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Welcome

Our story of history is written in documents and books, so it is never to be seen in front of you. Tonight, we will be seeing history in front of you.

Welcome to the new issue of *History Today*. We are thrilled to bring you a new era of historical storytelling, where we explore the past in a way that is both engaging and accessible.

In this issue, we have a special focus on women in history, with a feature on Catherine of Aragon, the first queen of England. We also explore the life of Queen Elizabeth I, her reign, and the challenges she faced.

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Editor's picks

- Imperial Legacy
- Van Gogh: Life and Passion
- The Favourite

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DEFFING MOMENTS

RECTORY REFORM
A growing movement within the Church of England for the ordination of women finally won over in March 1994. The move was made without opposition from conservative clerics, leading to tripartite group, but was part of a third of those groups, made a descent in 1994.

1994
DEFINING MOMENTS

SUCK SHAME

Almost nine million gallons of crude oil was spilled into the Prince William Sound off the coast of Alaska after the Exxon Valdez oil tanker struck Bligh Reef in March 1989. The oil spread more than 1,000 square miles of coastline and 1,000 square miles of sea. The Exxon Valdez was a particularly challenging environmental disaster to remediate. It's estimated that between 50,000 and 200,000 seabirds were killed.

1989
DEFINING MOMENTS

A FAST FOR FREEDOM
One of the most powerful acts in Mahatma Gandhi's struggle for India's independence and social justice was putting his own life on the line in protest through fasting. Mahatma Gandhi undertook 17 fasts during the freedom movement against British imperial rule. He once even went 72 hours without food to protest the injustice of the British to force political reforms.

1939
“Whoever possesses Constantinople ought to rule the world”

https://es.wikipedia.org
ALL ABOUT

THE OTTOMAN EMPIRE

From its great architectural wonders, to the echoes of the empire that still exist today, we take a look at one of the most powerful and long-lasting forces in history.

Written by Katherine Worth, Alice James Brown, Nurwan Kanell

- Inside the Topkapı Palace
- Anatomy of a Janissary
- Rebels against the empire
- Explore Ottoman mosques
Ottoman Rise & Fall

Positioned at the gateway between Europe and Asia, the Ottoman Empire ruled victorious for 600 years until it crashed and burned.

A NEW BEGINNING
Under the leadership of a man called Osmán, a Seljuk Turk, a new empire is founded on Anatolia. It is named the Ottoman Empire, after its first sultan who creates the Imperial House of Osmán.

FALL OF GALLIPOLI
Ottomans fail to take the area, which is their first victory in resisted Europe. More to follow.

A SHRINKING EMPIRE
The Ottoman Empire slowly loses more and more territory, including modern-day Romania, Serbia, and Bulgaria. The empire becomes known as the Sick Man of Europe.

CRIMEAN WAR ENDS
Russia invades the Crimea, which is under the control of the Ottomans. The Turks will force Russia to withdraw, after pulling in other European powers.

GREEK WAR OF INDEPENDENCE
Following a Greek uprising against Ottoman rule, the Greeks begin a war of independence. The Greeks win this thirty-year conflict thanks to intervention from European nations.

LONDON STRAITS CONVENTION
A treaty is signed between the European powers, Russia and the Ottoman Empire to ensure the freedom of shipping through the Turkish Straits, connecting the Mediterranean to the Black Sea.

BALKAN WARS
Prior to the conflict, the Ottomans held 169,300 square kilometres of land in Europe—most of which they lost in 1912.

2 MILITARY CONFLICTS
Macedonia is divided among 3 COUNTRIES: Greece, Serbia, and Bulgaria.

YOUNG TURKS STAGE A COUP
A nationalist revolutionary group, the Young Turks take power by force, creating unrest among the empire's many minorities. They try to modernise the Ottoman state but their foreign policy is a disaster.

WORLD WAR I
When war breaks out across Europe, the Ottomans join the Germans. However, things go badly for them during the conflict and they lose hundreds of thousands of soldiers.
**Timeline**

**AN ALBANIAN HERO**
1443
- By organizing a rebellion against the Ottomans, the Albanian Marquis of Vlora manages to drive the Ottomans back. Over 1,000 books have been written about him since 20 languages.

**INTO CONSTANTINOPLE**
- Under the leadership of Sultan Bayezid II, the Ottoman forces lay siege to Constantinople, where the last remnants of the Eastern Roman Empire hold out. The Ottoman forces finally succeed in taking Constantinople and make it their new capital.

**SELM I TAKES SYRIA, ARABIA, PALESTINE AND EGYPT**
- The Ottoman Sultan Selim I gains more land, taking Syria in 1516 and Egypt the following year under Sultan Selim II.

**BATTLE OF VIENNA**
- Having failed to take Vienna several times before, the Ottomans attempt to take the city once more. They are defeated and they never try to seize Vienna again.

**CONQUEST OF TUNIS**
- With the Spanish Empire holding Tunis, up to 500,000 Spaniards lay siege to the city. The Spanish surrender in November and the Ottomans take over.

**SULEIMAN THE MAGNIFICENT**
- Suleiman reigns for 46 years, becoming the most powerful Muslim leader in history. He expands to the Levant, Spain, and Central Asia.

**THE ARMENIAN GENOCIDE**
- The facts are still uncertain today, but in 1915, 1.5 million Armenians are killed. Most of those who aren't killed are driven through the hostile mountains and deserts with no food, water or shelter.

**THE ARAB REVOLT**
- The Ottoman error in Mecca in 1926, but claims that he is fighting against the nationalism in Istanbul, not the sultan. The British see this as the perfect time to invade Jerusalem, and they take the holy city.

**ROAD TO THE REPUBLIC**
- The revolution is established on 1 Nov 1922.
- The French leave by the following year and they captured Jerusalem on December 28th, 1922.
- The British leave by the following year and they captured Jerusalem on December 28th, 1922.
- The republic is proclaimed on 29 October 1923 with Mustafa Kemal as the new president.
Harem
The harem was where traditionally female members of the sultan’s family lived. Women, concubines, also their own mother and children lived within its impermeable walls. More than 300 rooms, plus a host of other buildings, made up the harem. In the 16th century, the sultan himself (Murad II) moved into the harem, preferring its security and closer proximity to his family. The harem was for a cry from the rustic brothels populated by Western art - it was a place of worthy, ritual cleanliness, court intrigues and family life as well as sex.

Tower of Justice
The tallest part of the Topkapi Palace, it watches over the Bosporus and is visible from miles away. It is one of the newer additions to the palace, as it was constructed only after a fire in 1503 had destroyed a significant part of Mehmed II’s original buildings. It was adjacent to the Divan (the place where the Imperial Council had meetings), so the Sultan had a gate installed so he could sit and listen to proceedings from the next room.

Mosque of the Agas
Built at a diagonal angle so that it could face Mecca, the Mosque of the Agas is the oldest mosque in the Topkapi complex, as it was built in the time of Mehmed II. It was reserved for the elite – only the Sultan, white-scarfed and students of the Inner Palace School were allowed to use it. Nowadays, it holds the manuscripts originally held in Ahmed III’s library.

Divan
Built from cunning white marble and adorned with green and gold, the Divan was the place where the Imperial Council would meet four times a week. This was undeniably one of the most important places in the entire palace. Once meetings were over, on some days scores could précis notes to the Grand Vizier – the man who was only one step below the Sultan.

Outer Treasury
This red brick building is now a weapons museum, containing Abbasid and Umayyad arms as well as a vast range of Ottoman ones. However, it used to be the official treasury of the Ottoman Empire, containing vast quantities of gold and silver used to keep the Sultan’s coffers well stocked. The money made was used to pay the Sultan’s personal soldiers, as well as sending funds to the holy cities of Mecca and Medina.

Gate of Salutation
This gate now forms the main entrance to the Topkapi Palace museum and was one of Mehmed II’s original features. However, the two iconic towers either side of the gate were added by Sultan Selim the Magnificent in the 16th century. It divides the First Courtyard – where visitors can tour – from the Second, where only those who were invited by the palace proper. The inscription above the iron gate reads the Ottoman phrase “There is no god but God. Muhammad is the prophet of God.”
Kiosks
In the Fourth Courtyard, you’ll find a number of pavilions and small buildings called kiosks, constructed in a range of architectural styles. Some were built to commemorate famous military victories, such as at Yozgat and Mihmadali, and others were built purely for the Sultan’s pleasure. The newest one, the Bedesten Kiosk, was built in 1629 by the same architect who designed the Dikalikica Palace.

Library of Ahmed III
Built in the early 18th century by the then-living Sultan Ahmed III, this library once contained manuscripts works from all reaches of the Ottoman Empire, including Greek and Slavic manuscripts. Members of the Ottoman court were free to use the library, though removing any of the books from its shelves meant harsh punishment.

Audience Hall
Here, the Sultan would receive important guests, such as state scholars, foreign ambassadors, and state officials. In this room, he would be informed of the decisions made by the Imperial Council and he would be shown from their meetings, overseeing the governance of the entire empire. Its sumptuous interior was designed to reflect the might of the Empire, and impress all those who stepped within its walls.

Gate of Felicity
The gate of Felicity served as the main entrance to the Sultan’s private residence, where he would retreat to at the end of a long and hard day’s work. As well as serving this purpose, it also had a ceremonial role, and could be used as a place to pay homage to the Sultan. During enthronement ceremonies, the Ottoman throne would be symbolically cut in front of the gate. The throne would also be placed there when discontent in the Empire was brewing, as the Sultan would receive his loyal ministers within the confines of the Second Courtyard.

Inside History

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Inside History

The Topkapi Palace
Istanbul, Turkey, 1460-1478
In almost 400 years of its history, Istanbul’s cornice Topkapi Palace grew so important that it eventually operated as a city within a city, housing thousands at a time. It wasn’t just the Sultan’s opulent residence – it was the heart of Ottoman society, acting as its high-security administrative centre, royal court, and even an entertainment venue.

The Topkapi Palace sits pride of place at the top of a hill overlooking the Bosphorus, Golden Horn, and Sea of Marmara. The site was strategically important, and in the days of Byzantium was used as Constantinople’s very own Acropolis. When the Ottoman Turks conquered the city in 1453, they destroyed much of it, but new ruler Mehmed II recognised the site’s potential.

He designed and constructed the Topkapi Palace according to his own vision. The palace featured four courtyards, each serving a different function. However, Mehmed II himself only lived there for three years, as he died in 1481. His successors made their own breaks, resulting in a vast range of architectural styles within the walls.

Any unwary Ottoman official was permitted to enter the First Courtyard, allowing a thriving trade to spring up within the palace grounds. The Second Courtyard was where governmental business took place. The Third and Fourth courtyards were the most secret, and incorporated the Sultan’s private quarters. Inside the complex, you’d find mosques, government buildings, libraries, living space and vast collections of armour, weapons, jewellery and pottery.

But while the newly restored Topkapi remained crucial to the Ottoman capital for hundreds of years, the Empire needed essentially to occupy the Topkapi’s capacity. In 1856, the Sultan moved himself and his government to the newer Fatih Palace, leaving the Topkapi with only a few functions. However, after the collapse of the Ottoman Empire, it has found a new lease of life as a museum, receiving over 3 million visitors per year.
**BORN HAT**
Their long, floppy wigs and far was draped somehow in the shape of the 78, the special mohawk. Their red cap (cap) was on the helmet and held in place. Rivalries between the Ottoman and the natural world allowed the Janissary to be built with pride and strength.

**MUSKET**
Early adoption of firearms, the Janissary also overwhelmed their environment. The hand-held weapons, the flintlock muskets, allowed them to move quickly and efficiently, whether they were using their teeth or using their hands in a room.

**HIRKA**
From the days when the Janissary Christianized their religion, they had to be literate. Hikma, the first copy of the Qur’an, can be highly distrusted and leaves its mark on the heart. In contrast to the Christians and Muslims of the period, they were only slightly colored and slightly colored.

**KILIC**
Most effective at a distance, the Janissary were lightly armed for mobility. If that failed, they turned to their primary weapons, the bow and arrow. Kılıç, a long, curved sword, was used to cut down the enemy. Since they were also used as secondary weapons, they could be used as primary weapons when necessary.

**YATAĞAN**
Arms were placed into the Janissary’s hand, they would use their primary weapon as a secondary weapon. The Janissary’s weapon is a combination of a sword and a bow. When used as a primary weapon, it was used for defense.

**POWDER HORN AND AMMUNITION**
In their hands, the Janissary were lightly armed for mobility. They were able to move quickly, whether they were using their teeth or using their hands in a room. Powder horns were used to hold the powder and balls, prior to loading into the musket.

**OUTER WEAR**
In 16th century Ottoman diplomatic Di Hakiçibey, observed that the Janissary’s clothing was characterized by the elements of their location and climate. Therefore, they had a wide variety of coats, and coats, with embossed embroidery on every corner.
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Hall of Fame

THE OTTOMAN EMPIRE REBELS

The Empire’s reign was as volatile as it was long. Fraught throughout with widespread rebellion, these forces would come to unravel it.

LASKARINA BOBOULINA

ANKARAGA “ELLIANABULOS” - EASTERN ORTHODOX 1871-1885

Not to disappoint her father who was imprisoned for participating in a Russian aided Greek uprising in 1870, this fanatical social reformer, born in a prison, at 15, trained in military tactics and engaged some armed units and commanded a fleet against the Ottomans during the war. As a result of her activities, Sultan Abdur Rahman I awarded her the honorary title of Admiral, making her the first woman to hold it.

MARYANA MARRASH

 SYRIAN - BAHASA 1815-1900

Marya on this list famed as the Schaum, Marash implored intellectual revolution. Part of the Nubia (Syrian) literary movement, she was the first woman published in the Arabic language. She joined the traditions of sultans, composing original verse and discussing ideas in both Western and Eastern literatures. Along with her Turkish contemporaries contributing to the magazine Kamel – at the center of the Young Turk movement – she represented an undercurrent of Ottoman feminism championing future rights.

SULTAN PASHA AL’ATRASH

SYRIAN - DURZI 1880-1912

This hero of Syrian nationalism fought for independence in the Levant, not only from the Ottomans but also the succeeding French occupation, and even the Syrian government during a time of contentious dictatorships. After his father led a bloodily suppressed revolt in Damascus, al’Atrash developed a network of Arab nationalists across the region. In 1917, the forces were the first to enter Damascus and hung the Arab Revolt flag, but the lesson he learned fighting the Ottomans meant his influence would carry well into the 20th century as he used similar campaigns against other powers.

SKANDERBEJ

ALBANIAN 1465-1566

This Albanian hero was pursued in the Balkan mountains by the Ottomans multiple times for over 25 years. At the worth of his power, its loss, from a noble Albanian family, he was sent as a diplomatic tribute and continued in Ottoman service until the battle of Vlore in 1465, where he was killed in battle. He used false papers from Sultan Murat II to take over Egypt and then Egypt to allying with local leaders called the League of Gastein. Then battling this with Suleiman and other Turks, he repelled both Muslim and Christian onslaughts. During the Siege of Vlore he even repelled an army ten times in size. Finally in 1468, he died of malnutrition and strepococcal fever over the defense of Albania for a subsequent decade.
SHEIKH BEDREDDIN
Turkish-sounding Muslim mystic (1629-1642)
Sheikh Bedreddin caliph mystic favored pantheism in the west of Ibn al-Arabi. His insistence on unity of all things meant that all religions preached the same message: that spiritual and physical were inseparable, and even that all property should be communal. His revolt in 1640 was crushed by Bayezid Pasha, but left long-lasting ideological and political consequences. The Ottomans were forced away from a Muslim identity and more towards an Ottoman identity that leaned towards assimilating minorities. His teachings lived on through Sufi orders like the Bektashis, and he was championed by modern Leftists.

ISMAIL ENVER PASHA
Turk-Saladinian (1881-1922)
The most powerful man in the Empire’s final days, Enver Pasha was part of the Committee of Union and Progress’s Three Pashas triumvirate. Merged with the Young Turks, they seized 1908 parliamentary majorities, and staged a 1912 coup. Initially moderate reform-minded, wishing to restore the Empire’s former glory, their policies of “participation under the suzerainty of Otomanium,” ultimately lead to the 1915 Armenian Genocide. As Minister of War, he allied with Germany in 1914.

KABAKO MUSTAFA
Turk-Saladinian (1791-1808)
Little is known about his early life, but in 1807 Mustafa was an officer of a Yavuz unit defending the Bosphorus against Crimean prince. As Sultan Selim III began his Modern-Globo reforming forces according to French standards, they revolted and killed a minister over new style uniforms. Kabako Mustafa reached Constantinople and was supported by Janissaries. They imprisoned the Sultan and terrorists assassinated him even they installed his cousin Mustafa IV.

HAMPTURSIAM BOYAJAN
Armenian
As other Ottoman minorities acted, independence, Armenia remained loyal. However, non-nationalist sentiments stirred in the 1908, who supported the Young Turks in the Rele-Tehirli War. Armenian wavers and Muslim minorities were sent to the west in Eastern Anatolia, in 1915. Armenian leaders remained there. He was captured, tortured, and killed by Turks, then released and was elected to parliament representing Armenia. Ottoman authorities hung him in 1917.

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MUTHALLIR 'ALI PASHA
Albanian - Beratian (1765-1816)
Muhammad Ali Pasha, the Khedive of Egypt, saw himself as the successor to the decaying Ottoman Empire, rather than its vassal. In 1805, he and a contingent of Albanian mercenaries invaded Syria, all in a three-week civil war ensuing from Napoleon’s withdrawal from Egypt. In 1814, he launched an outright war with Sultan Mahmud II took Ottoman Syria, and temporarily captured part of southern Syria itself. Declaring independence in 1839. In 1840, the Italian war troops in crush him, butInstead Ali came out on top. His Dynasty continued until the 1955 coup d’etat by Gamal Abdel Nasser.

KARADOBE
Serbian - Eastern Orthodoxy (1706-1817)
Following the 1800s annexation of Venetian-Mustafa Pasha in Belgrade and the 1830s insurmountable local Serbian rulers by ‘engaged’ Janissaries, competitors elected Sandrobe (Vilige Georgie) to lead their uprising. Named for his handsome, fiery temper, among friends and foe alike, he succeeded famously. Eventually, Sandrobe’s death in 1816 and the Ottoman brutally crushed the unorganized rebels. Built a town of better life, and Karadobe’s head was eventually impaled for a week-long display in Constantinople.

Hall of Fame

Although ethnically Albanian, Muhammad Ali Pasha would oversee a sort of literary, artistic, and economic renaissance in Egypt, including its world-famous cotton industry.
Q&A With...

ALEV SCOTT

THE AUTHOR AND JOURNALIST TALKS US THROUGH HER MODERN JOURNEY AROUND THE OTTOMAN EMPIRE’S FORMER REALMS

ALEV SCOTT
OTTOMAN ODYSSEY
TRAVELS THROUGH A LOST EMPIRE

Ottoman Odyssey is out now from Riverrun

Alev Scott is of Turkish and British descent, raised and speaking in the lift before working as a journalist in Turkey where she chronicled the changing political climate and attempted military coup in 2016. She has since been relocated by the Turkish government and currently cannot return to her adopted home.
Q&A with...

