

THE CAMBRIDGE COMPANION TO
THOMAS MORE

This *Companion* offers a comprehensive introduction to the life and work of a major figure of the modern world. Combining breadth of coverage with depth, the book opens with essays on More's family, early life and education, his literary humanism, virtuoso rhetoric, illustrious public career and ferocious opposition to emergent Protestantism, and his fall from power, incarceration, trial and execution. These six chapters are followed by in-depth studies of five of More's major works – *Utopia*, *The History of King Richard the Third*, *A Dialogue Concerning Heresies*, *A Dialogue of Comfort against Tribulation* and *De Tristitia Christi* – and a final essay on the varied responses to the man and his writings in his own and subsequent centuries. The volume provides an accessible overview of this fascinating figure to students and other interested readers, whilst also presenting, and in many areas extending, the most important modern scholarship on him.

George M. Logan is the James Cappon Professor of English (Emeritus) at Queen's University, Canada, and a Senior Fellow of Massey College in the University of Toronto. A leading More scholar, he is the author of an influential book on *Utopia*, principal editor of the Cambridge edition of that work and editor of More's *History of King Richard the Third*, as well as senior editor of the sixteenth-century section of the distinguished *Norton Anthology of English Literature*.

Cambridge University Press
 978-0-521-88862-2 — The Cambridge Companion to Thomas More
 Edited by George M. Logan
 Frontmatter
[More Information](#)

CAMBRIDGE COMPANIONS TO RELIGION

A series of companions to major topics and key figures in theology and religious studies. Each volume contains specially commissioned chapters by international scholars which provide an accessible and stimulating introduction to the subject for new readers and non-specialists.

Other titles in the series

THE CAMBRIDGE COMPANION TO CHRISTIAN DOCTRINE

edited by Colin Gunton (1997)

ISBN 0 521 47118 4 hardback ISBN 0 521 47695 × paperback

THE CAMBRIDGE COMPANION TO BIBLICAL INTERPRETATION

edited by John Barton (1998)

ISBN 0 521 48144 9 hardback ISBN 0 521 48593 2 paperback

THE CAMBRIDGE COMPANION TO DIETRICH BONHOEFFER

edited by John de Gruchy (1999)

ISBN 0 521 58258 × hardback ISBN 0 521 58781 6 paperback

THE CAMBRIDGE COMPANION TO KARL BARTH

edited by John Webster (2000)

ISBN 0 521 58476 0 hardback ISBN 0 521 58560 0 paperback

THE CAMBRIDGE COMPANION TO CHRISTIAN ETHICS

edited by Robin Gill (2001)

ISBN 0 521 77070 × hardback ISBN 0 521 77918 9 paperback

THE CAMBRIDGE COMPANION TO JESUS

edited by Markus Bockmuehl (2001)

ISBN 0 521 79261 4 hardback ISBN 0 521 79678 4 paperback

THE CAMBRIDGE COMPANION TO FEMINIST THEOLOGY

edited by Susan Frank Parsons (2002)

ISBN 0 521 66327 × hardback ISBN 0 521 66380 6 paperback

THE CAMBRIDGE COMPANION TO MARTIN LUTHER

edited by Donald K. McKim (2003)

ISBN 0 521 81648 3 hardback ISBN 0 521 01673 8 paperback

THE CAMBRIDGE COMPANION TO ST PAUL

edited by James D. G. Dunn (2003)

ISBN 0 521 78155 8 hardback ISBN 0 521 78694 0 paperback

THE CAMBRIDGE COMPANION TO POSTMODERN THEOLOGY

edited by Kevin J. Vanhoozer (2003)

ISBN 0 521 79062 × hardback ISBN 0 521 79395 5 paperback

THE CAMBRIDGE COMPANION TO JOHN CALVIN

edited by Donald K. McKim (2004)

ISBN 0 521 81647 5 hardback ISBN 0 521 01672 × paperback

THE CAMBRIDGE COMPANION TO HANS URS VON BALTHASAR

edited by Edward T. Oakes, SJ and David Moss (2004)

