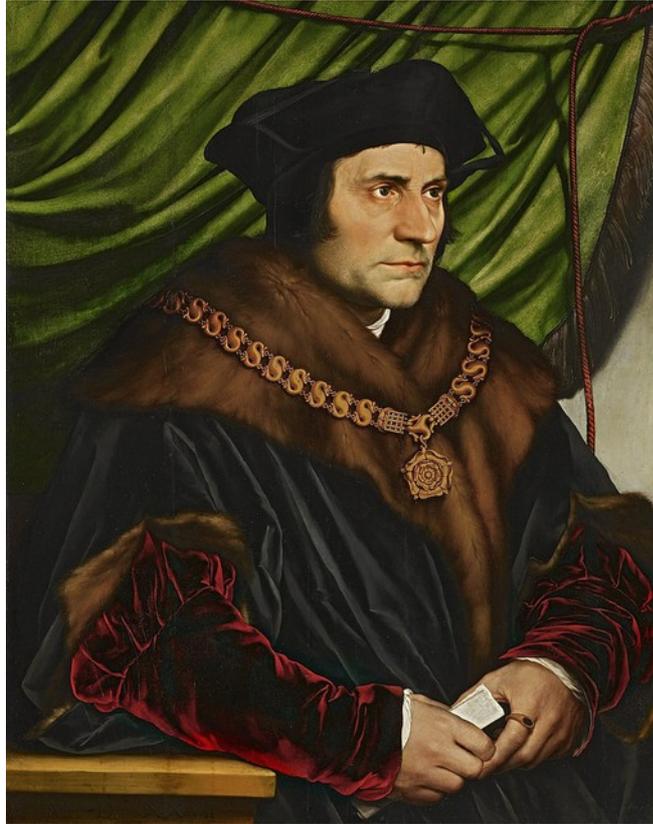


THOMAS MORE



by Pedro M. Ormazabal

First published June 17, 2022

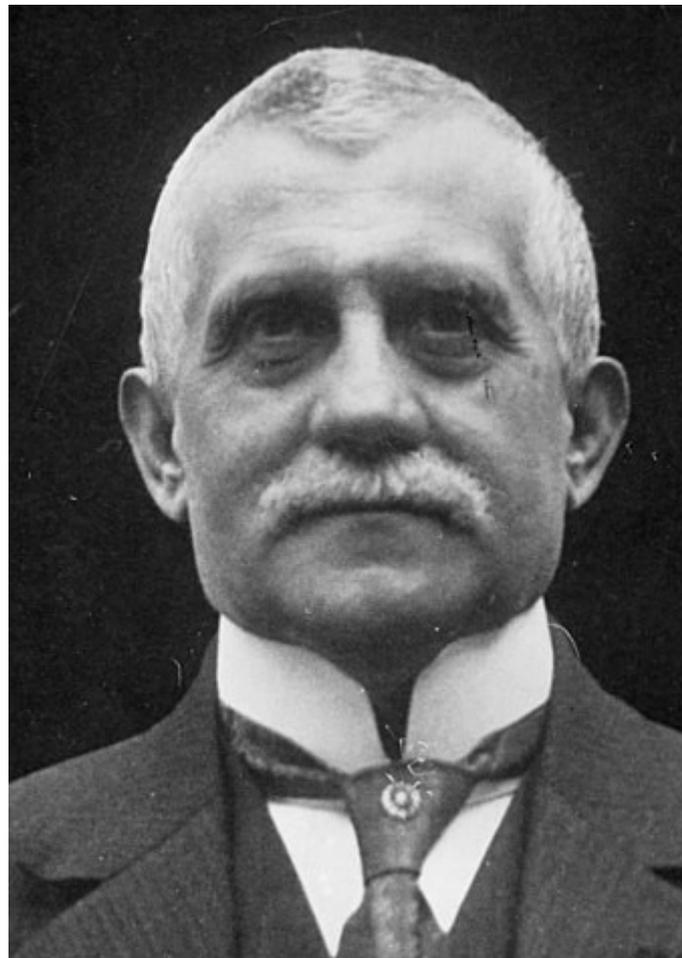
That is the most famous portrait of Sir Thomas More, by Holbein the Younger, dated 1527. He is wearing the medal of Lord Chancellor of England, though he was not appointed to that position until 1529. Something does not square here. Perhaps it is the poor quality of computer images, but the medal seems to be floating in the air. Miles: good eye, yes I confirm that necklace looks painted in later. Never noticed that.

Thomas More is a very special saint in the Catholic Church. He is one of the few saints who are not priests, friars or monks, and probably the only one who was prime minister, magistrate, philosopher and a prominent statesman. With such a profile, he is an inspiring figure for Catholics who are not clerics, but lay, and aspire to seeing their faith realized not only in their personal lives, but in worldly affairs as well. However, his story and tragic end pose some questions.

It is convenient to start by briefly summarizing the character of the saint in the standard version. More was a very learned man. He was a devout Catholic, a prominent statesman and a loving father. Faithful to his beliefs, despite the fact that for long years he had been a personal adviser to Henry VIII and a key figure in his administration, More did not bend to Henry's brutal religious and political policies. A skillful lawyer, More thought he could save his life amid the storm that Henry was

unleashing by keeping his mouth shut and withdrawing from the public scene. Henry finally came after his old friend, but More stuck to his beliefs and did not recant his Catholic faith, knowing that he had one foot on the scaffold. After a rigged tribunal sentenced him to decapitation on the basis of perjury, More spoke his mind and was finally beheaded on 6 July 1535, setting an example of faithfulness and firmness to the Catholic faith and to conscience for the coming generations of Catholics.