1. **Your Book OTTOMAN ODYSSEY CHRONICLED A JOURNEY AROUND THE OTTOMAN EMPIRE’S FORMER LANDS. WHEN YOU STARTED THIS BOOK, WHAT WERE YOU HOPING TO FIND?**  
   
2. I was looking for social and cultural traces of the Empire but to be honest, I wanted to keep an open mind about what I would find—these things are difficult to predict or even to define until you’ve really talked to people and understood local conceptions of history. I went through 12 countries, so it was quite a journey.

3. **WERE THERE MANY PLACES WHERE THE INFLUENCE OF THE OTTOMANS WAS CLEARLY STILL FELT VERY STRONGLY?**  
   
4. Yes, I would say the Balkans were the most striking area in terms of Ottoman influence—both in the current Turkish government’s assertion and promotion of important Ottoman symbols, for example, and also in the political tensions simmering over a hundred years since the collapse of the Empire in this area. Palestine and more obvious places like Cyprus were also interesting in terms of lingering linguistic ties.

5. **WHILE MANY EMPIRES THROUGH HISTORY TENDED TO WANT TO IMPOSE HOMOGENEITY, THE OTTOMAN EMPIRE IS KNOWN FOR REMAINING FAIRLY DIVERSE. DID YOU FIND THAT TO BE TRUE AS YOU Explored?**  
   
6. I did. The territories of the Empire were and are still hugely diverse, and the Ottomans, for the most part, allowed local elites to be practiced instead of imposing Islam. However, local perceptions of the nature of this diversity vary widely, some citizens of former territories think of the Empire as tolerant, others not so much.

7. **WHAT ELEMENTS OF THE EMPIRE, IF ANY, DID YOU FIND THAT SEEMED TO HAVE BEEN MAINTAINED THROUGHOUT THE DIFFERENT REGIONS?**  
   
8. Until the end of the empire, a principle of toleration coupled with a demand for strict obedience to the Sultan. Architectural style in some places. And of course, elements of language that remain today.

9. **HOW MUCH OF A CONNECTION DID YOU FIND BETWEEN THE COUNTRIES YOU VISITED AND TURKEY?**  
   
10. I would say mainly in terms of language and elements of culture like cuisine, which are strongly represented in Greece and much of the Levant.

11. **DO YOU FIND THAT CONTEMPORARY RELATIONS WITH TURKEY WERE AFFECTED MUCH BY FEELINGS ABOUT THE EMPIRE?**  
   
12. To an extent, yes—this is something that runs rather on religious grounds, for example, the Muslims in the Balkans. It’s not that I was talking to people and understanding the past through their eyes.

13. **IN THE LATE 19TH CENTURY, MUSLIM AND JEWISH BABIES WERE BREASTFEEDED BY WOMEN OF THE OTHER RELIGION.**  
   
14. The “milk siblings” of Jerusalem really surprised me. The Muslim and Jewish babies were breastfed by women of the other religion in the late 19th and early 20th century when the region was still under Ottoman control, as a matter of convenience between neighboring families. It was a practice that stood as a symbol of acceptance and friendship between the two religions—something that would be astonishing today.

15. **THE BOOK IS ALSO A CHRONICLE OF THE PEOPLE YOU MET AND THEIR STORIES. DID YOU FIND IN THEM SOME SENSE OF A SHARED HERITAGE?**  
   
16. Absolutely. All the elements I’ve mentioned—linguistic and cultural ties. Personally, as someone with Turkish Cypriot heritage, I found affinity with some people I did not expect to find that was probably the greatest gift of researching this book.

17. **AFTER FINISHING THE BOOK, DID YOU FIND THAT YOUR UNDERSTANDING OF THE EMPIRE HAD CHANGED AT ALL?**  
   
18. Yes. I had known before I set out that empire is not just about asserting power, about the political control of other people—but I only knew it naturally. I actually saw what that meant in real terms when I was travelling and talking to people, and understanding the past through their eyes.
**Places to Explore**

**OTTOMAN MOSQUES**

Visit these feats of supreme architecture in the Islamic world.

1. **BLUE MOSQUE**
   - **ISTANBUL**
   - Perhaps one of Istanbul’s most famous buildings, the Blue Mosque, also known as the Sultan Ahmed Mosque after its imperial creator, is nothing short of stunning. Its minarets and domes grace a unique silhouette on the Istanbul skyline, making the mosque able to hold its own in beauty next to its neighbour Haghia Sophia.
   - Built under the orders of Sultan Ahmed I, who reigns the Ottoman Empire from 1603 to 1617 and is buried there, this mosque was certainly a statement. Architect Sinan Saraf also designed the Hagia Sophia, and his design skills played host to six minarets—more than any other mosque at the time—and the courtyard was the biggest in any mosque throughout the empire. However, none of this is what’s famous for today. The mosque’s interior is decorated with tens of thousands of blue Iznik tiles, giving the building its nickname, and 260 windows let in natural light that allows you to see the inside as its glory.

   The Blue Mosque is open every day, but admission is not allowed during prayer hours or until 10:30 am on Fridays. Entrance is free. [www.sultanahmetmosque.org](http://www.sultanahmetmosque.org)

2. **MOSQUE OF MUHAMMAD ALI**
   - **CAIRO**
   - Although not built by a sultan, the Mosque of Muhammad Ali in Egypt’s capital is no less Ottoman. While Muhammad Ali, an Ottoman commander who became viceroy of Egypt, was trying to act independently of Istanbul in the mid-19th century, his architectural style actually ended up being very similar. The building took about 18 years to be completed, and it’s easy to see why—it’s massive. The interior of the mosque measures a staggering 41 meters square, and the spacious remittances of its counterparts back in Istanbul. What is most impressive, however, is the main dome, which reaches 47 meters in the sky, with a diameter no less than 21 meters. That certainly isn’t the only dome this mosque boasts, though, with four half-domes and four further smaller domes.
   - These are amongst the minarets that rise up 80 meters on bases that are only three meters wide. This mosque also has a marbled, which houses small arcades sheltered by their own domes.
   - Inside the mosque is just as grand as outside, with vibrant golds and reds costing from every corner. Egyptians have taken a lot of pride in this building since its creation in 1840-48, and you certainly can’t fault their taste.

   The Mosque of Muhammad Ali is open daily from 5 am to 5 pm, and entry is $10.
Mustafa Pasha Mosque

The Mosque is located in Skopje, the capital of Macedonia. It is considered one of the most important Ottoman architectural monuments in the country. The entrance to the mosque is through a rectangular portal with marble paving slabs. Inside, the prayer hall is spacious, with high ceilings and beautiful stone carvings. The mosque is open daily from 8am to 7pm. For prayer times, please check the latest timings.

Suleymaniye Mosque

This mosque is located in Istanbul, Turkey. It was commissioned by the Suleymaniye Sultan and was completed in 1557. The mosque is renowned for its beautiful architecture, including the large dome and minarets. It is open daily from 8am to 5pm. For prayer times, please check the latest timings.

Places to Explore

1. Mustafa Pasha Mosque
2. Suleymaniye Mosque
3. Gazi Husrev-Beg Mosque

All three mosques offer a glimpse into the rich cultural heritage of the regions they are located in. Whether you are interested in history, architecture, or culture, these mosques are worth a visit.
Historical Treasures

TOPKAPI DAGGER

DIPLOMACY ON A KNIFE’S EDGE

The Topkapi dagger was a gift intended for Ottoman sultan Murad Shah from Ottoman sultan Mahmud I in 1574. The Ottoman-Venetian War raged for three years between 1573 and 1576, until a peace treaty, the Treaty of Lepanto, was signed in September 1576. To seal the peace, the sultans sent expensive gifts, such as gold plates, to Istanbul for Mahmud as a peace offering.

In return, Mahmud commissioned a series of arms gifts and issued an embassy to deliver them to the Persian border. Allowed with a protective emerald, the Topkapi dagger is a perfect example of the closest successors that surrounded gift giving. It was well known that Nadir had a penchant for precious jewels, in particular emeralds from the Mughal empire, and he even took the rhoda more diamond following his tenure of Delhi, India, in 1730. However, Nadir never got to see his eyes on the emerald dagger. He raised taxes time and time again in his military campaigns, Nadir had been faced with a number of events that had forced him to seek peace with the Ottomans in the first place, stated for his increasing cruelty and the boiling, the economy to rule. Nadir was assassinated in his bed in June 1747 at the hands of his own men.

When Mahmud’s embassy arrived at the border to discover that Nadir had been assassinated, they promptly returned home with the dagger and the rest of the gifts. The dagger was subsequently placed in the royal treasury at Topkapi Palace in Istanbul, which was eventually converted into a museum in 1924 following the end of the Ottoman Empire the previous year.

The royal treasury forms one of the main collections at the museum and the dagger remains on display in it. Public interest in the dagger rose thanks to the 1964 film Topkapi, which depicts a fictional plot to steal it from the museum. Actor Peter Ustinov won an Academy Award for Best Supporting Actor for his role in the film and the popularity of the dagger increased. It is now considered to be one of the museum’s star attractions.

PUBLIC INTEREST IN THE DAGGER ROSE THANKS TO THE 1964 FILM TOPKAPI

DECADENT DECORATION
The handle of the dagger is made from gold and silver with gold and silver送s and patterns engraved in the metal. The hilt is encrusted with rubies, emeralds, and pearls.

HIDDEN TREASURE
The top of the dagger’s handle is in an original emerald from which the sultan Shah in 1574. When he was removed, it actually reveals a small gold watch hiding underneath, which was made in London.

SACRED SYMBOLISM
Daggers were once considered highly symbolic because they were considered to be a symbol of power and the start of a ruler’s power. The most powerful you were, the more important gift you could give.

SHOWING OFF
Daggers were frequently used as diplomatic gifts such as the Topkapi dagger because they were considered to be a symbol of power and the start of a ruler’s power. The most powerful you were, the more important gift you could give.
MODEL MILITARY VEHICLES

TREMENDOUS TANKS

Dominating the battlefield for 100 years, the tank was initially designed to break the stalemate of trench warfare and provide infantry units with a mobile, armored base of fire that would give them a significant tactical advantage. Since that time, the tank has developed into an essential component of any integrated military force, whilst always challenging designers to find new ways of combining offensive firepower with greater speed and mobility.

First introduced by the British during the Battle of the Somme on 1 September 1916, the tank was developed under the utmost secrecy for fear of alerting the Germans to these devil's new weapon. Originated in London, workers involved in their production were told that the vehicle was working on more than simple war tanks for use in the distant future. As military planners looked for a suitable code word for the new machine, the word tank was adopted.

As the tank developed, it became a crucial component of German Blitzkrieg during WII, as they perfected the use of fast moving armored vehicles to back up infantry assaults, following devastating aerial bombardment. Today's tanks still have their origins back to the first British Mark I machine of the Somme Offensive and will still be found at the forefront of any ground based military operation.

Airfix kits allow you to recreate hundreds of different tanks, aircraft, tank and car scale models in the comfort of your own home. Airfix produce a wide variety of tanks and military vehicles in a variety of different scales and schemes.

Within the Airfix range, alongside the basic kits, there is a Cromwell AFV Tank Starter Set which contains glue, paints, brush and essential parts, everything you need to create a stunning 1:76 scale model.

The Battlefront Gift Set contains everything you need to build a complete diorama, including a Sherman and Tiger Tank, British and German infantry crew. A gift boxed set, all in one point, glue and brushes required.

Airfix.com and all good retail stockists.
The True Tudor Queen
In 1485 England began negotiations of the utmost importance with one of the two great European superpowers: Spain. The aim was to secure a marriage between Henry VII’s son, Prince Arthur, heir to the newly established Tudor dynasty - and the Spanish Infanta Catherine. Arthur was yet to reach his second birthday, and at two and a half, Catherine was only slightly older. The negotiations such as these were not unusual, and Catherine would never remember a time when England had not been a part of her future. She would be raised with the belief that it was her destiny to become queen of England.

Born in December 1485 and the youngest of four surviving daughters of Ferdinand of Aragon and Isabella of Castile, from the outset Catherine’s upbringing was set to be extraordinary. Her parents were the most powerful couple in 15th century Europe, and unusually shared joint sovereign power. This was because Catherine’s mother Isabella was queen of Castile in her own right, but her marriage to Ferdinand had united her kingdom with that of Aragon. From the beginning therefore, through the example of her mother - to whom Catherine was often compared, she was no stranger to the concept of female rule. It was one that would impact upon her deeply.

By the time of Catherine’s birth, her parents had long been engaged in war against the Muslims, and by 1488 the kingdom of Granada remained the only Spanish city still under Muslim control. During her childhood, Catherine and her siblings frequently travelled with their parents as they fought zealously to conquer Granada. In so doing Catherine gleaned some valuable lessons from her mother about what it meant to be a queen, for Isabella herself was fully immersed in the campaign. This was to be the great enterprise of the Spanish monarchs’ reign, and Catherine was present when, on 2 January 1492, the city finally surrendered. It was a triumphant moment, and Catherine was there to witness the height of her parents’ triumph. Though Isabella’s ascendency meant that she had little time to spend with her children, she took a great interest in their welfare. The humanist Erasmus would later note that Catherine was educated with learning by the care of her illustrious mother, for Isabella was conscious of the importance of her daughters’ education, and unfailingly worked to prepare them for their future roles as queen consorts.
The True Tudor Queen

Catherine’s tutor was Alexanders Gemaldis, an Italian scholar who later accompanied her to England, and her curriculum was varied, including classical Latin, and from her childhood Catherine also had a strong devotion to the Catholic Church. Kranmer described her as being “as religious and virtuous as words can express,” which perhaps derived from her mentor, who was renowned for her piety. This trait would remain with Catherine for the rest of her life—a constant when all else seemed to be in turmoil.

Royal children were useful tools for negotiation in the European marriage market, and through the marriages of Catherine’s siblings her parents had created alliances with powerful and rich Roman Catholic empires. The negotiations for Catherine’s marriage to Prince Arthur, however, were drawn out across several years, and it was not until August 1497 that the young royals were formally betrothed. It would be several more years before Catherine left Spain for her new land, and in the meantime she began a correspondence with Arthur. She was clearly eager to meet her new bridegroom, for his only surviving letter to Catherine refers to her as his “harmattic queen” and conveys his lasting desire to see her. Finally, in 1518, 15-year-old Catherine was able to bid farewell to her parents as she began her journey to her new land. Though neither Catherine’s letters nor those of her husband have been preserved, her letters continued to play a role in Catherine’s life, and while she lived she would champion her interests passionately. In October Catherine arrived in England with an entourage of Spanish attendants; after many years, her wedding day was almost upon her.

On 14 November Catherine and Arthur were married in a magnificent ceremony at Old St. Paul’s Cathedral. Henry VIII had gone to an extraordinary level of expense in order to ensure that the celebrations were both exceptionally lavish and conducted on a huge scale. The Lord Chancellor celebrated the marriage with enthusiasm. Thomas More claimed that Catherine “fulfilled the beauties of every age” and that everywhere she “receives the highest of praises”. Shortly after the wedding, in the depths of winter, Catherine—now Princess of Wales—accompanied her husband to Ludlow Castle on the Welsh Marches. It was here that Arthur was to form the art of government, with Catherine by his side. However, in March 1519 the couple fell sick, and shortly Catherine recovered, Arthur did not. On 2 April 1519, at the age of 15, Arthur died, and was buried in Westminster Cathedral. His untimely death devastated his parents, and threw Catherine’s future into the air.

The inventory seemed to be remedied quickly when it was agreed that Catherine would marry Henry VIII’s only surviving son, ten-year-old Prince Henry, and in 1551 the young couple were betrothed. On 26 November 1540 however, tragically she was given Catherine another, Isabella of Castile, died. In personal terms the grief that Catherine must have been immense, but in political terms it signified disaster, Isabella’s death meant that her husband Ferdinand was now king of Aragon only, while Catherine’s elder sister, Anna, inherited her mother’s kingdom of Castile. As the daughter of the king of Aragon alone, Catherine’s status as a bride glorified and no longer was she viewed as the greatest prize in the European marriage market. Henry VIII’s attitude towards Catherine changed, and he began considering alternatives for his precious only son. Catherine, still in England, found herself vulnerable, and now learned some important lessons about the tumultuous nature of royal marriage negotiations. It was then that she was given a little hope of Catherine enjoying the privileges of companionship that she had not come to expect, for on her deathbed, her living conditions became a stark contrast to those in which she had been raised.
and she was forced to pursue some of her powers and place in order to maintain herself and her household. Though she complained to her father that her servants “were about in rage,” she did little to help her. She had no idea of where her future lay, for all seemed closed to her. In 1527 however, Catherine was given her own initial role to play when she began acting as the father's ambassador in England. Such a role was extraordinary, and was the first occasion in European history in which a female had fulfilled such a position. This gave Catherine a valuable opportunity to learn about the art of diplomacy and foreign relations, and the news she conveyed to her father was often written in her own hand. In 1528 however, a new ambassador arrived at the English court, and thus Catherine was forced to take a back seat. She would not have long to wait until her future became clear.

The friendship and mutual affection Catherine had found came to an end when Henry VIII died on 21 April 1547. With his death Catherine's fortunes were transformed, for less than two months later, on 11 June Catherine was married to the new king, Henry VIII, she had at last fulfilled her destiny, for she was now queen of England. Twelve days later the royal couple were crowned together in a splendid double coronation at Westminster Abbey, and Catherine presided over the customary gout in some of her first public appearances as queen.

Catherine was extremely popular with her subjects, and her household, in whom she was a kind mistress, were devoted to her.
The True Tudor Queen

Her Spanish roots remained important to her, as can be seen in her advent of the pomegranate - a Spanish emblem - as her personal badge. She retained her love of her homeland throughout her life, and often wore clothes and jewels in the Spanish fashion. Though at 21 in 1509 she was more than five years older than her husband, who turned 18 within weeks of his imminent wedding, Catherine was still considered to be the "most beautiful creature in the world." The first years of her marriage to Henry were very happy, and Catherine also found her husband willing to listen to her advice. Coming from a family of strong women it was only natural that Catherine should wish to take a role in politics, and Henry's faith in her became apparent when she was made regent of England in 1533 while he went on campaign in France.

From 30 June to 28 October, Catherine ruled England on her husband's behalf, quickly demonstrating that she was more than capable of the task. With an impending threat of invasion from Scotland, Catherine could not afford to be idle. Though she was pregnant, she busied herself with the preparations, including the making of banners and badges. Having crossed the border into Northumberland, on 9 September the Scots engaged in battle with the English army. Led by the Earl of Surrey, the result of the Battle of Flodden was a resounding victory for the English - and for Catherine. Many Scots were killed, among them King James IV.

In January, Catherine wrote to her husband of their success, informing him that "this battle hath been to your Grace and all your realm the greatest honor that could be. As a witness, she told Henry that she was "sending you for your barren a king's cup" - she had even considered sending him the dead king James's body, but "Your Englishman's heart would not suffer it." The success of Flodden was to be one of the highlights of Catherine's reign, in which she perhaps was herself forming some of the military success her mother had once achieved.