ISBN 0 521 81467 7 hardback ISBN 0 521 89147 7 paperback

Continued at the back of the book

Cambridge University Press
978-0-521-88862-2 — The Cambridge Companion to Thomas More
Edited by George M. Logan
Frontmatter
[More Information](#)

THE CAMBRIDGE COMPANION TO
THOMAS MORE

Edited by George M. Logan



CAMBRIDGE
UNIVERSITY PRESS

Cambridge University Press
 978-0-521-88862-2 – The Cambridge Companion to Thomas More
 Edited by George M. Logan
 Frontmatter
[More Information](#)

CAMBRIDGE UNIVERSITY PRESS

University Printing House, Cambridge CB2 8BS, United Kingdom
 One Liberty Plaza, 20th Floor, New York, NY 10006, USA
 477 Williamstown Road, Port Melbourne, VIC 3207, Australia
 314-321, 3rd Floor, Plot 3, Splendor Forum, Jasola District Centre, New Delhi - 110025, India
 103 Penang Road, #05-06/07, Visioncrest Commercial, Singapore 238467

Cambridge University Press is part of the University of Cambridge.

It furthers the University's mission by disseminating knowledge in the pursuit of education, learning and research at the highest international levels of excellence.

www.cambridge.org

Information on this title: www.cambridge.org/9780521888622

© Cambridge University Press 2011

This publication is in copyright. Subject to statutory exception and to the provisions of relevant collective licensing agreements, no reproduction of any part may take place without the written permission of Cambridge University Press.

First published 2011

A catalogue record for this publication is available from the British Library

Library of Congress Cataloging in Publication data

The Cambridge companion to Thomas More / edited by George M. Logan.

p. cm. – (Cambridge companions to religion)

Includes bibliographical references and index.

ISBN 978-0-521-88862-2 Hardback – ISBN 978-0-521-71687-1 (Pbk.)

1. More, Thomas, Sir, Saint, 1478–1535. 2. Great Britain–History–Henry VIII, 1509–1547–Biography. 3. Henry VIII, King of England, 1491–1547–Relations with humanists. 4. Great Britain–Politics and government–1509–1547. 5. England–Intellectual life–16th century. 6. Christian martyrs–England–Biography.

7. Statesmen–Great Britain–Biography. 8. Humanists–England–Biography.

I. Logan, George M., 1941– II. Title. III. Series.

DA334.M8C19 2011

942.05'2092–dc22

2010029549

ISBN 978-0-521-88862-2 Hardback

ISBN 978-0-521-71687-1 Paperback

Cambridge University Press has no responsibility for the persistence or accuracy of URLs for external or third-party internet websites referred to in this publication, and does not guarantee that any content on such websites is, or will remain, accurate or appropriate.

Cambridge University Press
978-0-521-88862-2 — The Cambridge Companion to Thomas More
Edited by George M. Logan
Frontmatter
[More Information](#)

For Clarence H. Miller

Contents

Notes on contributors page xi
Preface xv
List of abbreviations xix
Chronology xxi
The family tree of Thomas More xxiv

Part I Life, times and work

- 1 The making of a London citizen 3
CAROLINE M. BARRON
- 2 Thomas More as humanist 22
JAMES McCONICA
- 3 More's rhetoric 46
ELIZABETH MCCUTCHEON
- 4 More's public life 69
CATHY CURTIS
- 5 Thomas More and the heretics: statesman or fanatic? 93
RICHARD REX
- 6 The last years 116
PETER MARSHALL

Part II Five major works

- 7 Reading *Utopia* 141
DOMINIC BAKER-SMITH
- 8 More on tyranny: *The History of King Richard the Third* 168
GEORGE M. LOGAN
- 9 'The comen knowen multytude of crysten men': *A Dialogue Concerning Heresies* and the defence of Christendom 191
EAMON DUFFY

x *Contents*

- 10 'In stede of harme inestimable good':
*A Dialogue of Comfort against
Tribulation* 216

ANDREW W. TAYLOR

- 11 The lessons of Gethsemane: *De Tristitia
Christi* 239

KATHERINE GARDINER RODGERS

Part III Reception

- 12 *Afterlives* 265

ANNE LAKE PRESCOTT

*Foundational resources for More
studies* 288

Index 292

Notes on contributors

Dominic Baker-Smith, OBE, is Professor of English (Emeritus) at the University of Amsterdam. He taught formerly at the University of Cambridge and at University College, Cardiff. He has also served as chairman of the Society for Renaissance Studies. In addition to numerous other publications on Renaissance literature, he is the author of *More's 'Utopia'* (1991, 2000) and editor of the three volumes of Erasmus's *Expositions of the Psalms* (1997–2010) in the Toronto *Collected Works of Erasmus*.

