEBRUARY 1680
Three days after being convicted for witchcraft and interrogated under torture, La Voisin is burned alive in a public square, the Place de Grève.

LATE 1680
La Voisin’s daughter accuses Madame de Montespan of buying love potions to use on the king. However, the charges against Montespan were never proved.
What was it?
One of the most sensational criminal cases in 17th-century France, the Affair of the Poisons began with a warning of a plot against the king, Louis XIV. However, a three-year investigation uncovered a secret society of sorcerers, fortune-tellers and even priests in the heart of Paris, peddling charms to help you win games of chance, love potions to enthrall, and poisons to kill off relatives and rivals. What’s more, many of their clients were revealed to be nobles in the king’s inner circle.

Louis XIV appointed a special judicial commission to try those suspected of trafficking such items. The trials were unofficially known as the chambre ardente – ‘the burning room’. Though this was likely named for the flaming torches that lit the windowless room that housed the court, it carried the implicit threat of the punishment for anyone found guilty. Most notably, Catherine Monvoisin, better known as La Voisin, was burnt at the stake for using black magic, performing satanic rituals and selling poisons alleged to have killed between 1,000 and 2,500 people.

What were the consequences?
The court held 210 sessions, issued 319 writs of arrest and sentenced 36 persons to death. Louis XIV suspended public proceedings when his mistress Madame de Montespan was accused of buying love potions from La Voisin to use on the king. While the enquiry continued in private, around 60 were never tried for fear that their testimony would be too inflammatory to be heard even by the king’s hand-picked judges. Instead, these few were sent to remote fortresses and spent the rest of their lives in solitary confinement.

After the trials, Louis XIV instituted state regulation of the sale of poisons and declared all magic fraudulent. However, the most significant effect of the Affair of the Poisons is that Prince Eugene of Savoy was driven out of Louis’ court, after his mother was implicated in the scandal. Eugene got revenge by siding with the Habsburg Empire and won numerous battles against the French, losing Louis XIV the War of the Spanish Succession.

Who was involved?

**Gabriel Nicolas de La Reynie**
1625-1709
France’s first lieutenant general of police, Le Reynie led the initial investigation into the Affair of the Poisons.

**Louis XIV**
1638-1715
The Sun King remains Europe’s longest reigning monarch, famously ruling absolutely from the Palace of Versailles.

**Françoise-Athénaïs de Montespan**
1640-1707
The most celebrated maîtresse-en-titre – or chief mistress – of Louis XIV, Madame de Montespan had seven of the king’s children.
The first major clash of the American Civil War, the First Battle of Bull Run provided a harsh wake-up call to anyone who had anticipated a swift conclusion to the rebellion, claiming the lives of approximately 850 men and horribly maiming countless more besides.

The Civil War had escalated quickly. After Abraham Lincoln won the presidential election in November 1860, vowing to keep slavery out of the western territories that were yet to become states, many in the South felt threatened. Despite Lincoln’s assurances in his inaugural address that he had “no purpose to interfere with the institution of slavery where it exists in the United States,” these states feared the North would eventually seek to abolish all slavery, which was the cornerstone of the South’s agricultural economy. South Carolina, Mississippi, Florida, Alabama, Georgia, Louisiana and Texas seceded from the United States, but
the war itself didn't break out until 12 April 1861. Confederate forces bombarded Fort Sumter, an island fortress that controlled Charleston harbour, in South Carolina. Lincoln replied by calling for 75,000 volunteers to support the US Army in crushing the uprising. In response to this show of force, another four states (Virginia, Arkansas, North Carolina and Tennessee) joined the Confederacy.

With the stage set for a confrontation, Major McDowell was promoted to the post of Brigadier General and placed in charge of the Department of North-Eastern Virginia. Though McDowell felt that his 35,000 recruits would require extensive training before seeing action, political pressure forced him into going on the offensive.

He devised a plan to outflank the Confederates stationed at Bull Run (around 25 miles from Washington DC) and embarked from the capital on 16 July 1861. Unfortunately for the Unionist general, a Confederate spy named Rose O’Neal Greenhow had obtained his plans and passed them on to General Beauregard. Aware that reinforcements were headed via rail from the Shenandoah Valley to Beauregard’s position, McDowell launched a pre-emptive attack on Beauregard’s army. The attack began with an artillery barrage at 5.15am on the morning of 21 July. Alerted by projectiles striking alarmingly close to where he was eating breakfast, Beauregard countered the Unionist attack by trying to defend his exposed left flank. He also waited to hear how the planned attack on the Union’s left flank was going. But these plans actually failed to materialise, as the troops had not received Beauregard’s order. When a brigade under the command of Colonel William T Sherman forded the Bull Run tributary to attack the enemy’s right flank, the Confederate lines began to buckle. Only fierce resistance led by the likes of Thomas Jackson (earning him the infamous nickname ‘Stonewall’) prevented the Unionists from closing in for the kill.