Catherine's legacy was the only occasion on which she had full authority, but there were other times when she attempted to play a role in foreign politics and diplomacy. She made no secret of her preference for England to make an alliance with her home country of Spain, as was in evidence when her nephew, Charles V, visited England in 1520 - a visit that had come about through Catherine's influence. Shortly after she accompanied her husband to France to attend the Field of the Cloth of Gold, and though Catherine exchanged gifts with the French king and queen, it was clear that her heart lay elsewhere. Upon her return to England, Catherine urged Henry to ally with Charles V, and she was delighted when in 1522 her hopes came to fruition. This was cemented by Charles's engagement to Catherine's only surviving daughter, Mary.

In other respects Catherine's role as queen was largely ceremonial. In 1527 she successfully publicly pleased with her husband for the honors of a group of apprentices who were about to be executed for their participation in the Earl of Surrey plot. She presented prizes at tournaments, even a store of music and roasted the musicians Giles Dawes. Catherine was also fond of jewels - particularly rings of pearls - and fine clothes, often giving away pieces as gifts. On one occasion, for example, she gave Lady Maitreens a gown of white satin. Additionally, Catherine did her best to aid scholars and universities, visiting both Oxford and Cambridge, and acting as patron of St. John's College in the latter.

Catherine's scholarly interests probably stemmed from childhood, and though she...
The True Tudor Queen

was not considered to be a great intellect. She was certainly better educated than most Englishwomen at the time. Like her mother and father, Catherine determined to ensure that her only surviving daughter, Princess Mary, was given an education befitting one of royal blood and an active role in this. Catherine inspired the humanist Juan Luis Vives, whose book ‘The Education of a Christian Woman,’ was written for Mary. As Mary was her father’s sole surviving child, her education was crucial. It is quite likely that Catherine was pressing her for the responsibilities of monarchy that she envisaged her ahead. Like Prince Arthur before her, in 1533 Mary had been sent to Laflon to continue her education, and in Catherine’s mind there was no reason why Mary ought not to reign in her own right, just as her grandmother Isabella had. Catherine’s success as a queen – and a wife – is undoubted in many respects, but there was one key task that she failed to perform: she had not provided her husband with a surviving male heir. Of six pregnancies, Mary was Catherine and Henry’s only surviving child, and though both parents doted on their daughter, Henry was not prepared to consider the possibility of a female heir. Moreover, Catherine’s failed pregnancies had aged her considerably, and for many years several were of the opinion that she was “rather ugly than otherwise.” In 1527 Catherine’s marriage took a terrible downward turn, and it was one from which it would never recover. Anne Boleyn, a former member of Catherine’s circle, took the king away from her, and though she had enjoyed previous affairs, this time it was Anne Boleyn. Having diverted his attention to separate from Catherine and marry Anne Boleyn, Catherine’s relationship with Henry deteriorated rapidly. For Catherine, life would never be the same again. Henry VIII moved swiftly to have his marriage to Catherine annulled on the grounds that she had previously been married to his brother, Arthur. His case rested on whether or not Catherine and Arthur’s marriage had been consummated, which Catherine strongly denied. As a genuinely pious woman, it is unlikely that Catherine would have lied about something that could jeopardise her immortal soul, and thus her declarations that the marriage had not been consummated are likely to be true. She was nevertheless deposed by this turn of events, and steadfastly followed her marriage to be void and valid. She would stand her ground, and later declared to her nephew and supporter the emperor that “I am the king’s lawful wife, and while I live, I will say no other.” The king, Your Majesty, as he became known, was to be a long and painful process, especially for Catherine. On the king’s advice Cardinal Wolsey handled affairs. Wolsey was determined to secure a favourable outcome for his master, but Catherine had no say. In 1539 a legislative court met in London to determine the

ISABELLA AND FERDINAND’S EUROPEAN INFLUENCE

The joint sovereigns had connections that made them the most powerful duo in Europe

- Marriage
- Conquest/Treaty

“Catherine was eager to ensure that her only surviving daughter, Princess Mary, was given an education befitting one of royal blood.”
Muhammad XII
Successor to the last non-reigning Muslim city in Toledo, ruled over by Muhammad XII. Isabella and Ferdinand finally conquered the city in 1522, bringing it firmly under Christian control.

Manuel I
The capture of Granada meant that the kingdom of Castile and Aragon became so large and wealthy and therefore important. Relations between Aragon (now the country now associated) were secured by Manuel’s marriage to Antonio de Portocarrero’s daughter Leonora and Isabella’s daughter, and James Maria.

Henry VII
Henry VII was to ally with the Spanish monarchs. A part of the negotiations to Catherine of Aragon’s marriage to Ferdinand II of Aragon, and in the Treaty of Madrid del Granado in 1504, splitting the territory between the two countries. After Ferdinand’s death, Catherine married his brother Henry to maintain that alliance.

Louis XII of France
After years bickering with Charles VIII of France over who should be in control of Italy, known as the Italian Wars, Ferdinand signed a treaty with Louis XII to divide up the southern half of the country in 1503, with the small northern regions of Naples and Sardinia controlled by France. However, the peace didn’t last long as Ferdinand’s general, King Ferdinand da Carrara, took back Naples in 1504.

Maximilian I
Maximilian was one of the most powerful rulers in Europe with dominions in Germany, Austria and Burgundy. He allied with Isabella and Ferdinand by marrying his son Philip to Isabella’s daughter Maria. Maximilian’s daughter, Mary, was also married in the couple’s arranged marriage.
CARDINAL WOLSEY: FRIEND OR FOE?

Was Wolsey the true villain of the Great Matter?

Wolsey’s role in the Great Matter has been controversial, and it remains difficult to pinpoint his exact feelings on Catherine’s divorce. On a personal level, he had little reason to be against Catherine, as a prince, for she had never interfered with Wolsey’s political positions. Indeed, if Wolsey’s servant George Cavendish is to be believed, when Henry first informed him of his desire to separate from Catherine, Wolsey reassured him of his loyalty to the king and of his intent to attend the idea. However, he was fully aware that his wish farm depended on securing Henry a favourable outcome. Moreover, Wolsey was the King’s most trusted and influential advisor, and his loyalty to the king was absolute. For the reasons above, Wolsey paid little heed when Catherine became pregnant, for she left him in little doubt of her fertility. Wolsey referred to Catherine as the ‘right cow’ for her ability to influence the king, and she in turn made it clear that she held him personally responsible for slowing down proceedings, and was convinced that his attempts to secure an annulment were only half-hearted. As for Catherine, though Wolsey was no foe to her for was no friend either, she insisted over her self-preservation, which ensured that he did the king’s bidding. The outcome was disastrous not only for Catherine, but for Wolsey too.
validity of the royal marriage. Catherine was called upon to speak, but instead she appealed directly to her husband, asking him to "spare me the extremity of this court." If he would not, Catherine resolutely declared that "her God I commit my cause." To Henry's rage the case was adjourned to Rome, and proceedings dragged on. This was disastrous for Wolsey, who swiftly fell from favour for his failure to secure the annulment. He died on his way to London, and probably died in 1530.

Catherine's plight earned her the sympathy of many of those at court, including her sister-in-law, Mary, Duchess of Suffolk. She also retained the love and admiration of the English people, serving as a testament to her success as queen and regent. Yet this was not enough, and the king's desire to marry Anne Boleyn remained stronger than ever. Catherine, however, continued to stand firm in her belief that she was Henry's true wife, and refused to comply with his husband's demands. She renounced her marriage. This did nothing to improve relations between Catherine and Henry, and in 1531 Catherine was banished from court permanently. She would never see her husband or her daughters again.

The remaining years of Catherine's life were spent moving between the series of castles and unconfined spaces that were a far cry from the luxury of the palace she had enjoyed during her reign. On 22 May 1533 Archbishop Thomas Cranmer declared her marriage to Henry to be null and void, but it was a judgment that Catherine refused to accept. For the rest of her life she would insist on being addressed as queen, and refused to answer to anyone who called her otherwise.

The years of stress and anxiety took their toll on Catherine, whose health deteriorated. Residing at Richmond Castle, by December 1535 she was seriously weakened, and it was clear that she was near. Catherine began her final preparations, and her last thought was for the man she believed to be her true husband. Writing him a letter in which she beseeched Henry to be kind to their daughter, she ended with a touching dedication: "I vow that mine eyes desire you, above all things."

On 7 January 1536 Catherine died. Her final years had been a far cry from the glory of the court; she had witnessed as a child, and experienced during her marriage. Henry's treatment of Catherine in her later years has led to her portrayal as a tragic victim, and her entire life and achievements have been largely overshadowed. From her childhood Catherine's abilities had been firmly instilled in her: she was the daughter of a queen, she had lived, and died as a queen, and she was the mother of a queen. Those were the achievements that she ought to be remembered for, and though her plight is ultimately deserving of sympathy, her conduct was very much worthy of admiration as well. Moreover, as one of her contemporaries observed, Catherine was "more beloved than any queen who ever reigned."
A Queen At Rest

“To the end she appears to have remained devoted to Henry and to the people of England”
Catherine's Final
Resting Place

We pay a visit to Peterborough's 'Katharine of Aragon' Festival to reflect on the queen's final days and her lasting legacy

Written by Jonathan Gordon

Even before the Great Matter was resolved and Henry VIII got his wish for his marriage to Catherine of Aragon to be dissolved, the Spanish princess was already exiled from court and from her daughter. From 1534 to her death in 1536, she moved from castle to castle, estate to estate, watching her household diminish with each relocation as Henry sought to please her into accepting his wishes.

Finally she would see out the last of her days in Kimbolton Castle in Huntingdon and having seen her marriage annulled, her health declined rapidly: before she passed away only two and a half years later in January 1536, aged 50. Despite her last visit Henry had Catherine buried in Peterborough Abbey which was later made into Peterborough Cathedral shortly after Henry VIII began diverting monies by less than 50 miles north of Kimbolton and there she lays still.

To the end she appears to have remained devoted to Henry and to the people of England. She refused to give up her title as queen and as Henry's scheme began tainting England from the Vatican, many people looked to her as the one constant link to the only faith they had ever known. It is not surprising then that to this day Catherine of Aragon is celebrated and that Peterborough honours her life annually on the last weekend of January opening up the cathedral to a Catholic mass in the morning, followed by a commemoration service, a laying of wreaths of Catherine's tomb by dignitaries of the city and from Spain, and then a series of historical events such as tours of the city and talk at the local museum.

"Lots of people want to come and see her tomb. You see the pomegranates left and they've left all year round; it's not just for the special occasions. There are people who do practicality..."
A Queen At Rest

NEVER FORGOTTEN

Very Rev Chris Dallison, Dean of Peterborough, reflects on Catherine's enduring legacy and popularity.

In your experience of the ’Rehabilitation of Anger’ position, what can you tell us about her popularity?

This is just my second year here and it's clear that Catherine has a very significant following and built a place in the affections of many people. It’s not just at the Festival - throughout the year people ask about her commemorations, posthumous, at the tomb as a mark of deep affection and respect.

What do you think it is about Catherine that continues to make her such a popular figure?

There’s nothing like the ecstacy about the Tudors - a very private and idiosyncratic generation of women who were important of all sorts of reasons political, religious and pragmatic. Catherine herself represents a grueling but successful battle to assert her principles and there is something compelling in all of this.

More important do you think that her faith was to her, particularly in her final years when she faced her happiness threatened? She was absolutely central to her. It was the source of her energy and strength - and imperative of her capacity to begin.

We understand there’s been support for Catherine to be canoned. Could you tell us about them?

I have heard of that idea. It’s a movement. In the Roman Catholic Church it has not, and of course there are many similar movements - as a symbolic statement of women’s rights and importance. We know the stories of the Church in England but都不 need to make them, of course. Catherine’s support in the shaping of English history would surely be significant as well as her personal holiness.

Another factor in this is the title of Catherine’s late years itself, which is probably the best known and which casts her as a tragic figure. For all her strength and learning, there was very little she could do to halt against being divorced from Henry. Or rather it would be more accurate to say that she rejected a great many of the things that she could have done for her own sake, for the disastrous repercussions they could have had on the English people as well as herself. With Henry uniting the Catholic Church, she could have called upon her nephews, the emperor of the Holy Roman Empire, Charles V for assistance. She could have fought her corner through arms rather than words and in the process might well have saved a significant army of Englishmen loyal to her and to the faith, but she chose not to. She chose a more difficult path, but one that was true in her reputation as a woman of deeply held religious values and morality.

But that meant she lived out her final years as a virtual prisoner of Henry’s, separated from her daughter Mary and often only able to communicate through letters. She lived in stately homes with servants and household, but it was not the luxury and riches she had grown up with. Using her marriage to his late brother Arthur as the primary pretext for amusing that union, Henry insisted that she be referred to as Dowager Princess and never Queen. Through this decree, Catherine was able to determine those who were loyal to her and those to her hatred. As the years passed, she came to view those who called her Dowager Princess as her jokers, not her servants. It is understood she spent most of her days in her room, hardly ever leaving and taking most of her meetings with the few visitors she had them, away from those who might listen in and send word back to Windsor.

One such visitor and one of Catherine’s closest allies in these troubled days was the Imperial Ambassador to England from Charles V, Erasmus Chappys. It is understood that Catherine specifically asked for Chappys to be appointed thanks to his legal background and he was able to act as her defender at court in her absence. He was...
also able to give counsel in her daughter as Mary was finding the whole matter increasingly trying and upsetting.

While she asked visiting Catherine for some time, Chapneys finally went to Kemberton when Catherine began to fall ill and was able to converse in Spanish, which would have allowed them to speak secretly so that the servants couldn’t understand. That being said they also appear to have made a big play of arranging a meeting with all Catherine’s house present, spoken in English, so that her commitment to her marriage and faithfulness could be reported back to Henry, not that it ultimately helped in the days to come.

Still, presenting a facade, yet loyal from the end seems to have been of the utmost importance to Catherine. A letter to Henry supposedly written only hours before her death, the veracity of which has been questioned although the content is considered to be very close to Catherine’s real feelings, claims to still be utterly committed to him and calls on him to think of his soul over worldly matters, saying, “For my part, I pardon you everything, and I wish to devoutly pray God that He will pardon you also.”

There was still one last compromise to follow. Catherine after she died that was the cause of death. Catherine had taken to drinking Welsh beer in her later years. Possibly after complaining about the poor quality of ‘young wine’ she was being served in the castle, and it was rumored that these drinks may have been poisoned, leading to the slow, but certain decline in her health. A post-mortem at the time suggested that her organs were all healthy, save for her heart, which was black and had grown on it. It’s believed this may indicate she was suffering from cancer or heart disease and that this is a most likely cause of death rather than poisoning. Still, the rumor seemd in keeping with the tone of the story around Catherine perpetrated by her husband, planted against and separated from her child. She lived in constant fear of her husband’s wrath, which might afford an alternative explanation to her continued pronouncements of love and devotion beyond her commitment to her marriage alone. It’s understandable that in the heat of the age, with a religious flavor developing through the heat of the nation, such conspiracies would take root.

As it was Anne Boleyn would marry on the day of Catherine’s funeral in Peterborough Abbey and her good standing with Henry would rapidly decline to the months that followed. Less than five months after her first wife’s death, Henry would have his second executed on charges of adultery, incest and treason, suffering exactly the fate that Catherine had hoped to avoid for so many years. Ultimately, it’s clear to see why Catherine of Aragon remains such a popular figure. Her steadfastness in the face of hardship represents exactly the kind of astound nobility that England has traditionally valued in its leaders and heroes. Her religious devotion means that she is in important to English Catholics now as she was at the time of the schism with Rome, and her life prior to Henry VIII’s betrayal makes her closest all the more domestic and tragic, making for a hugely sympathetic figure. Standing in Peterborough Cathedral, seeing local schoolchildren dressed as Tudor ladies and gentlemen, seeing the Mayor of Peterborough and representatives of the Spanish embassy as well as many members of the public gather to remember Catherine, her appeal couldn’t be clearer.
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A UNITED STATES OF EUROPE?

We look back over the many attempts to bring the continent of Europe together under one rule

Written by Jonathan Gordon
A United States Of Europe?

The concept of European cooperation and interdependence didn’t start with the formation of the European Union. Its origins date back many hundreds of years to the earliest empires, and their influence continued to be felt right up to the modern era. Through the many attempts to bring the continent together, mostly through cooperation and imperial ambitions, we see many different ideas of what it means to bring Europe under one rule, whether it should have shared laws, shared controls, shared language and culture.

In the following pages we talk with Cambridge research associate and history author Jacob F. Field about the key examples of European unity through history what they teach us on how they interpreted the vision of the united Europe and how they left their mark on what would come down the line.

THE ROMAN EMPIRE (27 BCE – 395 CE)

The model for so much to come

When we talk about a singular vision for the continent of Europe all roads appear to lead back to Rome. While these were empires that preceded it, so much of how Rome managed its immense empire resonated for hundreds of years longer in each nation it touched. It had a wide-ranging set of policies that not only controlled Europe, but helped to define it as a region that could have common goals and authority. “The Holy Roman Empire makes its name from it.” This is how “the idea of Caesar come from Caesar. Everyone is looking to Rome,” Field tells us. So if so much of what follows is an attempt to emulate or live up to Roman Europe, what did it aspire to? “I think at least at first it was about security,” Field explains. “The fact that you’re based in the Mediterranean means that you have so many other rivals and it’s so important to have control of the whole basin. I think once Rome did that and started expanding, it kind of becomes like a shark that has to keep on moving forward to guarantee its security and its prosperity.”

What followed was a pretty multifaceted approach to building and controlling a unified continent, not just through direct rule from Rome through imposing local governors, but also by spreading its culture, laws and economies. Roads helped to tie the continent together and encourage trade among the regions, a united tax code made sure everyone paid their share and the introduction of Roman lands and wine are examples of the spread of culture too. “Rome is the most ambitious attempt to try and not just bring together Europe politically and try to dominate someone, but to try and bring them into this system and way of thinking, even on a cultural level,” says Field.

And there was the central Roman army, which not only gave the empire the teeth with which to defend and enforce its laws, but also gave non-Roman citizens a path to citizenship and loyalty within the empire. “In some ways I think that the Roman army makes it even more an ambitious policy than the EU. It was a central army and it was a rather democratic way for anyone to become a Roman citizen, buying into the system. If you weren’t a Roman citizen you could join for 25 years and at the end of your service you become as much a Roman as someone from in Italy. In a way it’s the army that, although it’s a strength, in a sense leads to its downfall and makes Rome much more unstable later on, when you have people in the provinces being more loyal to their legion commanders than the emperor in Rome. That’s when things begin to get problematic in the West at least.”

