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*. 
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THE CAMBRIDGE COMPANION TO

THOMAS MORE

Edited by George M. Logan
For Clarence H. Miller
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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 –
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
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 Knayght ... wrytten by him in the Englysh tonge, London, 1557
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
CWE The Collected Works of Erasmus, 86 vols., University of Toronto Press, 1974–
List of abbreviations

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<th>Abbreviation</th>
<th>Description</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>EETS</td>
<td>Early English Text Society</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LCL</td>
<td>Loeb Classical Library</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PRO</td>
<td>Public Record Office (London)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SP</td>
<td><em>State Papers … Henry the Eighth</em>, London, 1830–52</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Chronology

1478 (1477?), 6 or 7 February
More born, in London.

C. 1482–90
Attends St Anthony's School.

1483
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 City of God.

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 The Praise of Folly (published 1511).

1510
More in parliament, appointed an undersheriff of London.
xxii  Chronology

c. 1510  Publishes The Life of John Picus (Pico della Mirandola).

1511  Death of Joanna Colt; More marries a widow, Alice Middleton.

1513  Machiavelli writes The Prince [published 1532].

c. 1513–20  More writes The History of King Richard the Third.

1515, May–October  On trade embassy to Flanders; meets Pieter Gillis; begins Utopia.

1515–19  Writes four letter-essays in defence of Erasmian humanism.

1516  Utopia published in Louvain.

1517  Second edition of Utopia 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 Utopia published in Basel, together with Latin poems (written over the preceding two decades).


1521  Becomes under-treasurer of the exchequer; knighted; appointed to assist Henry VIII with his anti-Lutheran treatise, Defence of the Seven Sacraments.

c. 1522  Writes The Last Things.

1523  Made speaker of the House of Commons; writes Responsio ad Lutherum [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 A Dialogue Concerning Heresies, 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 The Confutation of Tyndale's Answer, 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 A Dialogue of Comfort against Tribulation, De Tristitia Christi and other devotional works.

1535, 1 July
More tried and convicted of treason. 6 July: beheaded.

1551
Utopia 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

John Leycester of London
chancery clerk
d 1455

Nicholas Millington [2]
esq.
m by 1470

Thomas Graunger
tallow chandler
d c. 1482

Agnes Graunger [1]
m 1474
d 1499

Johanna More
b 1475
d 1542

Joanna [1]
daughter of
John Colt
b 1486/7
d 1511

Margaret More
b 1505
m 1521
d 1544

William Roper
biographer of
Thomas More
b 1498
d 1578

Sir Thomas More
lawyer
undersheriff
MP
executed 1535

Joanna [1]
widow of
John Marshall,
mercer (d 1499)
d 1505

Joanna [1]
widow of
John Bowes,
mercer (d 1506)
d 1520

Alice
widow of
John Staverton,
mercer (d 1519)
d 1547

John Joye
brewer of St Botolph
Aldersgate, London
m by 1455
d 1464/5

Robert Joye
m pre-1470

Joan
widow of
Thomas Bowes,
mercer (d 1506)
d 1520

Joan
widow of
John Clerke,
draper (d 1519)
d 1547

William Dauntsey
mercer
b 1475
d 1551

Elizabeth More
b 1506
m 1525
d 1564

Prepared by Caroline M. Barron