Fortunately for the Confederates, reinforcements soon began to arrive, enabling them to establish a defensive line on the slopes of Henry House Hill. Having held McDowell’s advance, the Southern army turned the tide in the mid-afternoon when the 33rd Virginians stormed an artillery battery, earning a foothold that eventually led to the Confederates putting their adversaries to flight around an hour later.

The crushing Unionist defeat sent shockwaves across the previously confident Northern states, with anyone who had harbouried ideas of a rapid end to the conflict instantly disabused of such notions. Instead of the battle extinguishing the Confederate cause, it stoked the flames of rebellion that would engulf the United States for four long years and claim over 620,000 lives.
**Unionists**

**BRIGADIER GENERAL IRVIN McDOWELL**

**LEADER**

Having graduated from the United States Military Academy in 1838, McDowell went on to teach military tactics at the academy from 1841-45, teaching some of the soldiers he would one day fight.

**Strengths:** Schooled in tactics and bold enough to attempt to cut off his enemy’s reinforcements before launching a pre-emptive attack.

**Weaknesses:** Relatively inexperienced and pressured into going on the offensive before his troops were adequately trained.

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**SHERMAN’S VOLUNTEERS**

**KEY UNIT**

Comprised of four infantry regiments and Company E of the 3rd US Artillery, Colonel William T Sherman’s men fought as the 3rd Brigade of General Daniel Tyler’s First Division.

**Strengths:** Battled tenaciously and forced the Confederate line to buckle.

**Weaknesses:** Inexperience likely contributed to their losses of 120 dead and 211 wounded.

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**SPRINGFIELD 1812**

**KEY WEAPON**

Priced at $20 each, this rifle fired a .58 calibre bullet, and was the most commonly used gun throughout the American Civil War.

**Strengths:** Accurate at up to 400 yards.

**Weaknesses:** Required a skilled marksman to maintain its effectiveness.

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**Greatest Battles**

**01 Opening salvo**

Intent on harassing the Confederates’ right flank in order to draw fire away from the main attack, McDowell directs Colonel Israel Richardson to position his guns at Blackburn’s Ford. At approximately 5.15am Richardson fires the first shots of the day, his artillery raining cannon fire down on the enemy positions across the water, some of which fly far enough to smash down close to where General Beauregard is eating his breakfast.

**02 Sherman takes the initiative**

As the numerically superior Unionists press their advance on the Confederate left flank in the hope of routing the enemy before its reinforcements arrive, Colonel William Sherman orders his men to cross an unguarded part of the creek and hit the Confederate right flank, catching their opponents off guard. Colonel Nathan ‘Shanks’ Evans of the Confederates, having previously rushed to hold off the Unionist thrust before Sherman’s intervention, now finds himself withdrawing with his men to the slopes of Matthews Hill.

**03 Confederate collapse**

Despite fighting tenaciously, the Confederate line begins to crumble under intense pressure from the surprise Unionist thrust against its right flank. A chaotic retreat to Henry House Hill ensues at about 11.30am.

**04 Stand and fight**

Fortunately for Evans and his fellow commanders, help arrives in the form of Captain John D Imboden’s artillery battery, which unleashes a hail of fire on the pursuing Unionists for long enough to enable the Confederates to establish a defensive line on Henry House Hill. A potential rout has been averted.

**05 McDowell’s fatal error**

Confident that he has the Confederates hopelessly trapped on the hill, McDowell commits the critical error of deciding to obliterate his enemy with a relentless artillery bombardment instead of seizing the ground before him.
**STONESTRAWN ARRIVES**
Further reinforcement arrives for the Confederates in the form of Thomas Jackson, who earns his famous nickname during a determined defense of the Southenem's position from around noon until 2pm. It is alleged that when Jackson vowed, "We will give them (the Unionists) the bayonet", Brigadier General Barnard Bee (who died during the battle) exclaimed to his men, "There is Jackson standing like a stone wall. Let us determine to die here, and we will conquer."

**FORCED FROM THE HILL**
At around 4pm the remaining Unionist troops are finally rushed off Henry House Hill and sent into a scattered retreat. At the same time, Colonel Oliver O'Howard's brigade finds itself on the wrong end of an assault on Chinn Ridge (west of the main battle) from two Confederate brigades recently arrived from Shenandoah Valley. At the sight of the enemy's collapse, General Beauregard commands his entire army to move forward. Total victory is within his grasp.

**A FIERY EXCHANGE**
Desperate to plug the holes torn in their flank by the Confederate onslaught, Unionist infantrymen rush to engage the triumphant captors of the guns. A ferocious fight ensues that results in the Union artillery exchanging hands several times. Implored to "Yell like furies" by Jackson, the cry of the Confederates' 'rebel yell' fills the sky as they smash into the Union ranks.

**TURNING THE TIDE**
Having held their ground, the Confederates spot a chance to put the enemy batteries out of action. In a charge that will take a horrendous toll, the 33rd Virginians overrun the guns of Captain Charles Griffin, who had moved two of his guns to the southern end of his line with the aim of enveloping the enemy in a hailstorm of cannon fire. This success is then compounded by the capture of Captain James Ricketts' battery of the 1st US Artillery.