Key
- Single currency
- Apparatusation
- Democratic rights
- Legal system
- Freedom of movement
- Free trade
- Central taxation
- Central military

EXPERT BIO JACOB F. FIELD

A research associate at the University of Cambridge and Ph.D. candidate at the University of Manchester, Field has also written a number of popular history books, including the “Roads to Rome” series about the spread of Roman culture around the world. A hike in Northern California or a dive into the scuba pool in the Atlantic, along with his inspirational mother, is his best book. The history of Roman life and culture is available from his work.
**Before The EU**

**THE FRANKISH EMPIRE (481 – 843)**

Charlemagne's great experiment

While the Kingdom of Francia stood for many hundreds of years the eye is naturally drawn to the rise of Charlemagne and the Carolingian Empire phase of its history. This is where a unified Vision for the continent takes shape and a centralised series of policies seeks to bring order to Europe as a whole. ‘Charlemagne codifies the laws and he sends out envoys to the provinces, like inspectors, to make sure the laws are being followed and sent along.’ Field tells us, “Charlemagne isn’t just someone who said the laws should be this. He’s actually trying to enforce them and that’s another way you can compare it to the EU. The EU is pretty stringent about making EU regulations and laws are followed. Because of modern technology they’re more successful than Charlemagne, but they are still trying to have the same end goal of this centralised set of laws and breaking down local barriers and so on.”

Counts were put in charge of provinces and such was given several legal experts, called canonits, to maintain a consistent interpretation of the law. These counts were in turn in charge of levying soldiers for Charlemagne's army, collecting tolls and maintaining infrastructure. In addition there was an annual meeting of all the important men of the empire to discuss issues affecting the state, offering a degree of representation for each province. It doesn’t quite hold together though, as the post-Roman world, particularly in Western Europe, is still very fragmented and issues such as inheritance caused Charlemagne’s achievements to be pulled apart. “One of the problems of Francia is that you have this inbuilt rivalry between the heir who are jetsetting for senescence, jetsetting for position, so after Charlemagne do you have this quite long period of instability and civil war between his sons, which is only solved by the Treaty of Verdun in 843, when they formally decide to split the empire into three. It’s only really under Charlemagne, who was this incredibly charismatic and magnetic leader, where we can compare the Frankish realm to something like the Roman Empire, because really it’s a very short period that you have this sense of imperial unity.” Field explains. “Also this was an incredibly violent process. Charlemagne was constantly at war and had to use violence and coercion to bring people under his rule and convert them to Christianity.”

**THE HOLY ROMAN EMPIRE (962 – 1806)**

Rule in deformed form

While Charlemagne took the title of Holy Roman Emperor in his time, it is really more the late-medieval and early modern period that we think of as the height of the empire and where it is closest to holding a unified Europe together. That said, it’s also one of the most decentralised instances of such a project prior to the European Union itself with each state (there were 300 of them by 1545) run by its own king, duke or count reporting to the emperor, who was himself elected. Importantly for our understanding of the progressions towards the current model, it pulsed around the edges of various unified forms of policy-making and representation. “You’ve got the Imperial Diet, which from the mid 15th century is a permanent forum for the different member states to discuss things.” Field begins. “They don’t set laws, but it is a kind of central institution. You’ve got the imperial council, which are local and regional court systems. There is an imperial central court, which is kind of the EU court, but is really, really close.”

There were other things that weren’t present in terms of the kind of central control the original Roman Empire offered, such as a centralised currency. The mark was seemingly an attempt at this but really only used for holding to value when currencies already in use around the empire. “There was also no standing army for the emperor. One could be called, but that relied on local leaders supporting the emperor and heeding the call. And then there the dual power of the Pope that causes even more issues. You have the occasional crises, particularly in the later medieval period when there’s a rivalry between the emperor and the Pope. There’s tension about who appoints bishops and so on: the investiture crisis.

Continued conflict between the states often around religion, ending with the 30 Years War, finally comes to an end with the Peace of Westphalia, but this only confirms what was already known about the empire by this time, according to Field. “The components of the Holy Roman Empire were essentially sovereign states that just happened to be a part of this wider organisation. But really, after 1848 the power of the empire is existing in name only and the Holylands become much more focused on Austria and central Europe.”
NAPOLEONIC EMPIRE (1804 – 1814)
A model for modern laws

Napoleon really put the final nail in the coffin of the Holy Roman Empire, seeking to uproot the hereditary remnants of the old systems of monarchy and replace them with something equally autocratic, but with greater equality before the law.

Again this was a short-lived period of unification, the United States Of Europe under a single, iconic leader, but it left us with a lot of big influential ideas that resonate to this day. "He said himself that his greatest triumph was not his military victories but the Code Napoléon, his civil legal system, which swept away a lot of old-fashioned laws, which were often contradictory and had a lot of regional aspects," explains Field. "It essentially set forward things like equality before the law; it ended a lot of aristocratic privilege; a legalised right to divorce. Freedom of religion whether it was Christians, Jews, Catholics and Protestants and so on. You've got centralised courts." And while he ultimately failed himself as the sole ruler of the empire he was building, he still practised the mercenary he was preaching as part of the post-revolutionary wave he was tilling, as the make up of his army proves. "If you look at his menus, a lot of them stated as corporals or privates and worked their way up the army. Although from a British perspective we could look at Napoléon sometimes quite negatively. certainly his way of ruling had a lot of modern aspects to it."

In some ways his conflict with Britain, and the embargo he tried to enforce against trading with Britain was part of what soured the project as a whole. "In some parts of the empire this was just not going to work. Places like Portugal and Spain trade so much with Britain, it’s really bad for the economy. It was very unpopular in the Low Countries, but in places like Switzerland it encourages local manufacturing because they didn't have to compete with the British. His institutions weren't strong enough to hold this embargo against British trade for very long. And again, this wasn't a kind of thought through economic policy. This was his political and military response to his ongoing rivalry with Britain."

Napoléon Field, the great duchess of Austria, that was the code’s impact on the continent. “In terms of long-term impact the Napoléon Code still has a lot of echoes in systems of law and civil law that are in place. Field tells us, “Countries that were part of the Napoléon system after the early 19th century keep much better records, because he introduced civil registration.”

“I wished to found a European system, a European Code of Laws, a European judiciary; there would be but one people in Europe.”

– Napoléon Bonaparte, Writing from exile in St. Helena, 1815-21
Before The EU

THE NAZI REICH (1933 - 1945)

The opposite of union

The calls for Europe to come together under a single banner had been building, particularly after the Napoleonic Wars, increasing more still after the Great War; but the vision of Hitler and the Nazi Party was very different from what most had been dreaming of; even if it drew many of its influences from the Roman Empire, much like those that came before them. In a complete flip from the civil code of Napoleon, the Nazi Reich looked to establish a massive cultural shift in Europe with a nationally driven division of society. As an attempt to remodel and reconstruct society, this was an empire with very wide-ranging ambitions. You’ve got this official policy where you create this hierarchy of races from the Nordic Aryans at the top and going forth to the brown men/women; you’ve got a set educational policy and even a set literary policy with things like Strength Through Joy. You’ve got a set culture; the radio and cinema were really important to the rise of Adolf Hitler and Nazi policy,” concludes Field.

As World War II began a series of military states and puppet governments were set up to control the empire, enforcing laws, collecting taxes, and conscripting troops (according to the racial ranking system). But even in its name it was constantly calling back to the past, the Third Reich being the third empire following the Holy Roman and Germanic. “They were kind of magical in taking elements from Pagan culture and Viking culture. Especially to people like Himmler, that was very important to him. Another thing is that economically you’ve got the currency of the Reichsmark and what they would do is set official exchange rates with client states, which were very beneficial with the Reichsmark. They even had a set rate with the pound sterling when they occupied the Channel Islands.”

In this way everything fed back into Germany rather than any kind of pan-European cooperation. “There is no representation, no negotiation or compromise to be had here, even with those who were ideologically similar to their outlook. The deal with Mussolini was he could have Italy and parts of the Mediterranean and parts of Africa, but only in so far as they are subservient and secondary to the needs of the Germanic people. It was very much an unequal Europe they were trying to create.”

“We must build a kind of United States of Europe. In this way only will hundreds of millions of toilers be able to regain the simple joys and hopes, which make life worth living.”

- Winston Churchill, 19 September 1946, University of Zurich
The formation of the current European Union was something that started slowly and gradually gathered pace, issue and faster in the years that followed. Beginning with the European Coal and Steel Community in 1951, followed by the European Economic Community in 1957, there was a recognition that economic interdependence and alliance would help to bring to an end the decades and centuries of conflict in Europe. "You're joining together countrypersons through a common set of economic policies," says Field. "I think free trade really is at the heart of the European experiment in my view and one of the reasons why in one sense it's been incredibly successful in that there's never been a war between EU member states and the EU is the only one of these empires where these haven't been internal disputes or open violence between member states and areas of it."

Given that this all began with economic cooperation, oversight naturally goes to be a massive part of the equations and the European Union is formed of an entity to begin with, gradually expanding to the current 28 countries. The model perhaps (Cue K) that of Rome, according to Field. "I think for the first time since Rome you have incredibly strong centralised institutions, the European Court, the European Parliament, he tells us, "in another sense these institutions are at least nominally democratic. We elect the European Parliament technically speaking. The bureaucrats and civil servants that work for the EU are accountable to democratic institutions."

And it needs countries states elect MEPs to a lower chamber of the European Parliament with ministers from each country making up the upper house. "There's central control of a lot of decision making and law-making, but it's agreed by the collective. Also, unlike other empires, there's no cultural imposition being made. It's not a situation where everyone is going to speak French or Spanish or whatever. Things like freedom of religion are part of the bedrock of the EU, so it's a sense these common freedoms are really important. In terms of creating a European culture, it hasn't really come that because it's impossible really. Culture is no fad. You can't set a European religion. In the sense it's not as ambitious as something like the Roman Empire or the Third Reich, which are trying to change a culture and society from the top down."

The introduction of a central currency in the Euro has shown some of the faults in some of the EU's centralised approach, however. "Europe has the European Central Bank, which is setting a country's financial policies centrally, which is one of the problems that sprung up, because the EU has some very rich and advanced countries like Germany and France and there some countries that, although rich in historical and geographical terms, compared to France and Germany, places like Greece and Portugal are struggling. It's very difficult to create a coherent economic policy that fits all countries who have adopted the Euro. That's one of the problems with this kind of centralised mechanism. The EU is seven per cent of the world's population and about a quarter of its GDP, so it's incredibly ambitious to think you can be all of these diverse countries together?"

And while there's often talk of a European Army, there are many impediments to that emerging according to Field, with the EU more likely to rely on common security planning and the exchange of intelligence in the near future. "The idea of giving up your country's own armed forces, most people respond to that in a fairly negative way. Even if you're friendly to the concept and idea of further European integrations, I think that's a step that a lot of people and states would be unwilling to make. Particularly some of the newer members and the former Balkans. Greeks might not be so keen on having their army as part of the same organisation that Serbs and the Kosovars are part of. Write a pretty long way off an EU Army."

"The countries of Europe are too small to guarantee their peoples the necessary prosperity and social development. The European states must constitute themselves into a federation..."

— Jean Monnet, 5 August 1943, French Committee of National Liberation

THE EUROPEAN UNION

(1958 – PRESENT)

A path to peace
THE SECRET PRESIDENCY OF EDITH WILSON

Forget Hillary Clinton's failure to take the White House. The fascinating story of Woodrow Wilson's second wife Edith raises the question of whether America has already had a woman president - and just didn't know it.

Written by Beth Wyant

On 2 October 1919, Edith Noll Wilson's life took a traumatic turn. Her husband, Woodrow Wilson, 28th President of the United States, had suffered a stroke, which partially paralysed his body and severely weakened his constitution, leaving him "a shadow of his former self," according to his biographer, Lawrence. Edith was a dutiful First Lady, devoted to her husband and his public service, and proud of her role as his most trusted confidante. But her husband's illness led Edith to assume what has been described as her 'secret presidency', an unprecedented development that prompted gossip and controversy at the time, and has been hotly debated ever since. Until Woodrow's return in 1921, Edith looked after his business, acting as a gatekeeper who managed access to the president, those whom matters should or should not be presented to him, and collaborated with his physicians to control the gravity of his illness. Edith's "stewardship," as she described it, did not go unnoticed - one journalist, Republican veteran, dismissed it as the "petitio government". Edith's life had become far removed from the bustling of the White House where she was courted by the lovestruck president.
The couple crossed paths in unsettling times. Europe and the wider world were held in the grip of a war, which had killed and wounded thousands, and would take many more lives before its end. Pressure was increasing on Woodrow and his administration, with the mining of ocean liners in the Lusitania - which caused the deaths of more than a thousand people including 128 Americans - leading to questions of whether the United States should intervene in World War I. The president had some weighty decisions ahead of him, but he was to be driven to distraction by a viscountess, widow called Edith Roosevelt Galt. The 42-year-old, born 2nd June in Virginia, was to turn her fellow southerner’s head quite considerably.

It is said the 58-year-old president first caught a glimpse of Edith standing down a Washington street, but they were not to meet until an introduction was hosted by Woodrow’s cousin Helen Bone at the White House in March 1913. Edith and Woodrow had both been widowed - the president was heartbroken at the death of Ellen, his wife of almost 30 years, in August 1904, and Edith’s husband of 12 years Herman Galt had died in 1908. Edith experienced a new independence following her husband’s death. She inherited his family’s prosperous jewellery business, toured Europe, and upon her return to Washington she was known for driving her new automobile around its streets (it is thought she was one of the first women to drive in the capital). Woodrow was taken by the inquiring Edith, and he began to conduct himself in a manner quite at odds with his public image as a serious, academically-minded man.

The president sent numerous love letters to Edith, gifted her with roses, orchids and books, and took her on strolls around Rock Creek Park, where it is said that he jumped over walls and hugged her to the embarrassment of the secret service men accompanying them. It didn’t take long for Woodrow’s colleagues and the media to cotton on to this budding romance. He proposed just two months after the couple had met. Edith declined this advance, possibly due in convictions of the time that saw women reject initial proposals. When she later reconsidered, Edith had reservations due to the timing - the president was due to run for another term in the 1916 elections, and they broke them off, and the pair were wed in a private service at Edith’s Washington home on 18 December 1915.

It soon became apparent that Edith made a fine First Lady. America entered World War I in 1917, and throughout the semblance of the conflict’s duration, Edith set an example to the American public through activities such as forming a Red Cross unit at the White House, guiding sheep on the lawn to avoid the use of mowers (and donating the sheep’s wool to the church’s serving pajamas for soldiers being cared for in hospitals, visiting wounded servicemen in the country and abroad, and hosting each dusk as garden parties with菜品

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Madam President?
The Secret Presidency Of Edith Wilson

“Edith’s ‘stewardship,’ as she described it, did not go unnoticed – one outraged Republican senator dismissed it as the ‘petticoat government’”

Checklist for the modern First Lady

How Edith influenced the actions of future presidents’ wives

Play your part in times of adversity

Edith was a strong role model for American women during World War I. She set an example through taking up charity work, visiting wounded soldiers, and encouraging changes in diet and clothing where this would assist the war effort.

Champion a cause

First Ladies have been able to wield their own influence through promoting particular patronage causes. But, as has been said, that where thefiles of Eleanor Roosevelt championed social change, Edith’s passionate cause was her husband.

Schmooze international politicians and royalty

Edith mingled with high-ranking European politicians at the Paris Peace Conference, was a guest of King George and Queen Mary at Buckingham Palace, and admitted Belgium’s King and Queen to Woodrow’s sickbed in the time after his stroke.

Pen a bestselling memoir

Michelle Obama is the latest in a long line of former First Ladies to publish a memoir. Edith’s intimate effort, My Memoir, became a bestseller. But criticism included arguments that she stumbled with the truth, and focused more on her social life than, for example, her ‘secret presidency’

Preserve your husband’s legacy

Edith was committed to Woodrow to the end. In the decades following his passing, she donated his papers to the Library of Congress.LOOKED over the script for the Hollywood film about his life, and agreed to their use letters being published after her death.
Madam President?

Edith was always an independent, wealthy Washington woman. She was born on October 22, 1878, in Waynesville, Virginia, raised in a family which had grown prosperous on the back of the cotton trade but experienced a change in circumstances following the American Civil War and the outlawing of slavery. As a young girl, she learned the daughter of circuit court judge William Hume Bottling, was the favorite grand-daughter of her paternal grandmother, Virginia Bottling, who she spent most of her hours with, attending to them, including washing and ironing her grandmother’s clothes and looking after her 12 children. The future First Lady’s education was solely at home, enriched in French, English, poetry, music, and dressmaking at home—she attended a finishing school and attended events for a short time before her brothers’ education was required. Edith could trace her family history back to Pocahontas and her husband John Rolfe, and she had been born on the spot where she had her American heritage when her general visits may be thought to be destined. So she was born and she continued her education at an age of 14, in nursing some of her own events and visits to other parts of the nation, many of which are well known in her memoir. Edith went on to marry Colonel John Galt, a man who owned a successful business. It seems this marriage was the match that her second would prove to be. Their only child, a son, died a few days before birth. Seventy years after Cal’s death, in 1908, Edith caught a serious illness in the Red Cross Hospital.
autumn 1919 to convince the country that the US should return the Treaty of Versailles and join Woodrow's newly-formed global peace organization, the League of Nations. As Edith and Dr Cary T Grevy, his physician, had feared, the tour took a toll on Woodrow's health and he fell gravely ill. On 29 September 1919 the president collapsed following a speech he gave in Pueblo, Colorado, and was rushed back to Washington, but Woodrow had a severe stroke on 2 October and it seems he was never able to recover from this trauma.

Edith took the reins. To what extent is debatable - some have said she was in effect America's first, and only, woman president, while others argue that she had little real power and was only carrying out President Wilson's wishes, both vocally communicated and those she assumed of him. The First Lady wrote about what she described as her "stewardship" in 'Her Memory', the autobiography she published in 1919 and which was partially serialized in 'The Saturday Evening Post' as Europe marched towards another global war. An extract titled 'When Woodrow Was Ill', published on 25 February 1919, saw Edith write: "I studied every paper sent for the different secretaries or sessions, and tried to digest and present it sifted from the things that, despite my vigilance, had to go to the President. I, myself, never made a single decision regarding the disposition of public affairs. The only decision that was mine was what was important and what was not, and the very important decision of who to present them to my husband." But some politicians did not see it this way. Republicans Senator Albert Fall, an opponent of Wilson's, declared in outrage: "We have a personal government. Wilson is not acting as Mr Wilson is President!"

One particularly controversial element of Edith's stewardship was the fact she deliberately concealed the severity of her husband's illness. In her previously mentioned article 'When Woodrow Was Ill', Edith wrote that Woodrow's mind had not been affected by his stroke: "As long as he was reclined, it was clear and unclouded." She added that she required with his doctor about whether he should resign and one strongly advised telling such a course of action, so as not to have a negative impact on both the president and the country.