In this paper, I would like to focus on some questions about this story. The surname “More” is not unknown outside Britain. In Britain itself you have the surname “Moore” (think of Roger Moore 007), which is but a variant of “More”. In the Romance speaking countries you have the surname “Moro” which looks like the Romance version of “More”. Indeed, in Spanish “Thomas More” is always “Tomás Moro”. The Italian prime minister murdered in 1978 was Aldo Moro. In Spain, the surname Moro is not infrequent either, and you have, for instance, the prestigious winemaker Emilio Moro. I mention him rather than any other Spanish Moro because we find the same name in French version in Emile Moreau, Governor of the Bank of France in the 1920s. Perhaps Charles Maurras was a “More” as well. Here is the eminent banker Emile Moreau:

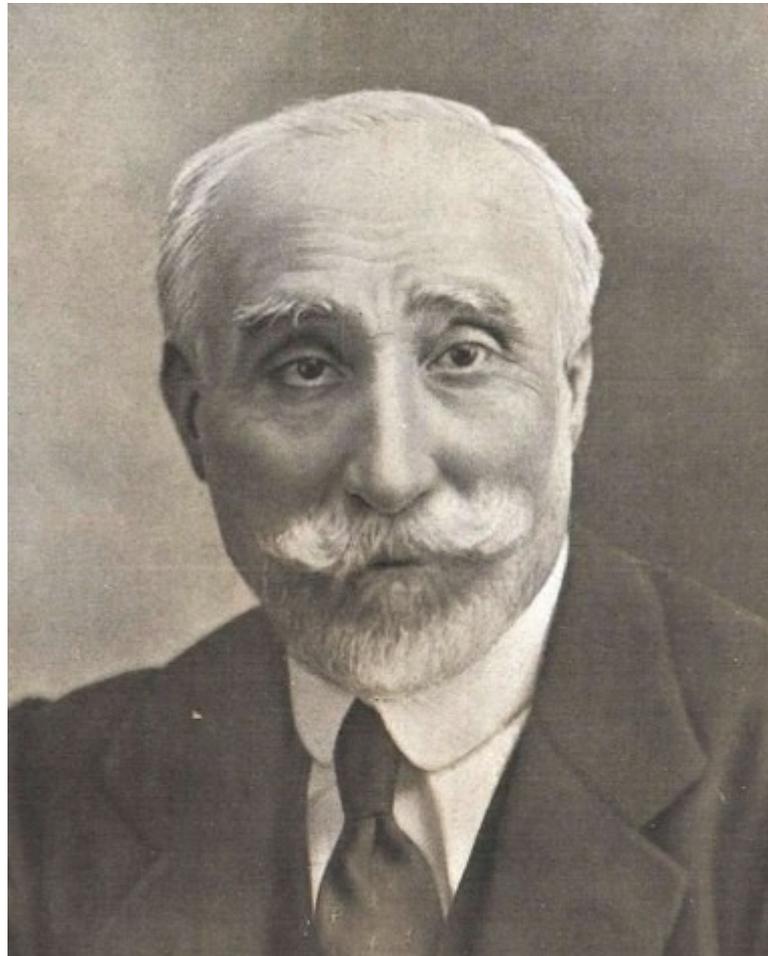


The perspective of the photo looks a bit odd, as it seems that either Moreau was very tall or the photographer very short. **It's either a paste or the background was removed.**

At least in Spanish, the meaning of the surname More/Moro is straightforward, and means “Moor”, so, in principle somebody having that surname has a Moorish ancestry

Moors are often confused with Arabs and Muslims, but the three are different things. The Moors are the inhabitants of Mauritania and are not Arabs, but, according to Wikipedia, mostly Berber. The old term “Mauritania” refers to North Africa in general, and more specifically to its Western part. Though the predominant religion among Moors today may be Islam, Moors were Christian before the Arab invasion of the lands of Mauritania. The Arabs, as well as the Berber, are ethnic groups whereas Islam is a religion, not an ethnic group, and it is professed by many peoples around the world who are neither Arabs nor Moors. I mention this because of what looks like yet another variant of “Moro”, which is “Maura”. Among famous Mauras we have the Spanish politician Antonio Maura, an outstanding character in an otherwise Spanish prominent family of politicians and intellectuals.

Here is a photo of Antonio Maura (1853-1925) dated 1917:



Something is also wrong with that photo, with much of it being repainted.

The Maura family has been said to have Jewish origins, but opinion remains divided on the subject. This is what I have found in <forebears.io> about the surname More, which is said to be the same as “Moore”:

The surname Moore has two distinct derivations. In one it originated from the first name Moor, whose origins are of great antiquity. This comes from the Old

French Maur, which in its turn derives from the Latin first name Maurus. (There was even a Saint Maurus in the sixth century.) The first name Maurus originally meant ‘moor’ (as in Othello the Moor) and was given to a native of North Africa. These were very rarely black people -like Othello- but were usually Arabs or Berbers. However, the name Maurus soon came to be used as a nickname for anyone with a dark complexion, meaning ‘darkie’ -almost certainly with much the same racist undertones as the word ‘darkie’ has today. Thus this derivation of the name Moore came to England with the Normans in the eleventh century (see also Morris.) The other derivation of the surname Moore is from the Anglo-Saxon word ‘mōr’ meaning ‘heath’. It is thus a place name, being given to someone who lived at or on a moor, heath or fen. The earliest forms of the name were preceded by ‘at’ or ‘de’ (e.g. Harry at Moore) with the additional ‘e’ because of the dative case.

So “Moore”, “More” and its variants (such as, for instance, “Morris”) are names that were brought to England by its Norman conquerors.

There are many names related to, or variations of, the original Moore. The name Moore is widespread throughout Britain and Ireland. (...) Sir Thomas More (1478–1535) was a statesman, scholar, author-and finally a martyr. Today he is best remembered as the hero of the film A Man for All Seasons. This depicts his friendship with Henry VIII, and their final quarrel, when Thomas More refused to support Henry’s divorce from Catherine of Aragon. For this Henry had him imprisoned, and later beheaded. Thomas More’s saintliness of character soon became universally renowned. He was subsequently canonised by the Catholic Church while to this day there is a Thomas More room in the bounds of the Kremlin.

The movie “A Man for All Seasons” is important because movies have a strong influence on people’s minds. Images are powerful and have the additional benefit of sparing the trouble of reading books. This was quickly understood when moving pictures were born, and this is why we have the Hollywood machine today, one of the most influential “mind-shaping” tools of public opinion and perception of reality. The 1966 movie “A Man for All Seasons” is based on a novel by Robert Bolt. It featured Paul Scofield as More and Robert Shaw as Henry. The director was Fred Zinneman.