**FLEE FOR YOUR LIVES**
Having begun their retreat in a relatively calm manner, the Unionists instantly panic when a blast of artillery overturns a wagon rolling among them. Intermingled with terrified civilians who had come to witness the spectacle of a crushing Confederate defeat, the soldiers of the North scramble back to the Unionist capital at Washington DC, having been thrashed.

**MISSISSIPPI RIFLE**
The first US rifle to feature the more reliable percussion lock mechanism, though outdated by the time of the Civil War, it was favoured by Confederate sharpshooters.

**TEXAS ARMS FACTORY**
The only ordnance factory, made only 4,000 rifles and 10,000 muskets.

**MISSISSIPPI RIFLE KEY WEAPON**
*Strengths:* Effective up to 500 yards with a rate of fire of 2-3 rounds per minute.
*Weaknesses:* An old-fashioned rifle compared to its contemporaries.
Fulfil your civic duty. Every household must provide a worker, male or female, for civic projects like temples, libraries and festivals.

Learn how to sail a ship. Trade has sparked ship building of ships. The vessels rely on rope, not pegs or metal, to keep them together.

Have beautiful things. In this blossoming era of art, everyone is adorning themselves with fine jewellery and decorating their houses with elegant furniture.

Make your mark. A lot of what we know about this period comes from inscriptions on buildings. If you want to be remembered, a little graffiti may be in order.

Forget to see the sights. This is the era of the pyramid builders and there are many amazing sights to see in their prime like the Great Sphinx and the Great Pyramid.

Let despots rule. Pharaohs may be seen as a god on earth, but even they are subservient to Maat, the goddess of justice.

Stick around too long. This golden era will come to an end. The final blow will be when the Nile fails to flood, causing years of war, strife and hunger.

Forget your rights. Women are treated as equals - they can own their own property, free slaves, make investments and choose who to marry. They are even allowed to file for divorce.

When one thinks of Ancient Egypt, some looming structure often rush to mind - the pyramids. These huge monuments serving as tombs for kings have become an iconic symbol of the power, ingenuity and accomplishments of the ancient world. By travelling to the Old Kingdom, you have landed right in the middle of it all. Known as the Age of the Pyramids, it is during the Old Kingdom period that the art of pyramid building will be perfected and some of the most ambitious and stunning works completed.

For Egypt it is a golden era where strong leaders rule solid, stable societies. Innovative, exciting forms of art are flourishing and new, profitable trade roots are bringing in luxurious goods. This period of stability, considered a peak of civilisation, is an excellent place to explore, take in the sights, and enjoy before, like all good things, it comes to an end.

WHERE TO STAY
You want to make sure you set up camp in the hub of the action during these dynamic times and without a doubt, that is Memphis. King Djoser, the first king of the Third Dynasty of the Old Kingdom, moved the royal capital here. It is the city of the king’s court and the home of government that rules over all the separate nomes - or districts - throughout Egypt. This structure has produced stability in the city, allowing for vast building projects. Memphis is a city overflowing with action, with workshops, factories and warehouses distributing food, and it is rapidly becoming a hub of culture and trade.
WHO TO BEFRIEND

Imhotep
Although you may assume it best to make a beeline for the pharaoh, there is a far more interesting figure it would be wise to befriend. Imhotep was chancellor to Pharaoh Djoser, but he also served as high priest and, most notably, architect of the step pyramid. Imhotep most likely was also the first to use stone columns to support a building. In the future he will be worshipped as a god - one of only two commoners to earn this honour - so it is well worth making the effort to meet this living legend in the flesh.

Extra tip: Pharaoh Djoser and Imhotep were somewhat of a dream team and there’s no way you could befriend Imhotep without his powerful friend’s approval. Considering the pharaoh ordered a pyramid of stone to be built in his honour, we can assume he would react well to a little flattery.

WHO TO AVOID

Pepi II
Prior to Pepi’s reign, the power of pharaohs had begun to fade. King Teti was murdered by his own bodyguards and succeeded by a possible assassin and by the time Pepi II is on the throne the power of nomarchs (local administrators of the regions) has grown enough to challenge the kings. The cost of maintaining the monuments of previous kings weighs very heavy, and Pepi’s long and ineffectual rule is only worsening things. Pepi’s reign marks the end of the Old Kingdom and the power will fall away from the royal court to the regional leaders, who it would be far wiser to befriend than the weak, aging ruler.

Construction
The pyramids are not being built by slave labour, but instead highly skilled workers who are paid handsomely for their time. Having construction skills guarantees a job in this era of vast building projects.

Artistry
Egyptian art is flourishing in the Old Kingdom and the pieces created will be among the first to survive for generations. The ability to carve from wood, copper or stone is highly prized, with life-size statues being created, as well the production of intricate jewellery, including broad collar necklaces.