Caroline M. Barron is a Professorial Research Fellow at Royal Holloway, University of London, whose work has focused on the history of medieval London: on its government and relations with the Crown, and on the lives of the men and women who lived in the city. Her most recent book, *London in the Later Middle Ages: Government and People 1200–1500*, was published in 2004. She is a corresponding Fellow of the Medieval Academy of America.

Cathy Curtis is currently an Honorary Associate of the Department of History at the University of Sydney. Her recent publications include the entry in the *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* on More's friend and fellow royal secretary Richard Pace (2004); 'From Sir Thomas More to Robert Burton: the laughing philosopher in the early modern period', in *The Philosopher in Early Modern Europe* (2006); "'The best state of the commonwealth": Thomas More and Quentin Skinner', in *Rethinking the Foundations of Modern Political Thought* (2006); 'The social and political thought of Juan Luis Vives: concord and counsel in the Christian republic', in *A Companion to Juan Luis Vives* (2008); and 'The active and contemplative lives in Shakespeare's plays', in *Shakespeare and Political Thought* (2009).

Eamon Duffy is Professor of the History of Christianity at the University of Cambridge and a Fellow of Magdalene College. His principal works include *The Stripping of the Altars: Traditional Religion in England c.1400–c.1580* (1992, 2nd edn 2005; Longman–History Today Book of the Year Award for 1993), *The Voices of Morebath: Reformation and Rebellion in an English Village* (2001; Hawthornden Prize for Literature), and *Marking the Hours: English People and Their Prayers, 1240–1570* (2006).

George M. Logan is the James Cappon Professor of English (Emeritus) and former head of the Department of English at Queen's University, Canada, and a Senior Fellow of Massey College in the University of Toronto. He is the

xii *Notes on contributors*

author of *The Meaning of More's 'Utopia'* (1983), principal editor of the Cambridge edition of *Utopia* (Latin–English 1995; English, 2nd edn 2002) and editor of *The History of King Richard the Third* (2005). He is also senior editor of the sixteenth-century section of *The Norton Anthology of English Literature*.

James K. McConica, CSB, is a past president of the University of St Michael's College and the Pontifical Institute of Mediaeval Studies at the University of Toronto. He is vice-president of the *Conseil Internationale* responsible for the critical edition of the *Opera omnia* of Erasmus and chair of the editorial board of the Toronto *Collected Works of Erasmus*. His books include *English Humanists and Reformation Politics* (1965), *Thomas More* (1977), *Erasmus* (1991) and, as editor and part-author, *The Collegiate University*, Volume 3 of *The History of the University of Oxford* (1986). He is a Fellow of the Royal Historical Society and of the Royal Society of Canada, a Foreign Member of the Belgian Royal Academy of Sciences, Letters and Fine Arts, a Corresponding Member of the British Academy and an Officer of the Order of Canada.

Elizabeth McCutcheon is Professor of English (Emerita) at the University of Hawaii. A former Guggenheim Fellow, she is the author of *My Dear Peter: The 'Ars Poetica' and Hermeneutics for More's 'Utopia'* (1983) and of many articles on More, Erasmus, Margaret More Roper, Renaissance humanism, rhetoric and other subjects; among these works is what is probably the single most frequently cited article on *Utopia*, 'Denying the contrary: More's use of litotes in the *Utopia*' (1971).