According to Wikipedia:

Robert Oxton Bolt, CBE, was born in Sale, Cheshire, to Methodist parents; his father owned a small furniture shop. At Manchester Grammar School his affinity for Sir Thomas More first developed [PMO: Interesting that a Methodist develops an affinity for a Papist Catholic martyr]. After leaving school aged sixteen, he worked in an insurance office, which he disliked; after studying in the evening for five weeks he passed three A-levels [PMO: Not bad] and went on to attend the University of Manchester, from which, after a year, he undertook wartime service, initially as a pilot officer candidate in the RAF (air-sickness preventing him from continuing past training) [PMO: Did Bolt feel airsickness for the first time when he tried to join the RAF?] from 1943 to 1946. He then served as an Army officer in West Africa until 1947, when he returned to the University of Manchester and spent three years completing his honours degree in History. Following this, he took a teaching diploma from the University of Exeter. For many years he taught English and history at Millfield School and only became a full-time writer at the age of 33 when his play The Flowering Cherry was staged in London in 1958, with Celia Johnson and Ralph Richardson.

Let us have a quick glance at the place where Bolt taught English and History “for many years”, Millfield School:

Millfield was founded in 1935 by [Jack Meyer](#) (referred to at Millfield as "Boss"), following his return from India with seven Indian boys, six of whom were princes. The school started in the mansion built and originally owned by the Clark family, who owned and ran the shoe manufacturer [Clarks](#). Meyer, educated at [Haileybury and Imperial Service College](#), adhered to the philanthropic aim, known at the school as The Millfield Mix: "...to nurture talent by providing the very best facilities, teaching, coaching and opportunities in which young people can exercise and explore their abilities; and to give awards to those in financial need.

The philanthropist “Boss” had therefore a common Jewish name, “Meyer”. Hardly surprising if we look at Haileybury:

The previous institution at Haileybury was the [East India College \(EIC\)](#), the training establishment founded in 1806 for administrators of the [Honourable East India Company](#).

This is the place where the Reverend Thomas Malthus, widely known for his theories about overpopulation, became professor of History and Political Economy in 1805. Malthus’ was the first chair in Political Economy on record.

There is a further interesting bit of information on Bolt:

After the war, Bolt joined the [Communist Party of Great Britain](#), but he left it in the late 1960s after the [Soviet invasion of Czechoslovakia](#).

So, before becoming a teacher of History, Bolt served as Army officer after having joined the Communist Party. Not a very frequent mix that strongly suggests that Bolt was a spook.

The Wikipedia bio of the founder of the Manchester Grammar School, the place where Bolt discovered More, also provides some interesting information:

Hugh Oldham, a Manchester-born man, attended Exeter College, Oxford and Queens' College, Cambridge, after having been tutored in the house of Thomas Stanley, 1st Earl of Derby. Historical accounts suggest that he was not a particularly learned man, but was in Royal service, being a favoured protégé of Margaret Beaufort, Countess of Richmond and Derby, mother of Henry VII, and became recognised for his administrative abilities. He was appointed Bishop of Exeter in 1505. His great wealth came from his water-powered corn mills on the River Irk near Manchester, which were subsequently used to fund the school's endowment.

Oldham was not a “particularly learned man” after having attended Oxford and then Cambridge. Surely this is why they admitted him in Cambridge when he came from Oxford. Fortunately, he had Thomas Stanley as tutor, who, apparently, received this mediocre man in his house to take care of his administrative abilities. Those abilities must have been outstanding, as they led Oldham to a Bishopric.

Later, Oldham's great friend [Richard Foxe, the Bishop of Winchester](#), wished to found a monastery. Oldham, however, convinced him instead to found Corpus Christi College in Oxford and contributed 6000 marks. Oldham also had a hand in the founding of Brasenose College, Oxford.

Let us have a brief look at this Foxe character (1448-1528). He seems to be of Jewish background, judging by his surname. In his picture in Wikipedia he looks like a boxer rather than a Bishop:



Definitely a Jewish nose.

In 1484, Foxe was in Paris possibly in pursuit of studies or possibly because he had become unpopular with Richard III. There he came into contact with Henry Tudor [PMO: Just like that], who was beginning his quest for the English throne, and took Foxe into his service. In January 1485 Richard intervened to prevent Foxe's appointment to the vicarage of Stepney on the ground that he was keeping company with the great rebel, Henry ap Tudor.

So Foxe was a Lancastrian. If the English “Episcopal Conference” was populated by the likes of Foxe, it is hardly surprising to learn that it surrendered to Henry in the blink of an eye when Henry threatened it with dispossessing it of its patrimony, a threat that the English Bishops did not oppose.

Interestingly, the one who consecrated Foxe Bishop in 1487, two years after the battle of Bosworth, was no other than John Morton, the same Cardinal who received More in his house in 1490. Morton must have known who Foxe was. Was Cardinal Morton a Lancastrian too?

Morton enthusiastically supported the "New Learning" (scholarship which was later known as "humanism" or "London humanism"), and thought highly of the young More. Believing that More had great potential, Morton nominated him for a place at the University of Oxford.

This would establish a link between More and the Lancastrians. Interestingly, the 1966 movie about More has sent us from the “communist” scriptwriter Robert Bolt to Thomas More. The other hand in the movie was the director, Fred Zinnemann. He was obviously Jewish, as his Wikipedia page explicitly says. Which begs the question: why were a British spook and a Jewish film director so interested in the character of Thomas More, Catholic martyr? The movie does not leave Henry in a very good position. He is presented as a brute womanizer. Which perhaps was the goal of the movie, rather than the martyrdom of More. Let us return to him.

As we just saw, Thomas More may have been a descendant of Normans. His ancestry is said by Wikipedia to be English with a French connection. According to Wikipedia, Thomas More was born on [Milk Street](#) in the [City of London](#), on 7 February 1478, to [Sir John More](#), a successful lawyer and later a judge, and his wife Agnes (*née* Graunger). He was the second of six children. More was educated at St. Anthony's

School, then considered one of London's best schools. From 1490 (aged 12) to 1492, More served [John Morton](#), the [Archbishop of Canterbury](#) and Lord Chancellor of England, as a household page. The father, John More, has a page in Wikipedia, but the mother, Agnes Graunger, does not, and we are told nothing about her. However, in <https://ancestors.familysearch.org>, we find the following information:

When Agnes Graunger was born in 1455, in London, Middlesex, England, her father, Thomas Hanscom Graunger, was 30 and her mother, Lady Margaret Hanscombe Sweetehanam, was 30. She married Sir John More on 24 April 1474, in London St Giles without Cripplegate, Middlesex, England, United Kingdom.