Negotiation
Trade with neighbouring nations has become very profitable and important development in the Old Kingdom. Most notably, the land of Punt has become a valuable resource of prized goods such as cedar, ebony and ivory.
If Old Ironsides had appointed a different son as his successor, the British Empire might have evolved very differently

Richard Cromwell was booted out by the army. It’s the first, and so far only, time when Britain has been governed according to the terms of a fully written constitution.

How was Cromwell’s Protectorate different from a monarchy?
One of the differences was a full written constitution. This set out in a particular document, the powers of the head of state, the powers of parliament and the powers of a permanent executive council. It set out how the state was to be funded, particularly the military. It also laid out the basis for religion, and what was to be the religious sect of the country. I believe that Oliver Cromwell, and Richard Cromwell, mostly abided by the checks and limitations by sharing the power laid out in the constitution in a way that never previously happened under a king.

What were some of the criticisms lobbed at the Protectorate?
It depends on your perspective. As a royalist, you’d detest it because you didn’t want Oliver Cromwell there, you wanted the Stuart line. Some of the other wings, the true radicals of parliamentary cause, thought the Protectorate was a bit too conservative. It was a step back, there wasn’t a king, but there was a single head of state called a Lord Protector. This was diluting a few of the pure republican aims and ambitions. They didn’t like the Protectorate, because it wasn’t a true republican system.

Like most early regimes, the Protectorate was financially in the red for most of its lifespan. Ultimately it ended up relying on important army backing. At odd times when under threat that backing became much more visible, and that offended many people. It enforced the union of Scotland and Ireland. But there were plenty in Scotland and Ireland who would never accept that.

What did the Protectorate get right?
We have, under Oliver, a head of state who was an experienced lord general of the army. So he was able to maintain the loyalty of a large standing army while still keeping them in check.

This supported a Protectoral regime both abroad and at home. Keeping tight control over both Scotland and Ireland earned respect from the other Continental states. From 1655-6, the Protectorate performed very strongly at first in an undeclared war against Spain and then, in alliance with France, in a formal war waged both in the Caribbean and in Flanders. It also ensured that there was support for – or at least no active opposition to – the Protectoral regime in the various English colonies which existed by the 1650s. Cromwell also ran an inclusive regime, which meant he tried to gain the help of old enemies. He tried to win over some of the republicans and the royalists, and the religious radicals in an effort to expand his regime.

Why did the Protectorate ultimately fail?
I don’t think there’s any sign when Oliver Cromwell lived that the Protectorate was in any real trouble. He faced issues at home and abroad but he largely resolved them. The problem is Oliver Cromwell died of natural causes on September 1658. And there was no one who was able to succeed him; who was could to be an effective civilian statesman; who was able to command the loyal trust of the massive army; and who had sufficient pedigree in parliament. I’m not one of those who thinks

What if... What if the English republic lasted beyond Cromwell?

Written by Jonathan O’Callaghan
"Cromwell also ran an inclusive regime, so he tried to bring on board old enemies"
Richard Cromwell (Oliver’s son) was a wet behind the ears dunderhead; he was intelligent and in many ways an effective figure. But I do believe his absence of military standing, his relative shortcoming of political experience and his overall lack of pedigree all ended up counting against him. Which ultimately led to the military coup of 1659 [which reinstated Charles I’s son, Charles II, as king].

**How could the Protectorate have survived beyond Oliver Cromwell’s death?**

Let’s pretend Oliver had another son who was as effective as him at commanding the army, as adept at politics as Oliver, and is old enough to have obtained some pedigree. On those bases I see no reason to believe that the Protectorate could not have continued. It might have been revised with future Protectorate parliaments - they would have presumably had to solve the finances - but there’s no collapse even under Richard financially. They could do things at home and abroad, they had quite an expansive and successful foreign policy during 1658 and 1659. I think it could have continued.

**Who else could Cromwell have appointed?**

There’s a possibility of Oliver’s youngest son, Henry Cromwell. He was an army man of sorts, he did have more considerable administrative skills and experiences than Richard, because he’d governed Ireland. Although I appreciate him, I’m not absolutely convinced about that line. I don’t believe he quite had the depth and experience in 1658 to fill the vast vacuum of his father any more than Richard did.

**What major political changes might there have been if it had continued at that pace?**

We would have had a continuation of the liberty of conscience, broad religious tolerance for Protestants. That was wiped out in 1660 when the Stuarts returned, and we have the restoration of a much narrower, more persecuting Church of England. If the Protectorate had continued untroubled long-term, the development [of the Bank of England], the state bank and parliamentary control of the finances likely wouldn’t

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### How would it be different?