Peter Marshall, FRHS, is Professor of History at the University of Warwick. He is the author of *The Catholic Priesthood and the English Reformation* (1994), *Beliefs and the Dead in Reformation England* (2002), *Reformation England 1480–1642* (2003), *Religious Identities in Henry VIII's England* (2006), *Mother Leakey and the Bishop: A Ghost Story* (2007), *The Reformation: A Very Short Introduction* (2009), and, among his many other publications, is editor of *The Impact of the English Reformation 1500–1640* (1997) and co-editor of four other books, including *The Beginnings of English Protestantism* (2002) and, most recently, *Catholic Gentry in English Society: The Throckmortons of Coughton from Reformation to Emancipation* (2009).

Anne Lake Prescott is the Helen Goodhart Altschul Professor of English (Emerita) and former chair of the Department of English at Barnard College in Columbia University. She is the author of *French Poets and the English Renaissance* (1978) and *Imagining Rabelais in the English Renaissance* (1998), and co-editor of the Norton Critical Edition of *Edmund Spenser's Poetry* (3rd edn, 1993), *Approaches to Teaching Shorter Elizabethan Poetry* (2000) and *Female and Male Voices in Early Modern England* (2000). Her study of More's reception in the century following his death forms the introduction to Jackson Campbell Boswell's *Sir Thomas More in the English Renaissance: An Annotated Catalogue* (1994). Her work has won prizes from the Sidney Society and the Donne Society, and has earned her the Spenser Society's Lifetime Achievement Award.

Notes on contributors xiii

Richard Rex is Reader in Reformation History at the Faculty of Divinity in the University of Cambridge and Director of Studies in History at Queens' College Cambridge. He is a leading scholar of the English Reformation, whose publications include *The Theology of John Fisher* (1991), *Henry VIII and the English Reformation* (1993, 2nd edn 2006), *The Lollards* (2002), and *The Tudors* (2002, rev. edn 2003).

Katherine Gardiner Rodgers is Professor of English at American River College in Sacramento, California, and the editor of *The Last Things* in the Yale edition of More's *Complete Works*. Her recent publications include 'Early modern aging: Erasmus's epigram "On the Troubles of Old Age"', in *Erasmus of Rotterdam Society Yearbook* 27 (2007), and 'Thomas More as witness in the prison letters', in *Moreana* 46, no. 176 (2009).

Andrew W. Taylor is Fellow and Director of Studies in English, Churchill College Cambridge. In addition to articles on the poet Henry Howard, earl of Surrey, he is the author of several book chapters on Tudor religion, including 'Versions of the English Bible' and 'The translation of biblical commentary' in *The Oxford History of Literary Translation in English*, Volume 2: 1550–1660 (2010), and 'Ad omne virtutum genus? Mary between piety, pedagogy, and praise in early Tudor humanism', in *Mary Tudor: Old and New Perspectives* (2010). He is co-editor of *Neo-Latin and the Pastoral* (2006), is co-editing *Ovid in English, 1480–1625* for MHRA Tudor and Stuart Translations, and is completing a monograph on biblical humanism and poetry in the early English Reformation.

Preface

Selecting and apportioning the subject matter for a Thomas More *Companion* is not an easy job. More's life and public career span a large and broad range of significant subjects; and he was also a voluminous and influential writer whose collected works run to fifteen volumes (really twenty-one, since four of the volumes are in multiple parts) in the Yale edition – and these must be supplemented by his correspondence. And while Companions are intended to give a comprehensive overview of their subject, I did not want the book to accord equal but therefore uniformly thin coverage to everything. I thus decided to divide it into three parts, as follows.

Part I comprises six essays on what I have called More's 'Life, times and work'. The section opens with Caroline Barron's essay on More's family and education and his early adult life – a decade divided between law, literary studies and his exploration and final rejection of the possibility of taking religious orders. It then continues with James McConica's treatment of a topic of fundamental importance not only for More's writings but for his public career, 'Thomas More as humanist'; the essay opens by tracing the development of Renaissance humanism and its advent in England and continues with an examination of its impact on More and an overview of his specifically humanist writings. Next comes Elizabeth McCutcheon's study of 'More's rhetoric', discussing the centrality of revived classical rhetoric to humanism and to More's writings in many different genres. The following essay is Cathy Curtis's heroic survey of the huge topic of More's public career, taking him from his early days as a young London lawyer to his resignation, three decades later, of the lord chancellorship of England. Richard Rex then treats the single most controversial aspect of both More's public career and his writings: his dealings – as an officer of Henry VIII's government, as the king's adviser in the anti-Lutheran treatise that earned him from Pope Leo X the (retrospectively ironic) title of 'Defender of the Faith', and finally in his own polemical writings –