Edith's memoir has been heavily scrutinized, and instead one of her biographers exclaimed it was "lachewful". Her description of Woodrow being entirely fit to continue as president does not stand up in the face of the knowledge we have of his condition - his left arm was paralyzed by the stroke, he was blind in one eye, his voice would give out after speaking for a while, and he was hardly able to move he could not get out of bed until mid-November. The president was often some time able to independently walk about the mansion, but he was so weak that he could not attend a cabinet meeting until spring 1919. Edith and Dr Grevy concerned the president from the outside world, allowing him contact only with themselves and his daughters from his first marriage (Edith and Woodrow did not have any children together). In an entire month, no one from the government saw the president, and the public was made to believe that he was resting from a bout of exhaustion. Nor everyone was satisfied with this explanation. On 5 December 1919, Republican sitting in Congress sent representatives to look upon the president's condition in person. This incident, later christened the visit of the "smiling committee" was no challenge for Edith and Dr Grevy - they simply adjusted Woodrow's position and posture so the true extent of his disabilities was hidden.

The First Lady may have claimed that she brought all important matters before the president, but it has been said that there were many letters left uncensored and issues ignored, with Edith either neglecting the approaches of cabinet members or opposing their action based on her views. or those she predicts of her husband. Arguments that Edith was de facto president were in light of the government appearing to have not functioned well at all - America almost went to war with Mexico over a dispute about American oil interests in the country, and Robert Lansing, Secretary of State, could not get through to Edith, and by extension Woodrow.
Edith has been described as the most powerful of all America's First Ladies, with her influence on the administration following her husband's stroke in 1919. But she expressed opinions that had experienced since marrying Woodrow Wilson didn't mean she was included for other women to occupy such prominent positions in American society. If Edith, who was known for her strong opinions, has been described as an opponent of women's suffrage movements in early decades. She came into conflict with this matter due to her husband's, encouraging the campaign of protests by campaigns, with women frequently picketing the White House. Woodrow began to sympathize with the idea of votes being able to be included or against votes for women, but he was not interested in ensuring rational suffrage for them. Edith, who opposed the powerful suffrage, made comments such as describing suffrage campaigners as "unruly" and she wrote in her diary that she viewed the subject with "utter anxiety." Thoughts has to be said that many historians have suggested that Edith's views were more ambivalent and that she didn't deny she was a supporter in the first place of overwhelming public opinion that she saw. Incest has suggested the First Lady was concerned about what women's suffrage would mean for her role as her husband's champion and protect. Woodrow eventually changed his mind on the matter, possibly influenced because of women's efforts in World War I, and Edith took the opportunity to persuade her husband to voting for the next president in 1920.
The Secret Presidency Of Edith Wilson

“Edith’s denial of reality saw her implore her husband to seek a third term in 1920, when he could not even make it down the corridor to his office”

for a long time. Eventually the issue was brought before the president and he was able to direct a solution and diffuse the crisis. Edith’s handling of the storm around the United States joining the League of Nations has also been intensely debated, with some commentators theorizing that Edith’s failure to bring differing voices before the president—rather than just her own—meant there was less chance of Woodrow offering compromises to his opponents, and therefore the possibility of the country becoming a member of the League was lost.

However the reader stands on the matter of whether Edith was or was not the ‘secret president’. It is clear that her role in constraining access to her husband meant she was able to frustrate those advisors of Mr. she dismissed. The First Lady’s chief concern was in facilitating the president’s public service by being his closest confidante and advisor, she was fiercely protective and had a long-held hostility towards many politicians in his circle. Woodrow’s advisor, Edward M. House, and his Secretary of the Treasury, William G. McAdoo, for example, offended Edith when they encouraged the president not to marry her ahead of the 1916 presidential election, using a fictional blackmail threat from Mary Hulbert Peck - a woman Woodrow had been close to during his first marriage - to bolster their attempts. Often Edith was suspicious of included; Joe Turpentine, her husband’s personal secretary, who also cautioned against the marriage taking place at that time, Secretary of State Robert Lansing - who saw her as a traitor because he held cabals in the Woodrow was ill following his stroke; and Harry Gable Lodge, the Republican senator who sponsored the opposition to America approving the Treaty of Versailles - Edith had her revenge on the latter by relaying his request to address the president’s forum.

Given the severity of Woodrow’s condition, it seems extraordinary that he remained in post as president. It is unclear how the history of post-World War I America, which suffered the same economic gloom as Europe, could have been different if vice president Thomas R. Bayard had taken over, and government had been able to operate at its full efficiency. Edith’s denial of reality saw her implore her husband to seek a third term in 1920, when he could not even make it down the corridor to his office. But the Democrats did not nominate him, and Republican Warren G. Harding was elected in 1920 on a campaign promising “a return to normalcy.” In March that year the former president and first lady settled into a new home in Washington and Edith cared for her husband until he died in 1924 aged 61. She devoted the rest of her life to ensuring his legacy lived on - her autobiography My Memories (1936) was a bestseller, she permitted the couple’s love letters to be collected and published after her death, and she assisted Ray Stannard Baker in collecting material for his authorised, eight-volume biography of Woodrow, which won the Pulitzer Prize. Edith also donated her husband’s papers to the Library of Congress, and the establishment of what became the Woodrow Wilson Library and Museum at the Virginia residence where Woodrow had been born, died, in 1942, the script for the Hollywood movie His dinner, and took part in the Woodrow Wilson Centennial Events in 1958, celebrating 100 years since his birth.

The former First Lady remained relatively active in Democratic Party circles for the rest of her life. She campaigned for Franklin D. Roosevelt when he was a nominee for the presidency (Edith was a long-time friend of Roosevelt and his wife Eleanor); took part in party conventions, and in 1961 Edith was invited by John F. Kennedy to join his inaugural proceedings. Expressing her keenest devotion to her husband for his memory, Edith was on the day she died due to attend the unveiling of the Woodrow Wilson Memorial Bridge, built in link Washington to Maryland and Virginia. This date, 26 December 1961, was the anniversary of her husband’s 105th years earlier. The 89-year-old Edith was buried alongside Woodrow at the Washington National Cathedral following her funeral there. She is the only First Lady to have been buried at the cathedral.

Edith’s ‘secret presidency’ has continued to fascinate, and it was brought into the spotlight when Hillary Clinton voted to become the US’s first woman president. As that ignoble glass ceiling continues to elude women, Edith’s unlikely story will surely continue to be debated and enjoyed.
Vincent van Gogh may be celebrated for his masterpieces, but his greatest legacy - and the key to understanding the man himself - are his letters.

To encourage it, without question or complaint. It would take just over two years for Vincent's prophecy of the "painter of the future" to come true, and despite his assertions, it was Vincent who would be the artist to fulfill it. By that time, Vincent would also be dead.

In his youth, Vincent had never intended to become an artist. Born on 30 March 1853, Vincent was the first surviving child of Reverend Theo van Gogh and his wife, Anna van Gogh. Four years after Vincent's birth, Theo was born. Among a brood of six, Theo and Vincent were especially close, and when his childhood came to an end, he began his first job. Vincent took up his pen to write to his brother, his first masterpiece to Theo written in 1871 while Vincent worked in The Hague. Three years before, Vincent had taken up a position at Goupil & Cie, an international art dealer that opened up the world to the young man. He was dismissed in 1872, but in the years before, Vincent had lived and worked in Brussels, London.
and Paris, where he installed his passion for art by collecting prints and visiting galleries. With his career in the art world seemingly at an end, Vincent devoted himself to his latest emerging passion: God. He was determined to follow in his father’s footsteps, begging Theo in a letter dated 23 March 1877 to “cast your eye up on high and ask that it be granted to me.” Over the course of three years, Vincent’s determination turned to obsession, and his letters were soon filled with religious fervor, or lamenting at the long path ahead of him: “If only everything were already behind me, as it is behind Father, but it takes so much hard work to become a Christian labourer and a preacher of the Gospel.” After moving to England even more, Vincent’s quest to join the family made him to The Hague in Belgium, where he became a preacher to coal miners. Living in squalid conditions in a break town, Vincent attempted to devote himself to his new congregation, but his methods angered the ire of his superiors and he was quickly stripped of his position.

After just over two years, Vincent’s devotion to God began to cool, and by 1879 he had abandoned his aspirations to join the clergy. Instead, Vincent was resolved to become an artist. However, with no income and an expensive new profession, Vincent needed money. It was at this point that Theo became Vincent’s “patron,” a role that he would continue until his brother’s dying day. It was a blessing, but the debt hung over Vincent’s head like a storm cloud, as he explained in August 1879: “I’ve never been in a position that I was a nuisance or a burden to you or those at home, then I should be overwhelmed by a feeling of sadness and should have to work with despair.”

In the time between Vincent’s career in the clergy stalling and taking up art full-time, Vincent’s relationship with his family began to crumble too. “For the past three years or so... I have been more or less without permanent employment, wandering from pillar to post,” Vincent wrote to Theo in July 1880. Aware of his own failings and utterly convinced of his father’s disappointment in him, Vincent and his letter quarreled frequently, with Theodore even threatening to send his son to an institution. “To the family I have, willy-nilly, become a more or less objectionable and study sort of character at any rate a bad lot,” lamented Vincent.

Things weren’t to improve in the coming months. Despite their clashes, Vincent moved back in with his parents in April 1881. Having fallen madly in love with his cousin, Leo, Vincent was shocked in three coming words: “Never, no, never.” While Kees and Vincent’s parents were satisfied that this was the end of the matter, Vincent continued to pursue her. “Should I resign myself to that ‘never, no, never,’ or consider the matter as yet settled & done with, keep to good heart and not give up...” wrote Vincent on 3 November. With Vincent determined to win over Kees, his relationship with his parents continued to deteriorate until he was forced to move, taking up residence once again in The Hague in January 1882. Here, things went from bad to worse. Having started studying under celebrated watercolorist Anton Mauve the year before, Vincent’s mentor encouraged Vincent to devote himself to figure
Van Gogh and Britain

Carol Jacobs, curator of the Tate Britain's newest exhibition, explains how Vincent's early years in England shaped him

How important was his time in Britain?

Very. Van Gogh touched down from many places in the world, including Britain. His time in England was a pivot of change and the first time he really was a solo artist. When he wrote home to his brother Theo later that year, he described himself as a “completely independent artist” and boasted about his “independence” in the way that he was working on his “sculpture of the countryside.” The exhibition explores this period in detail.

What made Britain so appealing to him?

It was a real rebellion against the French lifestyle and society. Britain was a place where he could be a “completely independent artist” and where he could work on his “sculpture of the countryside.” The exhibition explores this period in detail.

What changed for him in Britain?

As an employee of a British firm, Van Gogh found himself in a new environment and a new culture. He found himself working with a new people and a new society. He was able to work on his “sculpture of the countryside” and his “independence” in a way that he had never been able to before.

What can we expect from the exhibition?

The Tate exhibition: Van Gogh and Britain runs at Tate Britain on 27 March - 11 August 2025. Tickets are £22.99, concessions available.

Visit www.tate.org.uk for more information.
Vincent van Gogh

At the year’s end, Vincent found his domestic life with Sien limiting his artistic output. He longed to leave The Hague, and by autumn he moved to Drenthe, but he was plagued by guilt for abandoning her, as he described to his brother in early October: “I know that she is no good, that I have every right to do all I am doing that I could not stay with her there, that I really could not take her with me, but that doesn’t add the fact that it costs right through me.”

After several months in Drenthe, Vincent returned to live with his parents, taking up his own studio. Despite the death of his father in 1883, Vincent continued to work diligently and by spring he was on the brink of completing his first masterpieces, The Potato Eaters. In a letter dated 30 April 1885, his excitement was palpable: “It might just turn out to be a genuine peasant painting. I know that it is. But anyone who prefers to have his peasants looking neatly-parried had best run himself.”

In March 1886, Vincent travelled to Paris to live with Theo, where he not only became acquainted with new artistic trends, but where he became close to several artists, including Emile Bernard, Henri de Toulouse-Lautrec and Paul Gauguin. Few letters exist from the period, but Vincent continued to struggle financially, painting dozens of self-portraits to make up for the shortage of affordable models. Despite the hardships of Parisian life, Vincent and Theo’s relationship was nurtured, as Vincent admitted in a letter to his sister, Willemien, in the summer of 1885: “I didn’t have Theo, I should not be able to do justice to my work, but having him by a friend, I’m sure I shall make a hit and things will fall into place.”

He went on to admit, “As soon as possible, I plan to spend some time in the south, where there is even more colour and even more sun.”

“When I left Paris I was in a very state, quite ill and almost an alcoholic.” Vincent revealed in a letter to Gauguin on 13 October 1888. Indeed, in February Vincent had moved south, where he spent his first weeks recuperating during unusually bad weather. Once the weather cleared, however, Vincent fell ill with the climate and countryside. “I have never had such luck before, nature here is extraordinarily beautiful. Everything and everywhere” he wrote in September. It was here that Vincent acquired the Yellow House, where he envisioned an artists’ commune with himself and “a fine-face painter” – Gauguin – as permanent residents.

Vincent began to paint in current, determined to placate the walls of the Yellow House with paintings of people and sunflowers. In Vincent’s vision Gauguin arrived in Arles in October. At first the pair seemed to work well together, but cracks quickly began to appear. By December the situation was tense, with the artists frequently bickering. By this point, Vincent was low, and on 23 December 1888, Vincent penned a quick note to his brother, stating, “I think that Gauguin was a little discontented with the good

“Vincent painted many self-portraits to make up for the shortage of affordable models.”

Of course, portrait of Vincent owned by the author of anything, was not by Vincent at all, but painted long ago. There is a nice sense in it, however, of what it means to be an artist.
Vincent: In His Own Words

A Fatal Inheritance

Vincent wasn't the only one to suffer from mental health problems.

Theodorus van Gogh
1828-1885
Born on 31st June 1828, Vincent's father was a partner in the Dutch Reformed Church. Theodorus and Vincent had a close relationship, with Vincent believing that he was a disappointment to his father. Theodorus suffered a stroke and died in 1883.

Anna Car bentus
1839-1907
Anna was born on 1st September 1839 and married Vincent's father on 30th June 1863. She was a strong and loving mother. However, Vincent didn't have a good relationship with his mother after the death of his father.

Vincent van Gogh
1853-1890
The eldest son of Theo van Gogh, a middle-aged artist and writer, and Anna van Gogh. Vincent was born on 30th March 1853 and spent most of his life in France and the Netherlands.

Theodorus 1873-1890
Vincent's younger brother. Theo was five years younger than Vincent and was the one who became the family's primary contact in the Netherlands. Theo moved to Paris in 1886 and remained there for the rest of his life.

Elisabeth van Gogh
1859-1936
The eldest daughter of Theo and Anna, Elisabeth was a brilliant artist and married Paul Gauguin in 1888. She was a key figure in the formation of the Impressionist movement.

Carrie Forman
1856-1960
The second eldest daughter of Theo and Anna, Wilhelmina. She was born on 5th July 1856 and married Paul Gauguin in 1886. She remained a strong and supportive figure throughout Vincent's life.

The town ofviewModel's the yellow house where we work, and above all with me!" That fatal evening, Vincent attempted to attack Gauguin with a razor. Gauguin narrowly escaped and, in a fit of rage, Vincent cut off his own ear, wrapped it in newspaper and gave it to a prostitute, at his local brothel. If not for that event, he might have been a schoolmaster.

In the wake of Vincent's mental breakdown, he was placed in a hospital, where he remained until early January 1889. He attempted to return to the Yellow House but, frightened by the events of 23 December, he found himself at home with his parents. Vincent's health was much improved by the time he returned home in February 1889. He worked on his painting of a window, an oil he subsequently destroyed.

On 15 July 1889, Vincent van Gogh cut off part of his ear in despair over his failure to sell his paintings. He was admitted to a hospital in Saint-Rémy where he was cared for by the doctor Dr. Paul Gachet. It was here that Vincent found a moment of peace and tranquility. He lived and worked in the hospital for a year, from December 1889 to December 1890, his painting career taking a new direction.

On 27 July 1890, Vincent van Gogh died of self-inflicted gunshot wounds at the age of 37. His death shocked the art world and his work was recognized posthumously as a masterpiece of the Impressionist movement.

Vincent was not the only one to suffer from mental health problems. His family, including his mother, brother and sister, were all affected by mental illness. According to one of Vincent's biographers, Emily Bernard, "Theodore van Gogh died in 1883, months before the first formal argument between Vincent and his mother, van Gogh's husband, the bank manager. This almost was a fatal inheritance, since in Pelican the woman's illnesses from generation to generation."

Vincent was very sympathetic and acute with the mental problems of his family. He was very close to his brothers and sisters and was aware of their struggles. He tried to understand their pain and offer them support. However, he was also aware of the difficulties of living in a family with mental health problems.

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We take a closer look at some of the strangest things the Allied and Axis powers came up with to take on their adversaries

Written by Jonathan Gordon

Throughout human history, wars have been a catalyst for invention. In fact, hardship of any kind can lead to new concepts and ways of thinking to emerge and World War II had no shortage of hardship or incentives, some of the latter being as devastating and disruptive as the planet had ever seen. Here however, we thought we would concentrate on some of the stranger concepts. Whether successful or not, the tools and weapons we have chosen display a kind of outside the box thinking or disruption of convention that can so often lead to great ideas.

More often than not, the things that stood in the way of these inventions were not making an impact was a lack of resources or being slightly too outside the realm of possibility for technology at that time. From giant weapons that dwarfed the battlefield to funny ways of maintaining the tank, even the ideas that were failures have gone on to be adapted or reformed as entirely new devices and innovations that continue to affect our lives and have a massive impact on modern fields of battle. So, let’s take a look at some of WWII’s stranger contributions to military tactics.
GUSTAV RAILWAY GUN
The biggest gun ever made
Made by: Germany Date: July 1942

The thinking behind the Gustav gun doesn’t appear to have been too sophisticated. It was big. Very big. The barrel alone was over 47 metres long and the whole machine weighed around 2,310 tonnes. The reason it was so big was that it was needed to breach the defences of the heavily fortified Maginot Line and that meant munitions of a size and weight previously unheard of.

The gun itself was originally commissioned in 1934 by the German Army from Krupp AG, a leading arms manufacturer. It was requested to be completed by the spring of 1940 to launch an assault on the Maginot Line and begin the invasion of France. However, complications in its construction meant it wasn’t ready for test firing until 1944 and was first deployed in Sevastopol in early 1942.

While Sevastopol was devastated by the German offensive, the Gustav only fired 46 rounds before it broke out of its barrel (it had fired 220 in testing already). It also needed 4,000 men to move it into position and 500 men to fire it. After a brief appearance in Warsaw in 1944 to quell an uprising, the gun appears to have been scrapped to avoid its being captured.

SHERMAN CRAB
Enter the mine fail
Made by: Britain Date: 1944

The idea of having a tank mounted with a rotating cylinder with chains attached to it that could detonate mines ahead of it to clear a path for other armoured vehicles had been locked around for some time in British circles before it came into full effect with the Sherman Crab. South African Captain Albert du Toit is credited with the original concept of mounting such a device on the front of a tank and shared the idea with other mechanical engineers before heading to Britain to develop it further.

As it happened, multiple parallel schemes for this concept were in development from 1942, with the Sherman Crab ultimately endorsed and requested for production by General Blashford. While Lt. du Toit’s own thinking related to a flail powered by its own engine, the Crab’s flail was linked to its main engine. It was also fitted with rotors on the rear so that it could munch through barbed wire.