As far as I know, according to English usage the wife of Thomas Hanscom Graunger would be Margaret Graunger, not Margaret Hanscombe Sweetehanam, no Granger in it. The surname Hanscombe is interesting in that it links us to the Cambridge don Elizabeth Anscombe, full name Gertrude Elizabeth Margaret Anscombe, an outstanding disciple of Ludwig Wittgenstein, who has been analyzed by Miles. As far as I know, in English speaking countries, women take the surname of their husbands when they get married. For some reason, this does not seem to be the case here, and the mother of Agnes Graunger, in addition to keep her maiden name, is said to be a Lady, that is, nobility, so Agnes Graunger was nobility. However it may be the parents of Agnes Graunger seem to have been related, as “Hanscom” and “Hanscombe” look very much like variants of the same surname, just like “More” and “Moore”. As to the surname “Graunger”, ancestors.familysearch.org tells us that it is a variant of “Granger”, and that, again, it is of Norman origin.

Let us take a look at Thomas More’s father, Sir John More. Here is what we find in Wikipedia:

More was the son of William More (d. 1467), a London [baker](#) [PMO: again the joke of dropping the “n” from “banker”?], and Joanna Joye, daughter and heir of a London [brewer](#), John Joye, and granddaughter and heir of a London [Chancery clerk](#), John Leycester. More entered [Lincoln's Inn](#) in either 1470 or 1475, was called to be a [Serjeant-at-law](#) in 1503, a [Justice of Assize](#) in 1513, a [Justice of the Common Pleas](#) in 1518, and finally to the [King's Bench](#) in 1520, where he remained until his death.

More inherited the manor of Gobions in [North Mymms Hertfordshire](#), [PMO: from the baker’s family or from the brewer’s?], and tenements in London, and also purchased more land in Hertfordshire. He was [granted](#) a [coat of arms](#) during [Edward IV's reign](#) [PMO: Not bad for a commoner]. He also helped to fund his son-in-law [John Rastell's](#) attempt to reach and settle the New World in 1517, which got only as far as [Waterford](#) before the sailors abandoned Rastell and sold his cargo.

So the noble Agnes Graunger marries John More, the son of a baker and a brewer, who became *Sir* John More. Another baker turned knight. Otherwise, the story of the American expedition being ripped off in Waterford is strange and raises a number of questions. Waterford is in Hertfordshire, in the middle of England, not on the coast. The river Bean flows through it, true, but Waterford is not a port. Which raises the question: where did Rastell’s expedition to America really started? It could not be far from Waterford. Did it really sail on a river in ships that were supposed to cross the Atlantic? Did the ship or ships really undergo a mutiny in the middle of England? How did the mutinied sailors manage to sell the cargo? Where was Justice Sir John More whilst the expedition he had funded was being ripped off? The expedition is not said to bring American goods into Britain, but to transport British goods to the other

side of the Pond in order to make a settlement there. Which goods were in the cargo? This story, if it really happened, looks like a contrived event designed to serve as cover-up for a robbery or something of that sort. A robbery that is not said to have been investigated. Which raises the question: was Justice Sir John More somehow involved in the affair?

More made his will on 26 February 1527, naming his son, [Sir Thomas More](#), as one of his executors and asking for his remains to be buried in the City of London church of [St Lawrence Jewry](#). The will, proved on 5 November 1530, included provision for prayers for the souls of family members and for the soul of [King Edward IV](#).

Why did Sir John More dispose to be buried precisely in [St Lawrence Jewry](#)?

The church was originally built in the twelfth century and dedicated to [St Lawrence](#); the weathervane of the present church is in the form of his instrument of martyrdom, the gridiron. The church is near the former medieval [Jewish ghetto](#), which was centred on the street named [Old Jewry](#). From 1280 it was an [advowson](#) held by [Balliol College, Oxford](#). (...) [Sir Thomas More](#) preached in the old church on this site.

This should have happened between 1501 and 1504, when, according to the Spanish version of Wikipedia, More joined the Third Order of St. Francis and lived as a layman in a Carthusian convent. However, how is it that More was allowed to preach without being a cleric, but a layman—without a degree, neither in Divinity nor in Humanities? Interestingly, More is said to have preached in a church located “near the former medieval Jewish ghetto”. It seems that the Mores felt some attraction to that particular church and area of London, though we are not told why. By the way, Sir John More, that son of a baker and a brewer who ended up inheriting a manor and purchasing lands in Hertfordshire, is nobility, in which case his marriage to Agnes Graunger would make sense: noble marries noble.

Let us now have a look at Thomas More’s bio in Wikipedia.

According to his friend, the theologian Desiderius Erasmus of Rotterdam, More once seriously contemplated abandoning his legal career to become a monk.

As we saw above, according to the Spanish version of Wikipedia, for four years More was a member of the Third Order of St. Francis. The Third Order of St. Francis is for the lay; more specifically, it was established to provide an opportunity to the married to live a religious life. Wikipedia explains how the Third Order of St. Francis is organized:

The Third Order is divided into [Third Order Regulars](#), who live in [religious congregations](#), and [Third Order Seculars](#) or the [Secular Franciscan Order](#), who live in [fraternities](#). The latter do not wear a religious habit, take vows, or live in community, but gather together in community on a regular basis.

More seems to have belonged to the second type of “tertiaries”, the Seculars, though he lived in a religious congregation and I do not think that a Carthusian monastery qualifies as “fraternity”. The strange thing here is that a lay Franciscan tertiary lives for four years not in his house, but in a monastery, and a Carthusian one at that. The order of St. Bruno and that of St. Francis are different and, for all I know, Franciscans do not live in Carthusian monasteries or Carthusians in Franciscan monasteries. However that may be, there came a time at which More saw that his call was not the

monastery and decided instead to run for Parliament. A very radical change of life project.

In addition to this, there arises the question as to the support of More to get a seat in Parliament. Was it really so easy to get out of a Carthusian monastery after four years, run for a seat in the Parliament and get elected? I do not know of many monks who chose the monastery over a political career, and even less of politicians who considered becoming monks rather than politicians. This suggests that this story of the man who was in two minds about to become a monk or a politician is not real, but a diversionary story designed to portray More as a staunch Catholic, so that we do not suspect that he was playing a different game.