xvi *Preface*

with those whom we know as early Protestants but whom More could know only as heretics. The essay includes overviews both of More's polemical writings and, in its opening pages, of the history of religious dissent in England *before* Luther. The final essay in the section is Peter Marshall's study of More's last years, which begins with the afternoon in 1532 when More surrendered the Great Seal of England to the king and includes, in addition to an account of the stages of the deterioration of More's relationship with Henry that led finally to his execution, an overview of the Tower Works, the devotional writings that occupied most of More's time in his final years.

Part II of the book then offers detailed accounts of five of More's major writings. (I regard it as a strength of the volume that these works have also been treated, although briefly, by other hands, in the overviews of the broad categories of More's writings included in Part I.) The section opens with Dominic Baker-Smith's exemplarily non-reductive reading of More's endlessly enigmatic and rewarding humanist dialogue *Utopia*, a seminal work of modern Western political thought and writing. Next comes my own treatment of More's other greatest and most influential humanist (and political) work, the coruscatingly brilliant and shrewd *History of King Richard the Third*. Eamon Duffy then treats the most admired of More's polemical writings, *A Dialogue Concerning Heresies*, which C. S. Lewis declared to be a 'great Platonic dialogue: perhaps the best specimen of that form ever produced in English'. The section closes with essays on More's two most highly regarded devotional works, both written while he was imprisoned in the Tower of London. Andrew W. Taylor offers a nuanced reading of More's third major work in dialogue form, *A Dialogue of Comfort against Tribulation*, in which, in the aftermath of the catastrophic 1526 defeat of the Hungarian army by the westward-advancing Ottoman Turks under their emperor Suleiman the Magnificent, two fictional Hungarians discuss the proper response to the religious persecution, even unto death, that they believe threatens Hungarian Christians: the subject has an obvious analogue in More's concern for English Catholics like himself who decline to side with Henry VIII in his contest with Rome over his desire to put aside his queen in order to marry Anne Boleyn. Katherine Gardiner Rodgers then treats More's last – unfinished – large-scale work, *De Tristitia Christi*, on 'the sadness, the weariness, the fear, and the prayer of Christ' in Gethsemane: another topic with obvious parallels to More's own situation when he wrote, awaiting trial and execution, but, like all the other works he published or intended to publish, written not for himself but

for what he liked to call ‘the whole corps of Christendom’, where (as of course in the whole corps of humankind) *all* have sorrows and weariness, and all face death.

Part III of the book comprises a single essay: Anne Lake Prescott’s treatment, in ‘Afterlives’, of the enormous topic of the later impact of More’s life, death and writings, and especially the two most influential of these writings, *Utopia* and *The History of King Richard the Third*.

Each of the essays has a ‘Further reading’ appendix, and the book also includes a general bibliographical appendix of ‘Foundational resources for More studies’. In addition, I have provided a network of cross references between essays, and a detailed index, which has as one of its main purposes the provision of help in locating the book’s scattered treatments of topics – such as More’s letters and poems – that are not accorded chapters of their own but are treated, sometimes in considerable detail, in one or more of the essays. Taken all in all, the book amounts to something close to what literary scholars call a critical biography.

I have been fortunate to have a subject such as More, whose enormous stature and endless fascination made it possible for me to recruit so many first-rank scholars – several of whom, although eminent in fields that obviously have great bearing on More studies, have previously written on More (if at all) only in passing. Their superb scholarship, now brought to bear directly on him, sheds new light on a number of topics. I am proud to have been responsible for this enriching of the More community.