It was not without its issues though, as the flails could become tangled in barbed wire, causing the Crab to become stuck. It could only move at 3mph while it was clearing mines. It could also only catch so many mines and the chains could be blown off in the process. It was noted that the Crab was especially useful in areas where the Allies had already cleared out enemy forces.

DID IT WORK?
It remained unsuccessful as a flank, but it was used extensively and wasn’t actually built in time to do the job it was meant to.
Odd battle ideas

PROJECT HABAKKUK
The iceberg aircraft carrier
Made by: Britain Date: 1943

It is an irony to remind the war of limited coal stocks and aluminum supplies with which to build new ships. Geoffrey Pike picked a rather innovative aircraft carrier made from ice. His proposal was to use an iceberg, whether naturally formed or manufactured, because it could serve as a housing, and use it as a means for aircraft to be transported and deployed on the ocean. Pike began work with Auchinleck who gave him the go-ahead to devise a way to use a glacier to build a ship, although the ice would be so soft and long, it needed insulation and cooling. To keep the ice molten for refueling cisterns was found to be too expensive, although the prototype took three summers to melt in Patrice Lake.

THE NELLIE
A rabbit out of Churchill’s hat
Made by: Britain Date: 1939

As war in Europe was beginning again, Churchill naturally returned to the years of conflict just a couple of decades previous and the tale of the Great War. In that time, those involved in trench warfare had advanced great new solutions to the challenges of that war which could now be found. As First Lord of the Admiralty, Winston Churchill was in charge of some of these ideas, one of which was the “White Rabbit”, a trench digging machine that could dig ahead of a column of infantry and move the trench lines without endangering troops. Codenamed Cultivate N.1 and later moved to the Ministry of Supply division for Naval Land Equipment (N.L.E.), it picked up the name Nellie. Using two twelve-cylinder, high speed diesel engines, the Nellie became something of a beast, unable to be carried by conventional transport into the field. For all that though, by 1940 it was becoming clear that smaller, less paving engines were making trench warfare untenable. As clever as the Nellie could have been, it didn’t really have a place in the conflict.

WILDLIFE AT WAR

ANTI-TANK DOGS
This is a petry ‘Samoos one in the Soviet Union first trained dogs to approach tanks and drop bombs beween them, and then turned to a traped device that detonated a bomb strapped to a dog when the original plan didn’t work. Trained dogs did this until at 42, it was not terribly effective. Some were killed before reaching targets, some oxidized returning to the Soviet lines, and some went towards Soviet forces since they were what they originally trained with.

PIGEON MISSILE
Could pigeons be trained to recognize a target and use their natural homing abilities to direct a concorsion on target? That was the question asked by Lt. Skinner in the US. With pigeons that projected images from outside into components in the missile, the pigeons were expected to pick on the correct location when they saw the correct location, moving in the image left the place and in no doing keeping the missile on target.

GOLIATH TANK
Mighty name, small stature
Made by: Germany Date: Early 1942

Nicknamed the doo-dledog by American forces, the Goliath tanks were deceptively named since they were actually small, single-use remote controlled vehicles that could be driven close to Allied tanks or camps and destroyed. Powered either on an electric or petrol engine, they lasted a two-cylinder munition to original until the Goliath was deployed against a specific target via a central box connected with a wire, allowing it to be steered. It was mostly used for blowing up enemy defenses or mine clearance although it could also be used against tanks and had a range of 600 metres. More than 7000 Goliaths were produced and it would go on to inspire remote controlled devices in the post-war years. However, they were expensive, which given they could only be used once made them very inefficient. They were also very heavy, moving at less than 10km, which meant that unless a tank was stationary it was unlikely to ever catch up with one. The limited range of the gun was also a hindrance, as was the fact it could simply be cut to make the Goliath impractical. Even then, its thin armour meant it was very vulnerable even to small arms fire.

DID IT WORK?
Not at all. The Goliath was a fail, with no mines cleared or Allied tanks destroyed.

DID IT WORK?
Not at all. The Goliath was a fail, with no mines cleared or Allied tanks destroyed.
YOKOSUKA MXY-7 OHKA
Rocket-fuelled cherry blossom
Made by: Japan Date: 1945

As US forces advanced on Japanese positions in the Pacific and the Japanese government worked to hold them off, kamikaze attacks were becoming more and more common from 1944 onwards. By 1945 a new and even more devastating form of suicide fighter was deployed by Imperial Japan. Ohka with the help of the Aeronautical Research Institute of the University of Tokyo. What would become the Ohka (which translates to cherry blossom) was a single-seat, rocket-propelled bomb. However, since it needed to be deployed at short range it did not necessarily need a highly experienced pilot to control it. Most typically attached to a Mitsubishi G4M Betty bomber, the Ohka was taken to its destination, released, needed gliding to aim at its desired naval target and then would ignite its three rockets to give it could reach speeds of nearly 1000mph in a full dive. This speed meant ships had little time to react. However, not long after their deployment in April 1945, US forces realised they had to take out the Betty to avoid the issue and while some ships were lost or damaged early on, fewer and fewer were bashed in the following days.

DID IT WORK?
No US Navy tactics to pick-off the planes carrying the Ohka soon, they were very ineffective in the field.

BAT BOMBS
Another US concept was using bats with secondary devices attached to them to start fires in Japan. A small cavity with over one thousand compartments would be filled with high explosives, then stripped with a timed bomb. As the shell fell a parachute would eventually deploy, opening up the outer casing and releasing the bats from their compartments, where they would then seek shelter in the wooden areas of buildings. Tests suggested it might prove effective, but the project was canned when it became clear it wouldn’t be ready until mid 1946.

EXPLODING RATS
Another bizarre concept conceived by the British Special Operations Executive, the idea was to fill dead rats with plastic explosives and leave them around bomber rooms in Germany. The hope was that they would then be dispersed in the furnace and explode. That alone might have proved rather untidy, but if it in turn caused a boiler explosion then the damage would be extensive. The scheme didn’t get far though as the first shipment was intercepted by the Germans, but their continued hunt for body-harpooned rodents meant a lot of wasted resources.
Odd battle ideas

PANZER VIII MAUS
The 200 tonne tank
Made by: Germany | Date: July 1944

What was it with Nazi Germany and big things? Perhaps that’s a question to be explored at another time, but like so many of the attempted super weapons of the Axis forces, this was perhaps too large for its own good. The Maus was a massive new tank, the biggest created at that time, weighing a massive 388 tonnes with armour 200mm deep at its thickest point. The intention was for it to be a battering ram against the enemy line, punching holes through anything that the Allies could throw against it and barely taking a scratch in the process. There were a number of issues, however, not least that actually getting the thing to move with an engine that could actually fit inside the tank was a challenge. Several engines were tried, but it only ever reached a max speed of 20mph. Then there was the fact that with its immense weight it couldn’t use any bridges, but this led to it becoming vulnerable with a preassured calm. While five were originally ordered, only two prototypes were completed and even then only new guns to mount on them, and not long after this happened the Soviet Army caught the testing ground for the Maus in Böbingen.

THE SUN GUN
War this WWII’s most bizarre plan?

If you were looking for a crazy invention that seems like something that belongs in a Bond film rather than in the history books then you should not miss the German’s Sun Gun. The original Sun gun proposal by German physicist Hermann Oberth in 1929 would have involved a 100-metre wide concave mirror being placed into orbit around the Earth, able to reflect concentrated sunlight back on a desired target.

During World War II, this concept was revived by the German Army Artillery who expanded the idea to include a space station that would orbit 8,000km above the planet attached to a mirror made of metallic sodium with a range up to 10,000 kilometers, maneuvered by thruster rockets to find its target. They thought that at this range it could burn city-size holes in an ocean, but surprisingly this ambitious super weapon was never attempted and it was not until the modern satellite world that this technology was used.

THE GREAT PANJANDRUM
Pinwheel of death
Made by: Britain | Date: 1944

It was 1943 and the plan for the invasion of mainland Europe by Allied forces were taking shape at pace. There were a few logistical problems, though, with the plans for sea-based landings on the west coast of Europe, not least the Atlantic Wall defences that stretched down the coast of Norway to the border between France and Spain. The Allies needed something that could launch vessels without assistance from penalised ports but would be taking two, could scale the beaches and blow a hole in the defences big enough for a tank to pass through. Enter the Panjandrum, a 1 tonne hench contained in a drum between two wooden wheels, ten feet in diameter, fitted with centre rockets that propelled the device forward. While this device was supposed to be secret, it was tested on a public beach in Devon where crowds gathered to watch despite police warnings. While the Panjandrum seemed to fit from boat to shore fairly well, it kept running uncontrollably afterwards, sometimes losing rockets that shot off in all directions. Despite several attempts to vary the number of rockets and adding a third, central wheel to mitigate, it simply wouldn’t stay on course.
**WWII's Weirdest Inventions**

**AVRE BOBBIN**

*The carpet layer*  
Made by: Britain  
Date: 1944

The plan for a beach landing on D-Day were gathering pace and new concerns for how to deal with every conceivable challenge the forces might face were being thrown at the wall. A previous attempt at a beach landing at Hopping had shown a lot of the potential shortcomings, such as not being able to get tanks in position to offer cover to ground troops. Some tanks simply hadn’t been able to move on the simple surface. While some seemed worked on explosive wheels to punch through defences and others looked to charge mines fields. This Assault Vehicle Royal Engineers tank had the very simple task of laying a carpet down for the following tanks. The Bobbin, named after the spindle of canvas it carried between two steel arms, was intended to ride ahead of a tank column as they moved the beach, giving them a more consistent surface to drive on and hopefully prevent them from sliding into the sand. Further tanks that carried wood or were partially amphibious were also designed under the command of Major General Terry Hobart, from which the term Hobart’s Funnels has been derived. They certainly were peculiar, but also rather ingenious.

**FU-GO BALLOON BOMB**

*An intercontinental weapon*  
Made by: Japan  
Date: 1944

The United States had entered the war, but while so many other nations involved were seeing their major cities attacked and infrastructure destroyed, Americans were relatively well protected by the expanse of ocean between it and the enemy both East and West. Still, the Japanese needed to do something to match the strength of American troops and the concept of a free-floating, unmanned balloon packed with explosives that would use the naturally occurring jet stream over the Pacific to reach the US was taken up. The Fu-Gos, bombs made from paper and glued together with plastic, flew down to America and strike four into the population, damaging buildings with high explosive bombs and starting fires with incendiary bombs with no way of knowing where they would land. At least, that was the theory. Only a fraction even reached America. Casualties were very low and the nationalistic that Japan hoped they would create never amounted. They were however a type of intercontinental weapon the likes of which hadn’t been attempted before, a concept that went on to dominate the post-war arms race.
Sarah Churchill
Queen Anne’s real ‘favourite’

The Favourite is drawing audiences to the lesser-known time period of Queen Anne, but what’s the real story behind the rise and fall of Sarah Churchill, Duchess of Marlborough?

Written by Andrea Bivick
Sarah Churchill

Sarah Churchill was a bright blue-eyed, modish beauty who came to the court of Charles II around the age of 12, having already been a playmate of the Princesses of York - Mary and Anne - for some years. Sarah's older sister, Frances (or Fanny) Jennings, had been at court longer, and was widely considered to be a court beauty. Sarah was involved in many aspects of court life, including the 1605 masque Calisto - which she acted in along with Anne and other court ladies. Around this time, Sarah began to believe the very shy yet stubborn Princess Anne, five years her junior. Usually eclipsed by her beautiful older sister, Mary, it was of great comfort to Anne to have this rational, self-assured older girl notice her. Anne was soon very much under Sarah's thumb - where she would be for several decades to come.

When the 25-year-old John Churchill showed a romantic interest in Sarah, the 15-year-old may have readily given him her heart, but she wouldn't give her body to him as easily. She was 16 years old and had seen how love and sexual promiscuity had bedded other young women at court to their ruin. Not only had they lost their families and reputations, but they had also worked their reputations, and some even bore illegitimate children. Churchill's own sister, Arbella, had by then become James, Duke of York's mistress and given birth to several of his children. Even Farmer was renowned to have briefly warmed the Duke's bed. Churchill himself had already indulged in a sexual relationship with King Charles II's famed mistress, Barbara Lady Castlemaine - who happened to be Churchill's cousin. Later in life Sarah wrote, "Women signify nothing unless they are the mistresses of a Prince or a first Minister, which I would not be if I were young; and there are less of any women, that have understanding or impartiality enough to serve well those they really wish to serve." If Churchill wanted to bed Sarah, he would be allowed to do so only once they were married. His family

"Anne was soon very much under Sarah's thumb"
Was Queen Anne a lesbian?

Mary are asking, after seeing The Favourite, “Was Queen Anne a lesbian? Did she engage in sex with her favourites?” It’s very hard to categorically state the nature of a historical person’s sexuality, but the answer is probably not. The caustic and insinuations leveled against the queen and Abigail Masham were more likely due to the political and personal maneuvers of a bitter and resentful woman - Sarah Churchill—who was angered by the loss of her powerful status to someone whom she considered as her social inferiors (Ogilvy). At the time, accusing someone of having same-sex relations, particularly when they held so important a political role as someone like Queen Anne, was a common tactic used in order to discredit and ruin a rival. After all, the moral tone of Queen Anne’s court was much the same as that set by the previous monarchs. William and Mary, who had sought to establish the antithesis of the debauched and sexually profligate flavour of the Restoration. The film also largely, if not wholly, omits one of the important people in Anne’s life: her beloved husband of 25 years, Prince George of Denmark.

Queen Anne’s Real ‘Favourite’

Sarah and John Churchill were a real power couple.

Sarah held many important roles at the queen’s court and is often credited with the revival of the Queen’s household in its former glory. She was known for her tact and diplomacy, and her influence on the queen was significant. Churchill was the real ‘favourite’ in Anne’s life, and her political acumen and strategic thinking were instrumental in shaping the queen’s policies and decisions. They maintained a strong and supportive relationship, and Sarah’s influence extended to her children as well. Their presence in the court and their involvement in political matters were crucial in the development of Anne’s reign.

objected to her as his bride, for she was from a poor family. They eloped, however, in 1679, with the consent of the Duke of York, and their marriage proved to be long, passionate, loving, and fertile. Sarah could be a notoriously difficult person - even her own children generally agreed on that. She was fiercely devoted to the people she loved, and was an equally fierce opponent to her enemies.

Anne already had concerns that her father, King James II, would return England to papists. It was Sarah who, in that crucial year 1688, convinced these concerns in Anne’s mind and firmly encouraged the Princess to leave London to ride with William of Orange. This abandoned her father in his hour of need. In 1689, Anne’s sister, Mary, and her husband, William, were crowned William III and Mary II. By 1692, however, many could see plainly that her sister was regularly manipulated by Sarah, and she went to Anne aiding her to the end of friendship. This led to a terrible row between the sisters - and it certainly had people talking. John Evelyn wrote, 28th February, 1692, Lord Marlborough having used words against the King, and been dismissed from all his great places. His wife was forbidden the Court, and the Princess of Denmark was denied the Queen to dismiss her from her service but she refused to do so. It goes away from Court to Nassau. The two sisters were neither reconciled nor even met again, for Mary died of smallpox in 1694. Princess Anne married Prince George of Denmark in 1683. After her marriage to George, Anne made Sarah her Lady of the Bedchamber. It was also during this time that Anne and Sarah began using pseudonyms to refer to one another; Sarah and Anne were “Mr. and Mrs. Freeman” while Anne and George were “Mr. and Mrs. Molyneux.” George, “of the success of his ridiculous, of a few words,” proved a good husband for Anne, and enjoyed a loving and faithful marriage for their tragic senses from the fate that befall their many children. They had between 16 to 18 pregnancies, which ended in miscarriages, stillbirth, or, where the child lived a young age from disease. Their longest living son, the Duke of Gloucester, died in the summer of 1696, at the age of 1. It is often unfairly said that Queen Anne was a weak woman, but to lose so many children and not lose one’s reason arguably takes great strength. The death of the only Protestant heir was a blow to Anne’s hatred of atheists. William III, and it had political repercussions. The Act of Settlement (1701) stated, “The Princess Sophia, Electress and Duchess Dowager of Hanover, Daughter of the late Queen of Bohemia, Daughter of King James the First, to inherit after the King and the Princess Anna, in deficit of issue of the said Princess and Rul Majesty, respectively and the heirs of her body, being Protestants.” William III died during the winter of 1702, from pneumonia. Within the same year that the became queen, Anne confirmed various honors on the Earl of Marlborough, making him Duke of Marlborough and a Knight of the Garter, and in 1715, Sarah, now Duchess of Marlborough, was closely supported by the Whig Party, which Anne was not - and this brought added friction to their friendship. At any rate, things had deteriorated in their relationship following the death of the Duke of Gloucester, for from that point on, Sarah’s bullying of Anne seems to have increased.
Sarah Churchill

“Sarah’s bullying of Anne seems to have increased”

Blenheim Palace, a model of which is presented before the reader here, is an enigmatic example of the height of Baroque architecture. The impressive building was designed by Sir John Vanbrugh and Nicholas Hawksmoor in the early 18th century. Construction began in 1705 and Sarah, very characteristically, ended up involving herself too much in Vanbrugh’s work, resulting in rows – especially over the costs. Finally, after finding the Duchess for too troublesome, Vanbrugh quit after the rift with Queen Anne. Finishing the building of the palace was left to the Churchill family. As a testament in stone to the glory and honour that was her husband, she had construction continue until it was finished at last in 1733. It years after Churchill’s death. However, Sarah was never particularly happy at Blenheim. In 1756, she wrote, “I never design to see Blenheim again”.

Nonetheless, to this day Blenheim Palace stands as an impressive monument to the military genius that was John Churchill, 1st Duke of Marlborough, and is now a UNESCO World Heritage site.
How did someone like Abigail Hill rise to the top of Anne's late Stuart-era court? Who was she, anyway? Abigail Hill, born around 1600, was Sarah's first cousin. Her family was bit hard financially and Abigail and some of her siblings were obliged to go into service. When Sarah was made aware of this situation with her poor relations, she obtained work for some of them in the royal household. Abigail's sister, Alice Hill, was given employment with Anne's sons, the Duke of Gloucester, as a laundress. When Queen Anne was a princess during the reign of Charles II, she had a governess, four dressers, one laundress, one usherette, and a necessary woman. This, of course, was enlarged when she became queen, as a Lady of the Bedchamber. Abigail was in close proximity to the queen. Abigail would not have obtained this position had she not been connected to Sarah, but once she was there, this yeoman woman did her job well, and the queen noticed.