The English version of Wikipedia sums up the years 1501-1504, saying that More "ultimately decided to remain a layman, standing for election to Parliament in 1504 and marrying the following year". Which raises another question: why such a haste to get married after four years of hesitation about whether to become a monk? How did Thomas meet Jane? Did the families arrange the marriage so the bride and the groom scarcely knew each other? More got married just one year after having got elected to Parliament (which would be 1505, More aged 27). Wikipedia does not say anything about Jane, but I have found this in <encyclopedia.com>:

More, Jane Colt (c. 1488-1511). English gentlewoman who was the first wife of Thomas More. Name variations: Jane Colte. Born Jane Colt around 1488; died in 1511; eldest of three daughters of John Colt of Essex, a family friend of Thomas More; became first wife of Thomas More (...) in 1505.

So Jane was probably nobility, like Thomas.

Erasmus claims that Thomas More selected the young, uneducated country girl Jane Colt to be his bride in order to make of her what he wished. He instructed her in art and music and trained her to match his own tastes. When they attended church, he had her repeat the words of the sermon to be sure she understood them. At first, Jane Colt was often reduced to tears, then she rebelled. When her father advised More that a good beating would put her in line, More found the suggestion abhorrent.

As any husband would have, Catholic or not Catholic.

But Thomas More had a tendency to mock women, regarding them as stupid, foolish creatures. Though he felt girls should be educated as well as boys, he once told his daughters that even though they might not have anything to write about, they should write about nothing at length. Girls, being "loquacious by nature," should always have a world to say about nothing at all." Erasmus, in his *The Praise of Folly*, was clearly referring to Thomas and Jane when he wrote: "I know a certain man named after me who gave his bride some imitation gems, assuring her (and he is a clever jokester) that they were not only real and genuine but also that they were of unparalleled and inestimable value. I ask you, what difference did it make to the girl since she feasted her eyes and mind no less pleasantly on glass and kept them hidden among her things as if they were an extraordinary treasure? Meanwhile, the husband avoided expense and profited by his wife's delusion, nor was she any less grateful to him than if he had given her some very costly gifts." Eventually, the couple made peace and had four children. Jane Colt, known by Thomas' friends as an "affable wife," died at age 23. Thomas More married Alice Middleton ([Alice More](#)), six years his senior and the widow of a London merchant, one month later.

“The couple made peace”, so, at least for some time, the Jane-Thomas marriage was not a very happy one and Thomas does not look very much like a loving husband or father. There are two things that struck my attention here.

The first is More’s second wife, Alice:

Alice, Lady More (née Harpur; 1474–1546 or 1551) - also known as Dame Alice Moore - was the second wife of [Sir Thomas More](#) (...). She was the daughter of Elizabeth (née Adern) and Sir Richard Harpur.

“Harpur” may be a variant of “Harper”, but “Adern” does not look English to me. I googled “Adern Jewish” and the big computer always led me to Jacinda Ardern, current PM of New Zealand. In <https://jwa.org/encyclopedia/article/new-zealand#pid-11052>, “Jewish Women in New Zealand”, Ardern is praised as a Jewish woman who has reached the top political position in the island. Thus, More’s second wife was Jewish on her mother’s side. The question remains as to whether her first husband, John Middleton, London merchant, was Jewish as well. **He was, like the Middletons now.**

Secondly, More does not seem to have been very good with women. When I read about the economist John Maynard Keynes, who was gay, I saw that his companions in Cambridge, most of them (if not all) gay, had the same disdainful attitude towards women. In More’s case, his position on women’s education does not look particularly coherent in this text, for he advocated equality of education for boys and girls at the same time that he allegedly claimed that girls, unlike boys, were stupid and foolish. I wonder if Thomas’s presents to Alice were of the same fake nature as those that, according to Erasmus, Thomas offered to Jane.

As we have just seen, when Jane died in 1511, More had had four children by her: Margaret (Meg, the favorite of More) Elizabeth, Cicely, and John. After the death of Jane, More hastened again to get married. He had been married to Jane from 1505 to 1511, that is, for 6 years:

Going “against friends’ advice and common custom”, within 30 days More had married one of the many eligible women among his wide circle of friends. He chose Alice Middleton, a widow, to head his household and care for his small children. The speed of the marriage was so unusual that More had to get a dispensation from the [banns of marriage](#), which, due to his good public reputation, he easily obtained.

More had no children with Alice, who, according to Wikipedia, was 37 when she was married to Thomas, who was 33 by that time, that is, four years younger than Alice. Thus, by marrying Alice, More got a housekeeper rather than a wife. Perhaps stupid and foolish, but someone had to look after the children of Jane, who at that time were very young. It is understandable that Alice and Thomas had no children, as 37 was too late an age at the time for a woman to conceive. However, Thomas, at 33, would be at the height of his powers:

More had no children from his second marriage, although he raised Alice's daughter from her previous marriage as his own. More also became the guardian of two young girls: Anne Cresacre would eventually marry his son, John More; and [Margaret Giggs](#) (later Clement) who was the only member of his family to witness his execution (she died on the 35th anniversary of that execution, and her daughter married More's nephew [William Rastell](#)). An affectionate father, More wrote letters to his children whenever he was away on legal or government business, and encouraged them to write to him often.

We are not told how More became guardian of Ann and Margaret. However it may have been, it is convenient to keep in mind Margaret Giggs/Clement, for she was the only member of the More family who witnessed the decapitation of the father (in her case, step-father) on 6 July 1535. Interestingly, Wikipedia notes that Margaret Giggs/Clement died on the 35th anniversary of the decapitation of her father, which would be 6 July 1570. Surely a coincidence.

The academic career of More is also curious. From 1492 (aged 14) to 1494, More was sent to study to Oxford by his patron, the Cardinal John Morton. By the way, in <forebears.io> “Morton” is said to be a variant of “More”. More spent those two years studying “scholastic doctrine” with Thomas Linacre and William Grocyn. Without a degree, More moved on to study Law in New Inn and then in Lincoln’s Inn. In 1496, after two years of study of Law, he started his career as a lawyer. So in four years, More not only became proficient in Law, but also in Classical and Modern languages and in Philosophy. After finishing his four year studies, More became a judge and, according to Spanish Wikipedia, a teacher of Law, though it is not said where –or whether he got some academic degree at all, for it is odd to see someone teaching Law without a degree in Law.