**Real timeline**

1. **A new republic**
   - Parliamentary forces led by Oliver Cromwell execute King Charles I for high treason, leading to founding a new republic called the Commonwealth of England. *30 January 1649*

2. **Lord Protector seizes power**
   - Frustrated with political infighting in Parliament, Cromwell appoints himself ‘Lord Protector’ with powers akin to a monarch, with his regime propped up by his popularity with the army. *16 December 1653*

3. **Death of Cromwell**
   - After ruling for almost four years, the Lord Protector falls seriously ill and dies aged 59 on the anniversary of his great victories at Dunbar and Worcester. *16 November 1658*

**Alternate timeline**

1. **Rise of ‘Prince’ Richard**
   - Oliver’s eldest son, Richard Cromwell is quickly appointed Lord Protector, though he lacks military experience and has never played a prominent role in politics before. *September 1658*

2. **Rise of Henry**
   - Henry is favourably received by both Parliament and the army. *September 1658*

3. **Fall of the Protectorate**
   - Richard fails to unite Parliament and the army as they argue over the best way to resolve a looming financial crisis. Ultimately, the Lord Protector is forced to resign. *25 May 1659*

4. **Henry appointed**
   - On his deathbed Oliver Cromwell names his more politically experienced fourth son Henry, as his heir. Henry is favourably received by both Parliament and the army. *September 1658*

5. **Balancing the books**
   - Henry Cromwell is better able to mediate between Parliament and the army to force through the necessary spending cuts and tax restructuring to stop the Protectorate going broke. *1659*
have happened as soon as it did. I think it would also have continued with its army and strong navy. It might have run quite an expansionist, aggressive, outward looking foreign and colonial policy. That would have continued in a way that changes quite rapidly in 1660, because the Stuarts at the Restoration return to a traditional early modern monarchical foreign policy; divorcing themselves from foreign events.

What do you mean by ‘liberty of conscience’?
Cromwell and many others like him at that time - he was far from along in his active support for such measures - sought to clamp down on things such as: adultery, blasphemy, swearing, gambling and horse racing for example. These vices were either sinful in and of themselves or encouraged other sinful activities. Cromwell did not believe in allowing people the liberty to sin - he enthusiastically supported measures which would make sin more difficult. But he promoted other liberties - liberty of conscience for just about all [Protestant denominations], the free admission of the Jews, parliamentary elections and the presence of powerful parliaments, broader access to and equality before the law, a reduction in capital offences and so on. Many of these liberties were enshrined within the written constitutions.

If the Protectorate had not only survived but thrived, do you think Britain would have ever been tempted to embrace the monarchy again?
In many ways the Protectorate was better and more positive than the traditional monarchical form of government that we got back in 1660. Having a written constitution with those checks and balances laid out was also a fantastic thing. It’s a possibility that heads of state under the Protectorate might have changed the title back to the a more traditional title of king. But whether it would ever have collapsed, and people would turn to the Stuarts or some other old line claiming descent; or even whether there would have been a return at in the 17th or 18th Century to a pre-civil war monarchy, that’s a much more challenging question.

What if…
THE ENGLISH REPUBLIC LASTED BEYOND CROMWELL?

March of Monck
With the country on the cusp of civil war again, General Monck marches on London in support of Parliament, but on taking control of the city recommends the restoration of Charles II. 1 January 1660

Return of the king
On his 30th birthday, Charles II triumphantly returns to London to reclaim the English throne, met by cheering crowds. The date is celebrated annually as Royal Oak Day until 1689. 29 May 1660

Charles II dies
After acceding his brother Charles II, King James II faces growing opposition for being openly Catholic. Conspirators reach out to Charles I’s Protestant grandson, William of Orange. 6 February 1685

The Glorious Revolution
Dutch ruler William of Orange invades England, forcing James II into exile. In his absence, Parliament proclaims William and Mary (who is James’ daughter) co-ruling king and queen. 13 February 1689

Jacobite Revolts
Though his attempt to recapture Ireland is successfully put down at the Battle of the Boyne, James II and his descendants lead Irish and Scottish revolts on and off until 1746. 1 July 1690

Placating Ireland
Considered a moderating influence while Lord Deputy of Ireland, Henry might have been willing to find a diplomatic means of integrating the country into the Commonwealth, such as restoring confiscated lands of Irish Catholics. 1660

The Lord Protector rules the waves
Henry Cromwell continues his father’s expansionist regime, strengthening his army and navy to maintain order in Ireland and take new territories in the West Indies. March 1675

Charles II dies
Living out the rest of his life languishing on the continent, Charles II dies in exile. His brother James is unable to rally support for another invasion attempt. 6 February 1685

Cromwell dynasty continues
Though the country’s finest physicians keep Henry alive longer than he otherwise would have lasted, on his death his son – who had been groomed for the role – succeeds him as Lord Protector. 1690

No American Revolution
With their shared Puritan faith and fair representation in parliament, the American colonists don’t revolt but – thanks to a Pennsylvania politician in London, named Benjamin Franklin – do gain greater autonomy. 1776
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This hearty game pie took pride of place at a Medieval banquet. The grete pye (‘great pie’) was made from a variety of cooked meats such as beef, chicken or game birds, mixed with dried fruit and spices, and encased in shortcrust pastry (the word pie likely derives from ‘magpie’ because its mix of ingredients was like the random objects found in the bird’s nest). It would have been served to lords and ladies as the poor could not afford the more expensive ingredients to make it.

One of the first documented recipes of the grete pye was in the Harleian Cookbook, published in London around 1450. The pies would have generally been made over an open hearth and so the crust — known as the ‘coffin’ — would have been very hard and may not have been eaten as a result.