Four of the earlier recruited contributors were extremely helpful in discussing with me the shape of the book and other possible recruits to it: my old friend Elizabeth McCutcheon and my new friends (though long admired from afar) Dominic Baker-Smith, Richard Rex and Peter Marshall. The book is dedicated to another old friend, Clarence H. Miller, whose work – astonishing for both quality and quantity – as executive editor of the Yale *Complete Works of St. Thomas More* is only the most signal accomplishment of a lifetime of fruitful labour that has earned him an enduring place in the pantheon of the greatest humanistic scholars. Clarence’s generosity to me over the past two decades has made a tremendous difference to my own work. He gave me invaluable advice on many aspects of the *Companion*. So, too, did the unsurpassed Tudor historian and biographer John Guy. I am deeply grateful to both of these magnificent students of Thomas More.

I have greatly enjoyed working on the book with a series of highly capable, pleasant and patient individuals at Cambridge University Press: first Kate Brett, who in 2006 approached me about editing a

xviii Preface

Thomas More *Companion* and for nearly three years thereafter impeccably guided me through manifold intricacies of the task; latterly Laura Morris, who took over from Kate, and others who have been in charge of various phases of editing and production: Joanna Garbutt, Rosina Di Marzo and, finally, the copy-editor, Philippa Youngman. I want to offer my sincere thanks to all of these fine professionals and also to take this opportunity to say how proud and pleased I am to have been associated with the Press, in a series of projects, for a quarter of a century.

Abbreviations

Works in the following list, including the early biographies of More by Roper, Harpsfield, Stapleton and Cresacre More (Thomas More's great-grandson), are cited throughout only by abbreviation plus page number (and volume number, if any), e.g., Roper 208; *CW* 12:319. Modern biographies are cited only by author's surname, shortened title and page number, e.g., Ackroyd, *Life of More*, 201. For publication details of early and modern biographies and a list of the individual volumes of *CW*, together with other important modern editions of individual works by More, see pages 288–91.

- 1557 *The workes of Sir Thomas More Knyght ... wrytten by him in the Englysh tonge*, London, 1557
- CMore Cresacre More, *The Life of Sir Thomas More*, ed. Joseph Hunter, London, 1828
- Corr. *The Correspondence of Sir Thomas More*, ed. Elizabeth Frances Rogers, Princeton University Press, 1947
- CSPSp *Calendar of Letters, Despatches, and State Papers Relating to the Negotiations between England and Spain (1485–1558)*, 13 vols., London, 1862–1954
- CSPV *Calendar of State Papers and Manuscripts, Relating to English Affairs, Existing in the Archives and Collections of Venice, and in Other Libraries of Northern Italy (1202–1675)*, 38 vols., London, 1864–1947
- CU *Utopia: Latin Text and English Translation*, ed. George M. Logan, Robert M. Adams and Clarence H. Miller, Cambridge University Press, 1995
- CW *The Complete Works of St. Thomas More*, 15 vols., New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1963–97
- CWE *The Collected Works of Erasmus*, 86 vols., University of Toronto Press, 1974–

xx *List of abbreviations*

- EA R. S. Sylvester and G. P. Marc'hadour, eds., *Essential Articles for the Study of Thomas More*, Hamden, Conn.: Archon Books, 1977
- EE *Opus Epistolarum Des. Erasmi Roterodami*, ed. P. S. Allen, H. M. Allen and H. W. Garrod, 12 vols., Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1906–58
- EETS Early English Text Society
- EW *The English Works of Sir Thomas More*, ed. W. E. Campbell *et al.*, 2 vols. (edition not completed), London: Eyre & Spottiswoode, 1931
- Harpfield Nicholas Harpfield, *The life and death of Sir Thomas Moore, knight, sometimes Lord high Chancellor of England (1558–59)*, ed. Elsie Vaughan Hitchcock, EETS, 1932
- LP *Letters and Papers, Foreign and Domestic, of the Reign of Henry VIII*, 21 vols., London, 1862–1932
- LCL Loeb Classical Library
- ODNB *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, 60 vols., Oxford University Press, 2004
- OED *The Oxford English Dictionary*, 2nd edn, 20 vols., Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1989
- PRO Public Record Office (London)
- R3 Thomas More, *The History of King Richard the Third*, ed. George M. Logan, Bloomington and Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 2005
- Roper William Roper, *The Life of Sir Thomas More (c. 1557)*, in *Two Early Tudor Lives*, ed. Richard S. Sylvester and Davis P. Harding, New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press, 1962
- SL *St. Thomas More: Selected Letters*, ed. Elizabeth Frances Rogers, New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press, 1961
- SP *State Papers . . . Henry the Eighth*, London, 1830–52
- Stapleton Thomas Stapleton, *The Life and Illustrious Martyrdom of Sir Thomas More* (pub. 1588), trans. Philip E. Hallett, ed. E. E. Reynolds, London: Burns & Oates, 1966
- STC *A Short-Title Catalogue of Books Printed in England, Scotland and Ireland, and of English Books Printed Abroad, 1475–1640*, ed. A. W. Pollard *et al.*, 2nd edn, 3 vols., London: Bibliographical Society, 1976–91