This is the usual fake arc we have seen with them all. At Oxford by 14, which was not done, out by 16 with no degree, accepted to Law School with no degree, two years in Law School and out as a judge at age 18. A JUDGE AT 18!

After leaving academia, More served in a number of top positions in the English judicial system, so he must have known it well as an insider. More became not only a judge, but, interestingly, ambassador of England for commercial issues; a sort of Minister of Economics for Henry VIII. The Spanish version of Wikipedia underlines his diplomatic skills as commercial ambassador in Flanders in 1515 and in a long negotiation in Calais in 1517. The goal of those negotiations was “to solve mercantile problems”, so he must have known the leading merchants and/or their ministers, though we are not told with whom More negotiate commercial issues—merchants or politicians? As the Jewish presence in the mercantile community in the Low Countries was not insignificant, More, as head of the English commercial delegation, should have known first hand the projects of the Jewish community in that key area of Europe.

On this account, there is a character that deserves our attention, because it establishes a second Jewish connection to More. I refer to the Spanish Humanist Luis Vives. Vives is the one on the left and More the one on the right.



Another Jewish nose competition.

Vives was born in Valencia, a major city of the Mediterranean coast of Spain, in 1492 or 1493. His full name in Valencian was “Joan Lluís Vives i March”. “Joan Lluís” is a common composite name in Spain: in English it would be “John Louis”. “Vives” is the first surname of the father and “March” the first surname of the mother. In Valencia, Thomas More would have been “Thomas More i Graunger”.

Vives was born in Valencia to a family which had converted from Judaism to Christianity. As a child, he saw his father, grandmother and great-grandfather, as well as members of their wider family, executed as Judaizers at the behest of the Spanish Inquisition.

Despite the crimes of the Christian Inquisition against them, the family converted to Christianity. Makes sense, doesn't it? Otherwise, the “Banca March” is to this day one of the most secretive and powerful banking establishments in Spain. “March” is pronounced “Mark”. In theory, the family March, like the family Maura, come from the Balearic Islands. The Spanish Wiki page on Vives points out that the Vives family was important in the Valencian Jewish community.

Vives studied at the University of Paris from 1509 to 1512, and in 1519 was appointed professor of humanities at the University of Leuven. At the insistence of his friend Erasmus, he prepared an elaborate commentary on Augustine's *De Civitate Dei*, which was published in 1522 with a dedication to Henry VIII of England. Soon afterwards, he was invited to England, and acted as tutor to [the Princess Mary](#) [PMO: Surely because of the dedication to Henry of his commentary on Augustine].

What did Vives do from 1512 to 1519? The Spanish version of Wikipedia gives the answer: after graduation, Vives moved from Paris to Bruges because in that city there was a Valencian merchant community. That is to say a Jewish merchant community. Vives met there the woman who was to become his wife, Margarita Valldaura; in

English, Margaret Valley of Gold or Goldvalley. In 1523 Vives moved to England, with Margarita I guess, though she is not mentioned in the rest of the bio of Vives. According to Wikipedia, in England Vives made friends with More and with Catherine of Aragón. In Bruges as well as in England, Vives was engaged in trade in addition to his Humanist enterprises, so it stands to reason to assume that he had already met More in the Low Countries in one of More's "commercial missions" on behalf of "England" in the 1510s.

While in England, he (Vives) resided at Corpus Christi College, Oxford [PMO: With Margarita? Were at that time women allowed to live in Oxford Colleges with their husbands?], where Erasmus had strong ties. Vives was made doctor of laws [PMO: "Honoris causa" I guess, for he had not studied Law] and lectured on philosophy. Having declared himself against the [annulment](#) of the marriage of Henry VIII and [Catherine of Aragon](#) [PMO: Just like his friend More], he lost royal favour and was confined to his house for six weeks in 1528 [PMO: Not to the Tower and for a much shorter period of time than More]. On his release, he withdrew to Bruges, where he devoted the rest of his life to the composition of numerous works, chiefly directed against the scholastic philosophy and the preponderant unquestioning authority of Aristotle. The most important of his treatises is the *De Causis Corruptarum Artium*, which has been ranked with Bacon's *Novum Organon*.

Thus, "chiefly directed" against the pillars of Christian Theology. So much for Vives and for that More-Jewish connection. Let us return to More. In 1520, More "helped" king Henry to write a dissertation in defense of the seven Sacraments of the Catholic Church, against the doctrines that Marthin Luther was spreading on the Continent. The work was titled "*Assertio Septem Sacramentorum*". Of course, among those seven sacraments is the sacrament of marriage. For his contribution to combating the heresies of Luther, Henry was awarded by Rome the title of "*Fidei Defensor*", "Defender of the Faith" –of the Catholic faith, that is. This title is held to this day by the Sovereigns of England and the characters "FD" can be seen in today's English coins. Wikipedia points out that according to some the true author of the dissertation was not Thomas More, but Bishop John Fisher, another decapitated victim of Henry VIII. Fisher also Jewish, of course. Let us leave Fisher for the moment and continue with More.

If Miles is right and Henry was gay (and he has a very good case), More should have known it. Not only that. According to Wikipedia, More was "secretary and personal adviser to King Henry VIII", so he was very close to Henry. The question is how close. Wikipedia says that More "remained in Henry's favour despite his refusal", that is, despite his resignation as Lord Chancellor on 16 May 1532. It is difficult to see how More could have remained in Henry's favor after having refused to continue in the highest office of the realm, an office to which Henry had personally appointed him. I would view More's resignation as a challenge to Henry, and that would not help much to keep him in Henry's favor. According to Wikipedia, Henry waited to "take action" against More until More refused to attend the coronation of Anne Boleyn as Queen of England, which took place on 1 June 1533. Strange that an offended king does not take immediate action against the offender, but instead waits. For what? For another refusal? How many refusals of More did Henry need to "take action" against him?

Henry and Anne formally married on 25 January 1533, after a secret wedding on 14 November 1532.

The Wikipedia page of Bishop Fisher reads:

In January of the next year, Henry secretly went through a form of marriage with [Anne Boleyn](#).

Which is even worse, because instead of a secret wedding we have a secret “form of marriage”, an expression of which I cannot make sense.

Yes, which was it? It reminds us of the shenanigans with the marriage of Grace Kelly.

What need was there of a secret wedding or of a secret “form of marriage”? A king secretly wedding? Usually what kings do in secrecy is to have bastards, not weddings. From whom or what were Anne and Henry hiding? A secret wedding sounds as if the King of England was robbing a bank at night.