Although pies existed before the Middle Ages, the concept of meat pies with spices and dried fruit was introduced by crusaders returning from the Middle East and variations developed from there.

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**Did you know?**

Pies were largely savoury until the 1700s when the British established sugar colonies in the Caribbean.

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**On the Menu**

**GRETE PYE**

**BANQUET BAKING ENGLAND, 12TH CENTURY**

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**METHOD**

01 Line a nine-inch pie dish with half of the pastry. Using a pastry brush, coat it with one egg white and preheat the oven to 200°C.

02 Parboil the chicken breasts for 10-15 minutes. Drain them and then set them aside for a short while. Once they’re cool, slice them into medium-sized pieces.

03 Combine the minced beef, suet, salt, pepper, three egg yolks, and half of the spices in a bowl. In another bowl, add the rest of the spices to the dried fruit.

04 Mix the cornflour into the stock in a saucepan over a low heat and stir until the mixture has thickened. Remove the saucepan from the heat and keep it to one side.

05 Pour half of the meat mixture into the pastry dish. Arrange the slices of chicken over the top and then sprinkle the spiced fruit before pouring the thickened stock evenly over it all.

06 Roll out the rest of the pastry to add a lid to the pie. Using your fingers, press the sides closed and add some slits to the top using a sharp knife.

07 You can decorate the pie lid with shaped pastry trimmings and brush over the entire lid with the rest of the egg white to give it a glossy finish.

08 Put the pie in the oven and bake it for 15 minutes. Then turn the oven down to 160°C and bake it for a further 45 minutes. Take the pie out of the oven and leave to cool slightly before serving.

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**Ingredients**

- 450g shortcrust pastry
- 4 eggs
- 450g chicken, pigeon or duck breast, skinless
- 450g minced beef
- 2 tbsp shredded suet
- Salt and pepper
- ¼ ts cinnamon
- ¼ ts ground mace or grated nutmeg
- 1 pinch ground cloves
- 28g stoned dates
- 28g currants
- 56g stoned prunes
- ½ cup beef stock
- 1 tbsp cornflour

Makes 6-8 slices

© Getty

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**Did you make it? Let us know!**

[www.historyanswers.co.uk](http://www.historyanswers.co.uk)  /AllAboutHistory  @AboutHistoryMag
In 1839, Britain and China went to war after the Chinese stopped the British East India Company from smuggling opium into the country. But the Chinese were no match for the Royal Navy and they were ultimately forced to surrender ports to Britain and other foreign powers.

This marked the beginning of the end for the once mighty Qing dynasty, and in the wake of the First Opium War a new era of European interference in China - known as the ‘Century of Humiliation’ by the Chinese - was heralded. The ultimately led to the rise and dominance of communism as China emerged from centuries of dynastic rule.

Such is the canvas for Stephen R Platt’s masterful new book, Imperial Twilight: The Opium War And The End of China’s Last Golden Age. This is a vast and sprawling topic telling a story that stretches from one side of the globe to the other. It encompasses tales of politics and personality and a clashing of cultures that would prove to be disastrous.

Analysing the decades before the war began, Platt examines the different landscapes of China and the West, and ably demonstrates the lapses in communication and instances of manipulation that ultimately led to war. It is a story not just of armed conflict, but of the shifting sands of ambition among politicians, businessmen and those who saw a chance of bottomless wealth in the rich pickings of Chinese ports.

Platt ably navigates this tumultuous period in Chinese history, and the exhaustive research that has clearly gone into this new analysis of the Opium Wars is evident on every evocative page, but to his credit it never becomes overpowering. Likewise, with a cast that runs the gamut from missionaries and well-meaning but hopelessly confused British courtiers to the first celebrity drug barons, Platt shows that his talent for scene-setting is more than matched by his ability to bring to life the players in this fascinating era.

Taking in the wider influence of opium across China and the rest of the world, Platt offers some fascinating insights into how politicians and officials attempted to control the growing scourge of addiction while juxtaposing this with the riches that might be gained by those who had a stake in the trade. Yet this is more than a simple East-versus-West tale of politics and intrigue; it is the story of an era the ramifications of which still echo down the centuries to this very day.

Imperial Twilight is a weighty book, but despite its substantial length, the tale contains no fat in its telling. The revisionist narrative challenges some long-held beliefs around the Opium Wars, and paints the portrait of a world where all is peace and profit until the first shots are fired in a conflict that was, until the last vote was counted in Parliament, avoidable.

This book is indispensable for historians of China and imperialism, but in all honesty its audience should be much wider than that. It is an irresistible story of greed and mismanagement, of cultures that met and, ultimately, clashed.

Accessible, exhaustive and compelling, Imperial Twilight might also contain a few lessons that the politicians and decision makers of today could do well to learn.