Chronology

1478 (1477?), 6 or 7 February	More born, in London.
c. 1482–90 1483	Attends St Anthony's School. Death of King Edward IV; disappearance of his son and successor, Edward V; accession of Richard III.
1485	Defeat and death of Richard III at battle of Bosworth Field; accession of Henry VII.
c. 1490–2	More serves as page in the household of John Cardinal Morton (d. 1500), Henry VII's lord chancellor.
c. 1492–4	At Oxford.
c. 1494	Enters the Inns of Court to study law.
1499	Meets Erasmus.
c. 1501	Delivers lectures on St Augustine's <i>City of God</i> .
1503	Writes 'A rueful lamentation' on the death of Henry VII's queen, Elizabeth. (Most of More's few other surviving English poems probably also date from his early adulthood.)
1504	In parliament?
Late 1504 or January 1505	Marries Joanna Colt.
1506	More and Erasmus publish a volume of translations (from Greek to Latin) of the 2nd-century AD ironist Lucian.
1509	Death of Henry VII; accession of Henry VIII. Erasmus writes <i>The Praise of Folly</i> (published 1511).
1510	More in parliament; appointed an undersheriff of London.

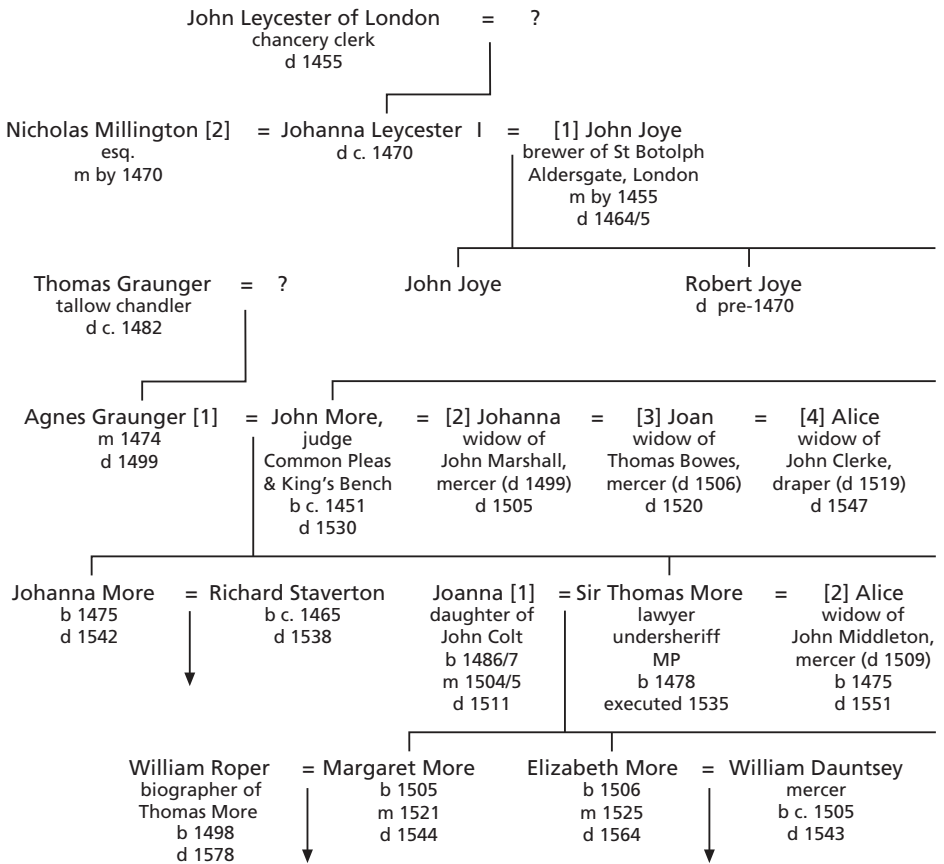
xxii *Chronology*

- | | |
|-------------------|--|
| c. 1510 | Publishes <i>The Life of John Picus</i> (Pico della Mirandola). |
| 1511 | Death of Joanna Colt; More marries a widow, Alice Middleton. |
| 1513 | Machiavelli writes <i>The Prince</i> (published 1532). |
| c. 1513–20 | More writes <i>The History of King Richard the Third</i> . |
| 1515, May–October | On trade embassy to Flanders; meets Pieter Gillis; begins <i>Utopia</i> . |
| 1515–19 | Writes four letter-essays in defence of Erasmian humanism. |
| 1516 | <i>Utopia</i> published in Louvain. |
| 1517 | Second edition of <i>Utopia</i> published in Paris. Martin Luther's ninety-five theses on indulgences signal the beginning of the Reformation. |
| 1518 | More joins Henry VIII's council. March and November: third and fourth editions of <i>Utopia</i> published in Basel, together with Latin poems (written over the preceding two decades). |
| 1520, May–June | In Henry VIII's entourage at the Field of Cloth of Gold (meeting between Henry and the French king, Francis I). July–August: takes part in trade negotiations with representatives of the Hanseatic League, at Bruges. |