There were more refusals by More before his resignation as Lord Chancellor in 1532. In 1530, being Lord Chancellor:

More refused to sign a letter by the leading English churchmen and aristocrats asking [Pope Clement VII](#) to [annul](#) Henry's marriage to [Catherine of Aragón](#), and also quarreled with Henry VIII over the heresy laws. In 1531, a royal decree required the clergy to take an [oath acknowledging the King as Supreme Head of the Church of England](#). The bishops at the [Convocation of Canterbury](#) in 1532 agreed to sign the Oath but only under threat of praemunire and only after these words were added: "as far as the law of Christ allows"

There are a couple of things here that deserve a closer look. First, there is the letter by the leading English churchmen and aristocrats asking [Pope Clement VII](#) to [annul](#) Henry's marriage to [Catherine of Aragón](#). I guess that by “annul” what is meant is a declaration that the marital bond does not exist. In the Catholic Church, divorce does not exist, and the matrimonial bond is “till death do them part”. Usually, the way people break their marriages is by appealing to the Pope, who hands the case to the Roman Rota, the ecclesiastical tribunal that the Pope established in the 13th century for matrimonial issues. The Rota does not annul marriages, because a Catholic marriage cannot be annulled, by the Pope by the Rota or by anyone. The argument of the wealthy, who are the ones who can afford to pay the high fees of the Roman Rota and the lawyers, is that there was no marriage, no matrimonial bond, never that the bond exists and that it is pronounced broken or “annulled”. The cause is customarily some defect in consent; for instance: that some party concealed crucial information to the other.

Henry did not go that way, which would not have been too difficult: it is the way to go and is used time and again by the wealthy to this day. He rather chose to use leading aristocrats and Bishops to demand from the Pope something that should have ended in the Rota, if the argument that the Old Testament says that a man should not marry the widow of a brother is anything to go by. Also odd is that the Pope does not send Henry's request to the Rota, which is the tribunal that the Popes had long before established to deal with those issues.

If by “annul” is meant a divorce, no Bishop in his right mind would ever request from the Pope a divorce, because, as I just said, divorce does not exist in the Catholic Church: a Catholic marriage is for life: “*quod Deus coniunxit homo non separet*”, that

is, “That Which God Has Joined, Let No Man Put Asunder”. “No man” of course includes the Pope. Full stop.

This strongly suggests that Miles is right in claiming that the nullity of the marriage of Catherine and Henry was the cover-up for the operation of not only seizing the property of the Anglican Catholic Church, but also for its replacement for another church of sorts, the church of the goddess pound sterling, of hard work and poverty for the people and more riches for the already rich. Henry, or the directors of the operation, chose the most controversial and noisy way to stage a matrimonial issue. This is where the eyes of everybody were going to be set, on whether or not the marriage to Ann was valid or whether the Old Testament made null the union Catherine-Henry, not on the expropriation of the patrimony of the Catholic Church and the establishment of a new church of a theocratic-mercantile character. By the way, Henry had been married to Catherine from 1509 to 1533, that is, for 24 years. According to Wikipedia, it was about 1527, that is, after about 18 years of marriage to Catherine, when Henry came to the conclusion that his marriage to her was null because he had violated some precept of the Old Testament, not of the New. The appeal to the Old Testament looks very much like an excuse (and not a very good one at that) to cast a smokescreen and go ahead behind the smoke with the operation of displacing the Yorkist opposition.

I do not mean to make an apology of the Catholic hierarchy here. I am not terribly fond of it. What I mean to say is that the controversy of Henry with Rome does not look like any religious or theological one, but rather like a strategic operation, as Miles notes. However, I would like to add that one of the features that distinguishes Christianity from other religions is the separation between the tiara and the throne, the civil and the religious. In other civilizations without any such separation, the will of the ruler ends up being the will of God. In the Christendom the separation has often been rather blurry, certainly, but it remains there and the civil ruler can be questioned from a religious standpoint—as the religious ruler can also be questioned from a civil standpoint. To keep that separation the ecclesiastical patrimony is fundamental. Without a patrimony, the religious would not have any presence in the civil sphere and religion would be air. Which is why I would say that, in addition to the obvious enrichment of those benefited by the operation, the expropriation of the patrimony of the Catholic Church was a first necessary step to a theocratic order of the kind pursued by Henry and his ilk. One has freedom to the extent that one has property (*pace* the World Economic Forum).

Secondly, as to the 1531 decree demanding the clergy to take an [oath acknowledging the King as Supreme Head of the Church of England](#), no cleric could take any such oath, as it collides in a too obvious way with the Catholic doctrine. To take any such oath is tantamount to placing oneself outside the Catholic Church. However, the English “Episcopal Conference” takes the oath and gives in without resistance to Henry’s encroachment upon the Catholic Church. It seems that adding a few words (“as far as the law of Christ allows”) is enough to make peace with a King that is not only attacking the Church, but founding a new one of his own: call it Church of England or Church of Henry, but it would be a new church. Not the Church *of* England, but a new Churchlike organization *in* England. The Church of England or Anglican Church is the Universal (this is what the Greek word “Catholic” means) Church in England. By the way, if the “law of Christ” is the Catholic doctrine, which is the doctrine a Catholic Bishop is expected to uphold, then the “law of Christ” leaves no room for the acceptance of any civil authority as Pope.

On 13 April 1534, More was asked to appear before a commission and swear his allegiance to the parliamentary [Act of Succession](#). More accepted Parliament's right to declare [Anne Boleyn](#) the legitimate Queen of England, though he refused "the spiritual validity of the king's second marriage".

So the marriage of Henry to Ann was not “spiritually valid” for More. What is that “spiritual validity”? What is the difference between validity and spiritual validity? What other kinds of validity did More contemplate? If the marriage of Henry to Ann was not valid, what right did the Parliament have to declare Ann legitimate Queen of England? And first of all, what question can be posed about the marriage of Henry to Ann if that marriage did not exist? At least not in the Catholic Church. There was no question about the validity, spiritual or material, of the second marriage of Henry because that marriage did not exist. More does not go that way, but this would have been the point according to the Catholic doctrine More was supposed to be a staunch defender of. One could understand that More speaks as if he admitted that there was a second marriage and, in order to keep his head upon his shoulders, implies the contrary (which means that there are no basis to crown Ann as Queen of England) in a diplomatic way saying that the marriage is not spiritually valid.