This history of the Opium Wars is an engaging and essential read.
Let’s not beat around the bush – if you’re into mythology, you’re going to want this book. The cover is wonderfully simple and it clocks in at over 300 pages packed full of stories, figures and images from ancient Greece to Indigenous America. The inside is vibrant, and the introductory spreads to the major myths are bold and a welcome reprieve from the amount of information.

Split neatly into geographical sections with a handy contents section at the front, it’s easy to use this as a reference book, which is exactly what the publisher is aiming for. When you read each myth, they start with a box outlining the themes, settings, key figures and primary sources, providing the perfect springboard for those going on to do their own research.

One criticism could perhaps be that the book doesn’t really do anything new with the myths – like others that have come before it, it seems to just be a rehashing of the main tales by high-level academics. However, it’s what is done outside the myths that makes the difference. With asides on writers like Virgil, timelines to illustrate points and rituals that go alongside the stories, there’s more here than meets the eye. What is especially pleasing is that instead of just covering ancient civilisations or Aztec myths, it covers a bit of everything – perfect to flick through on a lazy evening or to find something specific when you’re in a hurry.

All in all, there’s not much to fault. Whether you want to sing of arms and the man or meet the weaver of life, it’s unlikely you’ll be disappointed.
From Jaws to Twilight, sequels rarely live up to the originals. Though the same can’t always be said for monarchs – we’d take George VI over any of the Georgians – this is often how Napoleon III is treated. While his uncle is both romanticised and vilified as one of Europe’s greatest conquerors, Louis-Napoleon Bonaparte is frequently overlooked. However, in The Shadow Emperor, the Pulitzer Prize-nominated biographer Alan Strauss-Schom argues that we should look again.

In the first chronicle of Napoleon III’s life in 20 years, Strauss-Schom makes a compelling case. While Louis-Napoleon did not plot to overthrow Europe, he also did not kill over a million French soldiers or live in a constant state of war. Instead, Napoleon III sought to remake mid-19th century France as a prosperous nation, and did just that. He built a railway that rivalled Victorian England’s, created new transoceanic steamship lines and a modern navy, and redesigned Paris, introducing the straight tree-lined boulevards it is now famous for.

However, the author is not blind to Louis-Napoleon’s flaws. While he introduced a revolutionary new banking sector, giving the middle class access to capital and mortgages, it was also beset by corruption. While his military approved of his expansion of the empire, his invasion of Mexico was an abject failure, and he was famously defeated by the Prussians in 1870.

In this thoroughly researched read, Strauss-Schom reveals Napoleon III was keen to surpass the legacy of his famous forebear and – perhaps for the first time – reveals exactly how he achieved his goal.

Garlands, it seems, aren’t always about manicured lawns and fragrant flowers, for among the blooms and bees lurk some of nature’s most deadly weapons. In Death In The Garden: Poisonous Plants And Their Use Throughout History, poison, medicine and spirituality combine to tell the stories of some familiar plants that have eye-opening applications.

Michael Brown’s book certainly delivers on its titular promise of poisons, but there’s much more to this volume than that. Brown begins with a history of killer greenery and looks at humankind’s morbid fascination with not only cultivating them, but also protecting ourselves from their dangers. From food tasters to murderers via witch’s brews, poisoned clothing and the spiritual beliefs associated with toxic plants, these opening chapters are a useful primer.

The main focus, however, is on the catalogue of poisonous plants that occupy the majority of the book. Richly illustrated with colourful photographs, the history of each plant is complemented by growing tips and examples of their toxins being put to use, with examples drawn from a variety of sources. There’s even a chapter on how to grow your own venomous verdure.

Brown is undoubtedly an expert on his subject, and this is a highly entertaining book that will appeal to a range of readers. Whether you’re a keen gardener, an author of mysteries looking for your next murder weapon or simply intrigued by this fascinating subject, there is much to enjoy in this glossy and informative book.
ALL THE MONEY IN THE WORLD
Money rules everything - even family

**Certificate:** 15 **Director:** Ridley Scott **Cast:** Michelle Williams, Christopher Plummer, Mark Wahlberg, Romain Duris, Charlie Plummer **Released:** Out now

The fascinating, frequently hard-to-believe and ultimately tragic story of billionaire tycoon J Paul Getty may be unknown to many today. In *All The Money In The World*, master of cinema Ridley Scott brings Getty's legacy - and infamy - to the fore.

Framed within the famous 1973 kidnapping of his grandson John Paul Getty III, referred to as Paul, we get to know Getty senior through the perspective of Gail Harris, Paul's mother and Getty's son's ex-wife. One late night in Rome, Paul is kidnapped by a mysterious group of people, who demand $17 million in ransom for his release. Gail, who renounced any claim to the Gettys' money in the divorce with John Paul Getty II, is forced to stand strong on her own two feet, but her intensity here rivals even her strongest roles in an already illustrious career.

Michelle Williams is electrifying in the role of the stubborn, curmudgeonly and slowly unravelling Getty. Famously replacing Kevin Spacey in the role only a month before its theatrical release, he makes you forget all about that within the first couple of scenes, drawing you into his self-obsessed mausoleum of a life with the ease of a true acting powerhouse.