In 1707, while Sarah was absent from court, the queen attended the marriage of Abigail to Samuel Mitham, who, although a rather poor farmer, was still considered above his station. When Sarah found out that this had taken place without her knowledge, she was incensed. Sarah knew that if her power over Anne declined, this would have negative repercussions on her husband, John, and their children. Fortunately, this did not stop Sarah from being extremely rude to Anne. She still treated her like a little girl, and continually told her to "be quiet" outside St Paul's Cathedral. It is no great wonder, therefore, that someone who feels increasingly ignored, belittled, and disrespected by their best friend, will naturally gravitate to another who is kinder and more obliging. Abigail, although a mere bedchamber woman, increasingly provided the compassionate and deferential treatment that Anne needed. We can't be certain if she was sincere in her behavior towards Anne, but her technique in handling Queen Anne certainly worked.

In 1708, Prince George died, yet another massive blow to Anne's already greatly bemused state. In the film, The Favourite, Queen Anne is depicted as a very ill woman, distressed by a variety of physical health problems including gout, and suffering from short sightedness. This was certainly true. During her youth, her eyes were considered as poor, that she was sent away to the French court to have her vision treated by the more experienced eye physicians there. She had suffered smallpox when she was 12. Her body had gone through the emotional and physical upheaval of so many pregnancies. These ailments were exacerbated by the fact that she was also overweight, if not obese. In 1709, a solution was reached entitled: Secret Memoirs And Matters Of Several Persons Of Quality was published in London. Although given false names, the thirty-something Duke and Duchess of Marlborough were mentioned several times, including references to Churchill's past sexual relationship with Barbara Villiers.

As Abigail Mitham became more familiarly entwined as the new royal favorite, her cousin, the Tory politician Robert Harley, was on the ascent. He knew he needed to get the Duchess of Marlborough out of the way. Around this time, Anne decided to give Abigail her brother John Hill the regiment recently made vacant by the death of the Earl of Ears. This was a blatant snub to Marlborough, who was Hills' undisputed superior in all things military. Things became so bad between the two factions that some of the Duke of Marlborough's close supporters began to wonder if they should put the queen on the spot during Parliament and ask her to sack Mrs Mitham. They ended up deciding against this, but that they considered it indicated the political power that came with being the queen's favorite.

Not only was Abigail firmly in the Tory camp, it has been argued that she was also a lesbian. In 1712, Abigail gand the Tower had well and truly supplanted Sarah and the Whig in Queen Anne's heart, and the Marlboroughs were dismissed from court and sent abroad.

Queen Anne died in a coma at Kensington Palace following a prolonged smile in 1714. By the terms of the Act of Settlement, the throne was now in the hands of Elector Sophia's eldest son, George I who would rise as King George I from 1714-1727. Although the Marlborough family's fortunes had gone downhill at the fall of Queen Anne's reign, things improved in the Georgian era - but only in some aspects. For example, they were able to return to England and Marlborough was given his old position as Captain-General. There were more troubles to come, however - notably when Sarah had notorious falling-out with several of her children, including her daughters, Henrietta and Mary. Then, went of, John Churchill, Duke of Marlborough, died in 1722 - but the construction of Blenheim Palace was completed.

Towards the end of her life, Sarah Churchill published her memoirs, entitled An Account Of The Conduct Of The Doughty Duchess Of Marlborough in 1722. This fascinating book gives us great insight into her views on events that occurred and people she knew in her life. The last Duchess of Marlborough died 18 October 1744 - bringing to an end the life of one of the most powerful, and wealthy women in the world. She was 84 years old - an impressive age to reach, especially in the early Modern period. She will inevitably that she wished to be buried at Blenheim Palace near the body of her "Dear Husband", John, late Duke of Marlborough and, accordingly, the couple remains interred side-by-side in the palace chapel to this day. In summary, then, while The Favourite is in large part fictional, it is nonetheless an enjoyable, visually stunning romp based on the story of these historical persons.
Battle of Tours

F

ond of the blood-soaked sands of the Middle East in 660 CE, the Umayyad Caliphate started as a localized, family-run dynasty secured after numerous interminable wars that soon began to rapidly consume the territories around it, marching out from its capital in Damascus to cast its shadow as far as Hispania (modern-day Spain) by 714 CE. Ruled by its founder, Mu'awiyah I, an Islamic leader from a merchant family initially opposed to the Prophet Mohammed, the Umayyad Caliphates expansion was fueled by a desire to further the cause of Islam. It proved to be a very successful policy, with the bulk of the Middle East (including Iran, Iraq and Saudi Arabia) brought to heel, as well as the northern coast of Africa and, after less than a decade of campaigning against the ruling Visigoths (German tribemen) almost all of Hispania.

With the mighty Byzantine Empire bordering the Umayyad's northern fringe, the next logical target for the Umayyad armies to take in 720 CE was the west beyond the imposing Pyrenees Mountains: the Frankish Kingdom.

Also known as France, the greatest Barbarian Kingdom of Western Europe was in fact now a patchwork of independent kingdoms than a united realm. The fractious nature of Franks convinced the Umayyad Caliphate that the region represented easy pickings, inspiring an enormous host of 40,000 men to cross the mountains separating the Frankish Kingdom from Hispania (now renamed as the Empire of Charlemagne). Surprising them in their cause, and supremely confident of victory, the Umayyads had failed to take a formidable foe into account: Charles the Hammer.

The illegitimate son of Pepin II, the mayor of the palace of Aquitaine (the western Frankish kingdom), Charles Martel was born in Henri, Belgium, in 668. With no power to his name and impressed by his father's widow in 714, a young Charles somehow managed to engineer his escape and set about hunting Pepin's legitimate grandsons for control. By 778, having tested his rivals in battle after battle, Charles had restored his rule as mayor of Aquitaine.

Now content to govern this region alone, Charles waged relentless campaigns throughout the Frankish Empire, subduing the majority of the Franks and halting any from forming a future ally in Odo the Great of Aquitaine.

While Charles focused on strengthening his grip on his new kingdom, the Umayyads ventured even further into France, milking it in 720. With his rule over Aquitaine seriously threatened, Odo marched an army to the besieged city and defeated the Muslims, investing it; infliction a fatal blow on the invaders in their efforts to conquer the Franks.

It is a bid to solidify the borders of Aquitaine; Odo dejarly married his daughter to a relic Merovingian Berber by the name of Witigo (or Nainoa). Yet his military and political successes were not gained without price by Charles Martel - quite the opposite. Ignoring the Pope's pleas, appeal of Odo as a form of the Christian faith, Charles deliberately broke the fragile peace with Aquitaine by marching into Odo's lands. Having pillaged the region not once but twice, Charles then deserted left in harry before returning to his kingdom, satisfied that he had served his rival a stunning reminder of who really held sway. Yet, while Odo was out, the stylishly dressed by Charles' invasion, the Frankish monarch's incursion had the unintended effect of aiding the Umayyads, who had exploited the internal struggles of the two communities to
The reminder of his army had now caught up, bringing Alcuhyad's strength to approximately 30,000 and enabling the Muslim command to unleash the first of many waves of cavalry charges. As the sun's brilliance beneath a sea of charging horses and the war cries of the Umayyads, Charlemagne armed with two-handed greaves, spurs, and morion sharp function (showing arm) pressed together and bellowed themselves. Where the first Umayyad riders who had not been brought down by an axe smashed into the Frankish shields their spears and curved swords met chariots and steel with every stroke. Screaming horses fell in twisted heaps as row upon row smashed below the ferocious slashes of the Frankish soldiers.

Maintaining his composer, Charles kept Odin's cavalry out of the fray and implored his men to stand their ground. Another wave of Umayyad cavalry soon charged into the Frankish infantry, then another, the relentless assault gradually carrying them down into the defenders' lines. Yet any path to the Umayyads managed to close were quickly closed behind them as horsemen formed themselves couched by a sea of swords. At one point, a host of Umayyad riders surged towards Charles in the hope of decapturing the Frankish army only to be illustrated when a wall of infantry formed outwards that would not yield. Instantly despite his mounting losses, Alcuhyad continued to throw his cavalry at the invincible Frankish, each rider having to navigate a slope.

The Rear's second the last battle to be offered Muslim attack.
Battle of Tours

FRANKISH EMPIRE

NUMBER OF TROOPS
30,000

DIVISIONS OF CAVALRY
12

LOSSES
1,000

UMAYYAD CALIPHATE

NUMBER OF TROOPS
30,000

MOSTLY CAVALRY

LOSSES
10,000

CHARLES MARTEL

Marched from Aquitaine to the Bregence near Poitiers
Putting the Frankish army to flight

ABDUL RAHMAN AL-CHAFIDI

Fast already opposed himself as governor of Al-Andalus
A competent commander who tactically subdued
On the Great Plain
Three battle lines of battles charged on unhorsed ground

INFERIRY

The experienced Frankish infantrymen at Tours
were led by a well-organized and efficient defensive posture
Always prominent was their shield, especially in the center
Lacked the mobility and range afforded by the Muslim cavalry

FRANCISCA THROWING AXE

With a weapon much feared and feared soldiers under self-driving men
This lethal projectile was a symbol of the Frankish army's fearlessness in battle
Thrown on the march, it could decimate an army's front line
This weapon would have been incredibly useful to use in the chaos of battle

HEAVY CAVALRY

The larger number of Muslim troops was due to their cavalry
A combination of speed, coordination, and shock effect
This allowed them to break through the Frankish lines

SPEAR

The Frankish spear was a key weapon in their defense
It allowed them to repel invaders and push them back
However, it was also a weakness, as it could be broken in close-quarters combat
Greatest Battles

OCT 732
The Franks defeat the Umayyads despite the sheer brute power of the Moors

01 The element of surprise
After the defeat of the Umayyads at the Battle of Tours, Charles secured his father’s victory at Poitiers with a brilliant maneuver. He sent his army to the rear of the enemy, as the Moors pursued the Franks, while a portion of his army feigned retreat to draw the Umayyads into a trap. Charles then attacked the Umayyads from the rear, overwhelming them with a surprise attack. This tactic allowed the Franks to emerge victorious despite being outnumbered.

02 Skirmishes
During the retreat, the Umayyads engaged in numerous skirmishes, each of which was fought individually. Charles’ army, led by the general Taurin, inflicted significant losses on the Moors, who were unable to coordinate their efforts adequately. This continued to erode the Umayyads’ morale and inflicted casualties on their army.

03 Reinforcements arrive
While the Franks were repositioning for the final assault, Charles received reinforcements from his loyal vassals. These reinforcements bolstered the Franks’ morale and allowed them to continue the fight against the Umayyads.

04 Charge!
After a week of negotiating, the Franks launched a final assault. Charles personally led the charge, rallying his troops to宋体字

It was ultimately the element of surprise and the skillful maneuvering that contributed to the victory. The Umayyads were caught off guard, and their retreat only further disorganized their forces. Charles secured his father’s victory and ensured the survival of the Frankish kingdom.

All in all, the Battle of Tours marked a significant turning point in the history of the Franks and laid the foundation for their eventual expansion into the Mediterranean region.
Battle of Tours

10 The Hammer smashes Al-Qahafi
Driven by sheer greed, the Umayyads pay no heed to the size of their outnumbered foe as they urge them to return and fight. Their vanguard clashes with the nobler, unhitched hussars of the Franks, who attack the Umayyad left in the rear. The Frankish fringes do not stand a chance, and the Umayyads charge them down the back of the Franks’ line. No quarter is given. The victorious Frankish Franks return to the frontlines and prepare to reinforce their center.

09 Muslim cavalry rallies back
Desperate to save the land they have lost, swarms of Muslim cavalry engage the Franks in the north and encourage the assault on the Franks’ left by their cavalry, causing the Umayyad army to withdraw.

08 Raid on the Unayyad encampment
To reassert control and autonomy, the Frankish army quickly puts the camp to the sword and then captures the area. They then launch a counterattack toward the Umayyad army, setting the stage for the final battle.

07 Odo outflanks the enemy
Each time that the Franks’ center opens, the Frankish Franks are quickly met with formidable Frankish Franks, who attack them with a heavy and devastating force, causing the Umayyad army to retire. The Franks then move forward to prevent the Umayyad army from flanking their left.

06 A crack in the ice
Fighting fiercely, the Umayyad Franks are defeated. The Franks manage to outflank the Umayyad Franks and force them to retreat. The Umayyad Franks retreat to the rear and regroup, ready to fight again.

05 Hold the line
As the enemy begins to move across the field, the Franks’ lines tighten and move their armor, presenting the Frankish Franks with a training wall of steel and shield. Charles was relying on his heavily armed Franks to stand firm and stop the Muslim Franks from advancing, giving the Franks a chance to offensively reorient their forces.

04 Franks sack the Umayyad Franks
The Muslim Franks are taken by surprise, and the Franks’ Franks quickly seize the opportunity to outflank the Umayyad Franks, causing them to retreat.

03 Muslim cavalry charges across
As the Franks begin to engage their enemy, the Franks’ Franks charge across the field, stunning the Muslim Franks and causing them to retreat.

02 Franks defeat the Umayyad Franks
The Frankish Franks quickly move to engage the Umayyad Franks, causing them to retreat and surrender.

01 Stalemate
The battle is fought at full speed, and it is a matter of time before one side is defeated.
CAESAR SURVIVES ASSASSINATION ATTEMPT

A defiant Julius Caesar vows to continue his moves towards autocratic rule and forge a new era for all of Rome.

EXCLUSIVE Interview With

PROFESSOR CATHERINE SITTL

What was happening in the events leading up to Caesar's assassination on 15 March 44 BCE? On the eve before, Caesar had plans for a campaign against Mithras, and was preparing for his imminent departure. It was days before he was planning to leave, and clearly his departure forced the pace of the conspirators' actions. If they were to eliminate Caesar, they needed to do so before he departed. On the other hand, in the city and its environs there were a number of developments which in Rome that consolidated Caesar's power as supreme ruler, including dictatorship for life. It was Caesar's consolidation of power, in ways that were looked upon as unconstitutional and incompatible with the republic that made the conspirators believe that he had to be eliminated. Who were the conspirators that wanted to assassinate Caesar? Well, it was a large conspiracy. The "SAD" CONSPIRATORS BELIEVED "FAKE NEWS" SAYS CAESAR

In a stinging public address distributed by small birds around all of Rome, Julius Caesar has called upon his loyal base of supporters to stick by him in what promises to be a challenging month in the wake of an attempted assassination. "Brutus & co were low IQ people. No brains at all. They bought into FAKE NEWS that I want to be a dictator. Am only one who can make Rome great. SAD," he explained.

The conspirators against Caesar were led by Brutus.
EXCLUSIVE IDES OF MARCH BANQUET OFFER

ALL YOU CAN CARRY

Readers of What If can enjoy a very special offer: all-you-can-carry at Romulus Thermopoula for just 5 sedes. Offer is available from 11am to 11am from 15 March to 18 March. All of our takeaway foods. Cut out this coupon as proof of purchase and gorge yourself on our delicious kikis, omelettes, cheese, global and much more.
person who was thought to be the leader was Bitha. He may not have been the initiator of it, but when he comes on board he is regarded as his leader because of his authority, the respect with which he was held, his singleness of aim and, Perhaps, to a certain extent his own family history.

And they were concerned about the amount of power Caesar would have? We, 2nd although Caesar never called himself a king, that sense that absolute power was incompatible with the Roman republic, and Rome had a history of eliminating tyrants, was an important part of the way that the conspirators framed their action and explained it. Ultimately, that was its justification.

What happened on the day of the assassination? Caesar was killed in a meeting of the Senates by the conspirators. We’re told that a large number gathered around him and stabbed him. It was a collective action—no one blow on its own was fatal. And he was the only person killed. Indeed, the conspirators were very careful not to include any of Caesar’s circle within the victims, perfectly because they were worried about how they justified the act. This wasn’t just a purge of Caesar and his party. This was an elimination of a tyrant.

What happens after Caesar’s death? In the run-up to civil war to Rome? In the immediate aftermath of the assassination, the conspirators attempted to measure the Roman populous that Caesar was dead, but that he was a tyrant and there is no cause for pause, that one interpretation of the conspirators, who sort of have a minority in the days after Caesar’s death, is that they haven’t really thought through. They seem to be working on the assumption that you get rid of Caesar, and that on its own is enough. And of course what happens is that other factions within Rome respond very rapidly to what has happened, partly because of the opportunities but also because no one can be quite sure what the consequences actually started. What we find in the days after Caesar’s death is the emergence of two major factions: the conspirators and Antony, a key supporter of Caesar. And we have this quite surprising ability of both sides to believe, at least for the time being, in peace. They thought that Caesar would be the only person in the was not by any means the most likely outcome. And yet the conspirators and Anthony effectively negotiate an amnesty. That is, there is no penalty for the killing of Caesar, but in the same time two nobles desiring or what Caesar had done. And then in the weeks and months that follow, Anthony continues to consolidate his position (although it eventually leads to civil wars).

It’s said that Caesar had some reservations about going to the meeting, including a dream from his wife Calpurnia. Do we know if these are true? Well, we can’t tell whether it’s true or not. It’s a story that’s told about the events of the day but of course these are stories that create a dramatic narrative, in which Caesar goes despite having information that might suggest he should not.

So what if he had never gone to the meeting, and he had never been assassinated? He would have presumably led Rome and defeated for the Parthian campaign. I think there’s little evidence that his power would have been significantly underestimated at Rome in part because he had ensured that his supporters would continue to hold office during his absence. I think we can assume that as long as Caesar was alive, Rome would have retained a powerful fleet for him. So what are the outcomes of the Parthian campaign? Well, one possibility is that he carries out a successful campaign and returns to Rome in triumph, the greater and more glorious part of his entire career, his position of power consolidated for the rest of his life. And I think we probably need to assume that on his death he would have restored a successor. The other possibility is the Parthian campaign goes wrong, and Caesar is killed during it, in which case I think we think then assume a similar sort of power struggle develops at Rome as it appears we see after his assassination.

Did Caesar want to emulate Alexander the Great? Possibly. Alexander is a extraordinary glamorous and attractive figure. And the stories we have of Caesar are of him wanting, because he was the time, he was interested in Alexander and he did achieve nothing. So that could well have been part of how Caesar packaged a successful Parthian campaign.
Would Caesar have continued moving towards autocratic power, with himself at the helm? The direction of travel towards autocratic power was pretty firmly in place by the time of Caesar's death, and the sequence of events that leads to Augustus emerging as sole ruler in 27 BCE might not necessarily have been followed if Caesar hadn't died in 44 BCE. There's plenty of evidence to suggest that Caesar had identified his great nephew Octavian as a promising young man, and he might well have looked like the next person to follow Caesar.

Could there have been less civil wars and less bloodshed without Caesar's assassination? Yes: it is entirely possible from an internal point of view, because Caesar's assassination did leave a power vacuum, and civil war was a result in order to fill it. So yes, it is entirely possible to imagine a sequence of events in which Caesar dies at the age of 44 and there is a peaceful transition. I don’t think that the only outcome is a very volatile world, and it is one in which civil war has changed from the inescapable to the thinkable. Augustus managed to make it at the time of his death by the establishment of a system of authority. One of the key factors in Augustus' achievement of that is his consolidation of the army, and his establishment of a fiscal system that allowed the army to be paid. We have very little sense of how Caesar might have tackled those problems.