| 1521 | Becomes under-treasurer of the exchequer; knighted; appointed to assist Henry VIII with his anti-Lutheran treatise, <i>Defence of the Seven Sacraments</i> . |
| c. 1522 | Writes <i>The Last Things</i> . |
| 1523 | Made speaker of the House of Commons; writes <i>Responsio ad Lutherum</i> (a defence of Henry VIII against Luther). |
| 1525 | Appointed chancellor of the duchy of Lancaster. |
| 1527, October | First consulted by Henry VIII about the possibility of divorcing his queen, Catherine of Aragon. |
| 1529, June | Publishes <i>A Dialogue Concerning Heresies</i> , against William Tyndale and Luther. 25 October: succeeds Wolsey as lord chancellor. 3 November: opens the 'Reformation Parliament' (which sat until 1536). |

Chronology xxiii

- | | |
|------------------|--|
| 1532, January | Publishes the first part of <i>The Confutation of Tyndale's Answer</i> , his longest anti-Protestant polemic (second part published 1533, along with several other polemics in that year and the next). 16 May: resigns the chancellorship over the 'Submission of the Clergy', ceding veto power over ecclesiastical legislation to the king. |
| 1533, 25 January | Henry VIII marries Anne Boleyn (pregnant with Elizabeth I). 1 June: More refuses to attend Anne's coronation as queen. 11 July: Henry excommunicated by Pope Clement VII. |
| 1534, 13 April | More refuses to swear support for the Act of Succession acknowledging Henry's children by Anne Boleyn as heirs to the throne. 17 April: More imprisoned in the Tower of London, where, over the course of the next fourteen months, he writes <i>A Dialogue of Comfort against Tribulation</i> , <i>De Tristitia Christi</i> and other devotional works. |
| 1535, 1 July | More tried and convicted of treason. 6 July: beheaded. |
| 1551 | <i>Utopia</i> first translated into English, by Ralph Robinson. |
| 1557 | Collected edition of More's English works. |
| 1563 and 1565 | Collected editions of More's Latin works. |
| 1935, 19 May | More canonized. |

The family tree of Thomas More



Prepared by Caroline M. Barron