The supporting roles are well executed too, especially Mark Wahlberg as ex-CIA spymaster Fletcher Chase, who Getty hires to find and free his grandson (preferably without paying the kidnappers a dime) and Charlie Plummer (no relation to Christopher) as the young Paul. The latter in particular develops a fascinating relationship with his captor, Romain Duris' Cinquanta, who delivers an understated but captivating performance.

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The narrative, constructed from John Pearson's biography *Painfully Rich*, flows along with Scott's signature ease, the tension building from conversation to conversation, interspersed with abrupt scenes of violent action, making for a very entertaining watch.

Where the film falters a bit, especially for us history fans, is that it takes a lot of creative licence when it comes to historical accuracy. Many details of the kidnapping are changed, presumably to serve the narrative, even though keeping to the facts would have had an equal effect on the viewer. In addition, the story of Getty's deteriorating health is brought forward several years to coincide with the kidnapping, which feels contrived. Nevertheless, *All The Money In The World* opens a pocket of history that feels contrived. Nevertheless, *All The Money In The World* opens a pocket of history that may have been lost or forgotten to us – a similar feat is Christopher Plummer's portrayal of the stubborn, curmudgeonly and slowly unravelling Getty. Famously replacing Kevin Spacey in the role only a month before its theatrical release, he makes you forget all about that within the first couple of scenes, drawing you into his self-obsessed mausoleum of a life with the ease of a true acting powerhouse.

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An intense and often unsettling portrait of a troubled family's darkest hour.

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Michelle Williams is electrifying in the role of the driven Gail, seamlessly embodying a woman who has been forced to stand strong on her own two feet, but now faces overwhelming odds. Williams rarely puts on flamboyant performances - she doesn't have to, her intensity here rivals even her strongest roles in an already illustrious career.

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The fascinating, frequently hard-to-believe and ultimately tragic story of billionaire tycoon J Paul Getty may be unknown to many today. In *All The Money In The World*, master of cinema Ridley Scott brings Getty's legacy - and infamy - to the fore.

Framed within the famous 1973 kidnapping of his grandson John Paul Getty III, referred to as Paul, we get to know Getty senior through the perspective of Gail Harris, Paul's mother and Getty's son's ex-wife. One late night in Rome, Paul is kidnapped by a mysterious group of people, who demand $17 million in ransom for his release. Gail, who renounced any claim to the Gettys' money in the divorce with John Paul Getty II, has no money, so desperately seeks the elusive old man's help. In a surprising move to everyone except those who knew Getty, he refuses to pay a dime for his grandson's release. Gail's ensuing quest to free Paul becomes increasingly desperate, while the pressure on Getty to pay mounts almost daily. Meanwhile, Paul's peril in captivity soon becomes almost overwhelming for the unhardened young man.

Michelle Williams is electrifying in the role of the driven Gail, seamlessly embodying a woman who has been forced to stand strong on her own two feet, but now faces overwhelming odds. Williams rarely puts on flamboyant performances - she doesn't have to, her intensity here rivals even her strongest roles in an already illustrious career.
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The film sugarcoats the main character, Phineas Taylor Barnum, played by Hugh Jackman. It glosses over the fact that he exploited his workers, many of whom were discriminated against for their race or disabilities, rather than empowering them.

Though it forms the emotional heart of the film, the love story between Barnum’s protégé Philip and trapeze artist Anne never occurred in real life. This is because both characters, played by Zac Efron and Zendaya respectively, are entirely fictitious.

In the film, Barnum approaches a dwarf named Charles Stratton to join the show when he is 22 years old. In reality, Stratton was only four. Better known by his stage name, General Tom Thumb, he went onto become an international celebrity.

There was never a romance between Barnum and the Swedish opera singer Jenny Lind, as is depicted in the film. Barnum instead was devoted to his wife Charity in real life, as she was to him, and they were never temporarily estranged.

Just like in the movie, Barnum’s American Museum really did burn down in a fire in 1865. The exact cause of the fire remains unknown, although it was more likely down to Barnum’s pro-Unionist sympathies rather than opposition to his performers.
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Perhaps more than any other, the name Messerschmitt is associated with the fearsome might of the German Luftwaffe and the danger Britain faced during the dark days of the Second World War. It has become synonymous with the air battles that raged in the skies above Europe and is often used as a catchword to describe all enemy aircraft that fought against the Allied air forces during WWII. At the very forefront of aviation design during the 1930s and 40s, Messerschmitt were responsible for producing some of the most significant aircraft in the history of aviation.

From the first flight of the diminutive Bf 109 fighter in May 1935, Messerschmitt continued to be at the forefront of innovative aircraft design. The incredible Bf 109 series of fighters remained in continuous production throughout WWII and its record of being the most heavily produced fighter aircraft in history is unlikely to ever be challenged. With advanced aircraft such as the Me 163 Komet rocket fighter and the incomparable Me 262 jet coming after the classic Bf 109, the name Messerschmitt will always be linked with cutting edge aviation designs from this famous German manufacturer.

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