Would our view of that period today be significantly different? Caesar's assassination became hugely important symbolically, as the death of a tyrant, and from that point of view it remains extremely significant for Augustus. Some of the ways in which he tackled the problem of how to be an autocrat de seem to have been shaped by his great uncle's death. The other major change would be that Augustus' poetry would have looked very different. Virgil and others and then subsequently even Ovid would have been writing in a world that was peaceful. Some of the fundamental works of European literature are so embedded in a very precise historical context of the 30s and 20s BCE. It's quite interesting to speculate what would have come out instead.

Had Caesar's Parthian campaign been successful, would we view him as Caesar the Great now? Caesar had already established a pretty substantial military authority, which is very much part of his reputation. So I'm not sure it would have fundamentally changed that sense of Caesar as the great military strategist who then consolidates that into personal power. I think it was a course of action that absolutely fitted with the antonies and the profile and the power that he had already established.
HISTORY OF THE WRITTEN WORD

What can we learn about the evolution of language and civilisation from our oldest surviving texts? A new book helps us to find out.

The development of civilisations around the world can be partly attributed to the spread of a written language. While oral traditions are massively important to most cultures, being able to write something down means that it can also be made universal for a community. Once written, a law or religious practice can be codified, copied and spread around a wider region than word of mouth alone could guarantee. This is something that we can see in practice in Ancient Peoples in Their Own Words, a new title from Amber Books that chronicles key artefacts from Mesopotamia to Rome, showing how the written word was used to record historical events, establish legal practices and teach future generations the best practices of the past. What’s interesting to learn is just how far written languages developed in the centuries between all of these civilisations, each building on things picked up from the past.

So, join us as we pick through some of the most interesting artefacts featured in this new book and what we can learn about their origins.
LAWs OF THE LAND

During the 18th century BCE, King Hammurabi of Babylon issued laws that were inscribed on a stone pillar known as the "Code of Hammurabi." The code is known for its severe punishments, including death by drowning or cutting off the nose or an ear.
THROUGH HISTORY

CULTURAL IMPERIALISM

The Roman empire stood for many centuries as one of the enduring legacies of its time, spreading its culture and influence far and wide. Its power reached as far as India, the British Isles, and even the distant regions of the Middle East. The empire's influence was felt not only through military conquests but also through its laws, language, and technology. The Latin language, for example, became the lingua franca of the empire, and Roman laws were adopted in many parts of the world. This cultural imperialism had a lasting impact on the development of Western civilization, shaping the political, social, and cultural landscapes of many regions.
On the Menu
PAELLA VALENCIANA

A SPANISH CLASSIC, FIT FOR A QUEEN ALHAMBRA, GRANADA, 16TH CENTURY

Did you know?
Paella in Valencian simply means pan, since the name derived from the utensil it is cooked in.

Ingredients
- 500g rabbit, cut into small chunks
- 500g boneless chicken thighs, cut into small chunks
- 500g pork belly
- 120g green beans
- 200g red butter beans
- 200g Rapunzel tomatoes
- 1 litre rice
- 500ml chicken vegetable stock
- Extra virgin olive oil
- A few pinches of saffron
- A sprig of rosemary
- 1 tsp of paprika
- Salt and pepper to taste

METHOD

1. Heat a large, high-sided frying pan on a medium to high heat, adding enough olive oil to coat the bottom of it. Once at a good temperature, add the rabbit and chicken meat, and begin to brown. Try to have the large pieces in the middle as these will cook a little slower, leaving the meat watery/strawlike.

2. Once browned (about 10 minutes), but longer if needed: move the meat to the edge of the pan and add the green beans to cook in the centre. These will not take long to take on colour so keep an eye on them for about 5 minutes.

3. Once done, move the beans to the edges as well and add the chopped tomatoes. From this point on, let it cook until juices are all released. If from a can, simple heat through. Then add all the ingredients together and add the paprika, mixing well and making sure nothing burns.

4. Once well mixed add the stock, lemon/butter, beans, saffron and rosemary and bring to the boil. The stock should cover all of the ingredients. Saffron is cheap, so you can replace it with a half teaspoon of turmeric for the colour, although it won’t add the same flavour.

5. Allow the stock to heat up for 5 minutes, add salt and pepper to taste, then add the rice and turn up the heat again, mixing everything together well to spread the rice evenly. Remove the rosemary at this point, or that you don’t have it breaking the texture of the final dish.

6. Cook for 10 minutes on a high heat, bringing down to medium heat for another 5 minutes, and then finish off on a low heat for 10 minutes. Watch real all of the liquid has evaporated at this point, but don’t worry if it hasn’t - the most important thing is that the rice is not overcooked.

7. Allow the dish to stand for a few minutes once complete. This should allow a little extra time to absorb what liquid is left, or for the pan to soften a little if needed without still being on the heat.

Did you make it? Let us know!

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Without a doubt, Queen Victoria is one of the most studied monarchs to have ever lived. Numerous books, television series and films have been produced that focus on her life, to the point where you could argue that there is no new way to look at her. However, Stewart Richards, with Curtain Down at Her Majesty’s, subtitiled The Death Of Queen Victoria In The World Of Those Who Were There.

The book is comprised entirely of first-hand accounts surrounding the queen’s final days, her death and funeral. With excerpts from Victoria’s own journal, including her last ever entry, handwritten and even newspaper articles, you really get to experience the queen’s decline and passing through the eyes of those around her.

Richards’ decision to let the contemporary sources speak for themselves is undoubtedly a clever concept. It is fascinating to learn about the decline in Victoria’s mental and physical health in the weeks leading up to her death, particularly through the accounts of her resident physicians, Sir James Reid. Devoted to her care, Reid grew increasingly concerned over the queen’s deteriorating condition, at one point describing her as ‘dreaded, confused, and apathetic’. However, he also noted how Victoria ‘would pull herself together when she saw anyone but her maids or me’, proving that even in her dying days, the queen was resilient.

Reading through the first-hand accounts also offers a rare, emotional insight into Victoria’s death. For example, her grandson, George, Duke of York (the future King George V), declares ‘I shall never, never, leave her innermost room, with all of us sobbing & heartbroken round her bed.’ It is a poignant and simple statement, which serves as a reminder that not only had the nation lost a queen, but that a family had lost their matriarch.

It is also interesting to discover the uncertainty that came with the knowledge that Victoria was approaching death. In an excerpt from her assistant private secretary, Sir Frederick Pollock, he adds ‘no one seemed to know what the ‘mechanism was’ considering the last luncheon had passed away in 1857 – a reminder that the queen had passed a stable presence on the throne for over six decades.

The book concludes nicely with an epilogue featuring accounts relative to Victoria’s illness and funeral. This includes excerpts for the queen’s state funeral, the instructions she left behind for her burial and in a final section, an outline of Victoria’s extensive family at the time of her death. Thankfully, while Richards uses all these capturing accounts, he does provide introductions and footnotes to give context on different figures either used or mentioned in the book, which helpfully guides the reader through the various sources.

However, arguably the best aspect of this book is simply how enjoyable it is to read. The accounts that Richards has chosen are so engaging, that it almost feels like you are reading a work of fiction, rather than a collection of sources – and should appeal to all lovers of royal history.
WOMEN WHO DARED TO BREAK ALL THE RULES
A fun but shallow exploration of the lives of six daring women

Author Jeremy Scott Publisher OneNow Price £12.99 Released Out now

Vivien Woodhall, Mary Wolstonecraft, Julia Fillmore McPherson,ilibria Menninger, Margaret Angell and Coco Chanel all had one thing in common: they challenged the expectations of women in society, causing震动 and scandal along the way. It’s always great to see a book that shines a light on fascinating figures from the past, and Scott explores the lives of these six women with a witty and fun writing style that will appeal to readers who usually avoid heavier historical fiction.

However, the structure of the book is all over the place. Starting the first couple of chapters with Victoria Woodhall in the 19th century, Scott then jumps back to the 19th century with a chapter on Mary Wolstonecraft—a strange decision, considering that the latter is briefly mentioned beforehand, in the middle of Woodhall’s chapter. Also, the small chapter exploring the origins of avant-gardeism, a condition wrongly associated with Klimov, just seems out of place and completely unnecessary.

On a similar note, the chapters do not flow easily from one to the next and feel completely separate, although this does make it ideal to dip in and out of if you might have hoped if Scott had an introduction to explain his thought process and what he had hoped to achieve with this book, including his decision to pick these six women in particular. Instead, he writes for the very last couple of pages to try and tie it all together, in a way that almost makes it seem like an afterthought.

ROSA LUXEMBURG
A fascinating and artful memorial to the doomed leftist icon

Director Margarethe von Trotta Cast Barbara Sukowa Released: Out Now

Barbara Sukowa stars the Active Basis Film Festival. In her first feature and probing performance as the early 20th century Polish philosopher and revolutionary socialist, Rosa Luxemburg (1871-1919), each scene focused on the form, and themes of historical figures are posed with the same daring problem: What to include and what to exclude? Where best to apply creative license? How to make history relevant to modern audiences? Margarethe von Trotta, German-language cinema, in relation to the century of Luxemburg published by the Frankfurt in January 1993, tackles such questions with tremendous seriousness and deftly, cutting a screen drama highlighting how women played a vital intellectual role in Europe’s leftist movements.

Focused on events between 1899-1919, von Trotta interweaves standard fact-to-flame narratives of literary biography and countless movies. Better does Sukowa remake Luxemburg in any way, shape or form. In dealing upon and depicting the various improvements at home and abroad, public spectacles and fraught moments (outpouring emotions around key female friendships, occasional affairs of the heart, flirting with strong reservations and co-running the Spartacus League), the result is an experimental, resonant-like and impressively portrait of the woman herself and her allies dubbed ‘Red Rosy’.

Non-linear plotting, occasionally dramatic editing techniques and sudden scene transitions, and the absence of any cinematic text distancing and deceptive choices and (pages typically used to guide audiences), further aid the rewarding event guide mood and effect the filmmaker said and achieved.
THE PHARAOH'S TREASURE

An examination of paper’s role in the history of civilization

Author John Gaudet
Publisher Amberley Publishing
Price £16.99
Released Out now

Yet this isn’t simply a history of a medium, but of the world itself. Gaudet has a close and engaging understanding of the intricate links between communication and the march of civilization, and deftly demonstrates how something as ubiquitous as paper played its part in the world we know today. He brings the ancient world vividly back to life, and it’s a real pleasure to learn about not only how ancient documents were created, but how they were preserved and cared for too.

The Pharaoh’s Treasure is an enticing read and Gaudet’s enthusiasm for his subject is infectious. He turns a topic that might have proved rather dry into a tale of adventure and achievement, filled with irresistible anecdotes.

THE TRUE HISTORY OF CHOCOLATE

A wonderfully entertaining romp through a confection’s chronology

Author Sophie D. Coe & Michael D. Coe
Publisher Thames & Hudson
Price £9.99
Released Out now

The True History of Chocolate is a story told by chocolate-makers and historians everywhere, and it makes for fascinating reading. Beginning more than three thousand years ago in Central America, Stephanie D. Coe and Michael D. Coe delve into the discipline of cuisine, archaeology and social history to piece together the fascinating story of one of the world’s most popular culinary commodities.

In their vast history of chocolate, the Coes examine how chocolate came to be, from its origins in Central America and its use as currency to its introduction to the west, where it became the object of choice for the wealthy. How chocolate’s distinct status evolved through its use amongst the masses, easily accessible and fashionable, and what can it tell us not just about our eating habits, but the effects of the industry that produces it? The True History of Chocolate addresses all of these questions and more besides. Newly revised and updated, this richly illustrated, exhaustively researched book is a treasure trove of historical wonders and the story of the Coe, the story of chocolate takes on a vibrant, irreplaceable life.

Just like a tasty bar of chocolate, this hugely entertaining book is a real treat and deserves to be devoured. It’s insightful, scholarly and endlessly entertaining, and highly recommended not just to chocolate-lovers, but to anyone with an interest in the history of one of the world’s most popular culinary delights.
OUTLAW KING

Netflix’s bold attempt to create its very own Braveheart

Certificate 18 Director David Mackenzie Cast Chris Pine, Aaron Taylor-Johnson, Florence Pugh

Billy Howle Released Out now (Netflix)

With a reported budget of £20 million, there were high expectations for David Mackenzie’s take on Robert the Bruce and the fight for Scottish independence. Unsurprisingly, Outlaw King has drawn comparisons to the Oscar-winning epic Braveheart, but how does it fare in its own right?

At the beginning we meet Bruce’s young confidante, Chris Pine, a Scottish noble, as he reluctantly sworn loyalty to King Edward I of England (Stephen Dillane). He marries Edward’s goddaughter, Elizabeth de Bohun (Florence Pugh) but after hearing about the death of William Wallace at the hands of the English, Bruce decides that it is time to revolt. Securing the Scottish crown, Bruce leads his people in a guerrilla campaign to gain freedom from the English. Just as you would expect from a medieval epic such as this one, Outlaw King is full of blood, violence and gore, and as the 18 certificate suggests, is not for the faint hearted.

"Full of blood, violence and gore, and as the 18 certificate suggests, not for the faint-hearted.

The film presents a simplified version of the Scottish fight for independence and there is certainly more of a focus on Bruce’s personal motivations for rebelling, rather than exploring the complicated political issues behind it - and at times the pacing lags.

When it comes to historical accuracy, Outlaw King doesn’t do too badly in comparison to the wildly inaccurate Braveheart. The costumes are pretty much spot on, Elizabeth really was imprisoned by the English and Bruce’s main supporter, Angus Og MacDonald and James Douglas (played by Toby Garran and Aaron Taylor-Johnson respectively) are also true to form. Even Edward’s large battle scenes, even at the start of the film, is historically accurate.

Interestingly, Mackenzie chooses to conclude with Bruce’s victory at the bloody battle of Loudoun Hill rather than the famous battle of Bannockburn, which occurred seven years later. It is here where we see one of the film’s biggest historical inaccuracies with the presence of Edward, Prince of Wales (Billy Howle). King Edward’s son, when in reality he was never at Loudoun Hill.

It is a shame that the film shies away from exploring Robert’s darker side, particularly when he stabs his rival for the Scottish crown, John III Comyn, to death in a church (which actually happened). Perhaps it is because it would be harder to evoke sympathy for Bruce as a ruthless murderer, but it is one of the many cases where characterisation in the film is lacking.

The casting of Chris Pine is not as just as you might expect, although his Scottish accent is questionable at times. It is a shame that in the lead up to the film’s release, the stunt concentrated on his full frontal nudity scene, which turns out to be extremely brief.

Overall, Outlaw King is enjoyable with a good cast, although it would have been nice to see more of Florence Pugh. In fact, it is almost worth seeing the film just for its breathtaking scenery, which will make you want to visit Scotland as soon as possible.
Could you tell us a little about how the book of Curiosities was discovered and how you became involved with putting this new book together? The story of this book is really a story of discovery. Emily Savage-Smith, co-author of Lost Maps of The Oxfordshire discovered them, as did many others to say, the manuscripts discovered her. They called her back in 2000 from Chertsey because she’s a senior specialist in the history of Islamic science, and said, “We have this manuscript and we don’t know what to do with it and it’s already in the catalog, but we think we may have undersold it.” So, she took some photos and showed it around and more than this, series of maps that are not only unique, but of supreme value. Some of the maps are like nothing we would understand as cartography, showing details in oblique shapes rather than geographical outlines. How would they have been read? In the book are some illustrations. It’s like a diagram that you have without translation. They show where north and south are, they show directions and even distances, approximately, but the maps make actually say I should have done it with technical devices and calculated how to draw the map, but then how could anyone read it? Because you do not have a computer yet, because you’re working with very crude navigation with the stars and the sun and so forth, what you really want to know is how to plan a journey for that, what you need is a diagram that sets out in sequence the stages of your journey for what comes next. Is it almost like a virtual version of how you might give someone directions by telling them landmarks to look out for on their journey? There is an element of that, but think of the Tube map. This is a clearer example because a map doesn’t have space for the directions you describe. So the Tube map is a good example because you simplify and make it into a diagram and the reason is the same, because when we are underground we don’t have the navigation tools we have aboveground. A medieval person would be in a bit of a similar situation. They would know generally where he is north and where is south, but they wouldn’t be able to make up a precise way. Even if you make the map precise, the user doesn’t have the tools to measure it.

Read our full interview on historymanawer.co.uk. Lost Maps Of The Caliphate: Drawing The World In Eleventh-Century Cairo by Yossel Rapoport and Emily Savage-Smith is available now.

### Must-see events

**HISTORIES OF THE UNEXPECTED**

Sam Willis & James Dyrebell
Sunday 30 March 2020, 2pm
Massive world events can sometimes be traced back to seemingly inconsequential moments, as these presentations will help to illustrate.

**THE KING’S WAR**

Peter Connolly & Mark Logan
Monday, 1 April 2020, 2pm
Find out how Lionel Logue continued to play an important role in the life of George VI long after the events of The King’s Speech.

**NEW WORLD, INC. HOW ENGLAND’S MERCHANTS FOUNDED AMERICA AND LAUNCHED THE BRITISH EMPIRE**

Simon Torr
Tuesday 2 April 2020, 2pm
Split between London and the Eastern shores of the New World, learn how new innovations and a drive for fresh opportunities helped reshape the Empire.

**LOST MAPS OF THE CALIPHS**

Yossel Rapoport & Emily Savage-Smith
Thursday, 4 April 2020, 12pm
Islamic experts tell us about the discovery of the Book of Curiosities and how it broadens our understanding of medieval Islamic thought.

**PATRIOT OR TRAITOR: THE LIFE AND DEATH OF SIR WALTER RALEIGH**

Anna Beer
Sunday, 7 April 2020, 4pm
Learn how the famed adventurer, poet and writer went from being Elizabeth I’s favourite to being locked in the Tower of London.

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MARY QUEEN OF SCOTS

Director: Josie Rourke
Starring: Saoirse Ronan, Margot Robbie, Jack Lowden
Country: UK, USA
Released: 2019

This stylish drama promises scandal, intrigue and betrayal, but can it deliver on historical accuracy?

01 The beginning of the film sets Mary as a young woman active in Scotland, after the death of her husband, King Francis II of France. She is shown in childbirth and the scene is depicted as Mary in her early life. In reality, Mary was 16 when she married Francis II.

02 The film correctly shows Mary’s love for Elizabeth, suggesting her as a friend. In reality, their relationship was complex, with periods of tension and cooperation.

03 Elizabeth forced her son, Charles, to approve of Mary’s marriage to her own son, Philip. This event is portrayed as a part of Elizabeth’s plan to strengthen her own power. In reality, Charles was forced to approve of the marriage.

04 Mary’s trial and execution are depicted in the film. The trial was prolonged and complex, with many legal and political considerations. Mary was executed by firing squad.

05 The film focuses on Mary’s relationship with Elizabeth and the English court. In reality, Mary was more involved with the Scottish court and the Scottish nobility, although her relationship with Elizabeth was a significant part of her life.

Overall, the film provides a detailed and entertaining portrayal of Mary’s life, but it is important to consider the historical accuracy of the events depicted.
NEXT ISSUE

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