Holding fast to the teaching of [papal supremacy](#), he steadfastly refused to take the oath of supremacy of the Crown in the relationship between the kingdom and the church in England [PMO: How could a Catholic possibly acknowledge a civil authority as the supreme ecclesiastical authority?]. More furthermore publicly refused to uphold Henry's annulment from Catherine. [John Fisher](#), Bishop of Rochester, refused the oath along with More.

So you see, More is just playing his part, making *certain* there will be a rupture with Rome, by taking the Pope's part within England. He is the controlled opposition.

Enter Bishop John Fisher, whose clash with Henry was very similar to that of More. Here is one of the two portraits of him shown in Wikipedia, attributed to [Gerard Valck](#), after [Adriaen van der Werff](#), and dated 1697:



Note that there is no cross on the Bishop's chest and the spelling of his surname: "Fischer", not "Fisher", like in the Jewish banker Stanley Fischer, for instance. "Fischer" is not an uncommon Jewish surname. Wikipedia:

Stanley (Shlomo) Fischer, [Israeli American](#) economist who served as the **20th Vice Chair of the Federal Reserve** from 2014 to 2017. Fisher previously served as the 8th governor of the [Bank of Israel](#) from 2005 to 2013. Born in [Northern Rhodesia](#) (now [Zambia](#)), he holds [dual citizenship](#) in [Israel](#) and the [United States](#). (...) On January 10, 2014, President [Barack Obama](#) nominated Fischer to be Vice-Chairman of the US [Federal Reserve Board of Governors](#).

Which suggests that Bishop Foxe and Bishop Fischer were both Jewish.

The stories of More and Fisher are very much alike, though there is a point of strong contrast between the two. According to Wikipedia, Fisher, unlike More, had a wide popular support, and, as a consequence, his imprisonment, trial and execution were quite a problem for the PR department of the Crown:

A public outcry was brewing among the London populace who saw a sinister irony in the parallels between the conviction of Fisher and that of his patronal namesake, [Saint John the Baptist](#), who was executed by King [Herod Antipas](#) for challenging the validity of Herod's marriage to his brother's divorcée [Herodias](#). For fear of John Fisher's living through his patronal [feast day](#), that of the [Nativity of St. John the Baptist](#) on 24 June, and of attracting too much public sympathy, King Henry commuted the sentence to that of [beheading](#), to be accomplished before 23 June, the Vigil of the feast of the Nativity of St. John the Baptist. He

was executed on [Tower Hill](#) on 22 June 1535. The execution had the opposite effect from that which King Henry VIII intended, as it created yet another parallel with that of the martyrdom of St. John the Baptist, who was also beheaded; his death also happened on the feast day of [Saint Alban](#), the first martyr of Britain.”

Note: the “London populace”, not the “London people”. More is not said anywhere to have a popular support comparable to that enjoyed by Fisher, which raises the question as to why, because More had ranked higher in the civil order higher than Fisher in the ecclesiastical one: More had been, among many other top positions, Prime Minister, whilst Fisher was only a bishop. There were many bishops in England, but only one PM. Moreover, the attack on the church was coming from the civil, not from the ecclesiastical branch, however much the latter had been so infiltrated that it had been turned into a Tudor department. It was PM More’s time to show his English Catholic fellows that the Catholic majority was not going to give in to the foreign attack on England; indeed, if the top layer of the Church of England had not been previously infiltrated by the Tudor/Stanleys, Henry would have been unleashing a revolt. This is what happened in Germany with Luther.

If Miles is right to claim that the English people saw the Protestants as thieves, the Lancastrians had to have a solid grip on the civil as well as on the ecclesiastical top layers. Sort of like today’s virus operation: either you have the top layers of society solidly on your grip or you are going to face a lot of trouble when it comes to tormenting and expropriating the people with the preposterous story of the little bug that invaded the Earth to kill the human race. In 16th century England, it seems that things were very much the same as now. There was no revolt against the disruptive policies of Henry because the upper layers of society were under control. The Catholic hero More and the popular Bishop Fisher were **allegedly** decapitated because of their adherence to the Catholic doctrine and there is not any popular unrest, in sharp contrast to the German Peasant’s War.

Four days later, Henry had More imprisoned in the [Tower of London](#).

That would be 17th April 1534, after More’s refusal to take the oath regarding the Act of Succession. More is imprisoned in the Tower of London with no accusation pending on him. The goal of the incarceration seems to be to wear More down until he either publicly acknowledged Henry as the Pope of his new Church or until he publicly declared that Henry could not be made into the Pope of the Anglican Church, in which case he was sending himself to the scaffold. More was **allegedly** confined in the Tower of London for more than a year.

In addition to refusing to support the King’s annulment or supremacy, More refused to sign the 1534 [Oath of Succession](#) confirming Anne’s role as queen and the rights of their children to succession. More’s fate was sealed. While he had no argument with the basic concept of succession as stated in the Act, the preamble of the Oath repudiated the authority of the Pope.

The “action” of Henry against More brought finally him to trial for treason. According to Wikipedia, “The trial was held on 1 July 1535, before a panel of judges that included the new Lord Chancellor, Sir Thomas Audley, as well as Anne Boleyn’s uncle, Thomas Howard, 3rd Duke of Norfolk, her father Thomas Boleyn and her brother George Boleyn”. A remarkable “panel of judges”, but More, an experienced judge and lawyer himself, did not recuse that kangaroo tribunal. Perhaps there was no way to do any such thing, so More knew from the beginning that he was doomed. Which suggests that the trial was a farce and that, as Miles says, the divorce was a

cover up for the operation of destruction of the Church of England; in this case, in the name of freedom for England from the Papist oppression. The inaction of More suggests that he was in on it, but posing as defender of the Church of Rome—a sort of controlled opposition.

There are two questions at issue, namely, the Act of Supremacy and the divorce of Henry from Catherine. In the movie “A Man for All Seasons”, once sentenced to death and thus freed from silence, More speaks his mind. He says that the tribunal condemns him to death not because any opposition to the Act of Supremacy, which in my opinion is the key issue, but because his refusal to accept the validity of the marriage of Henry to Anne: “I will never bend to that marriage”, cries More out loud. This is strange, for, according to Catholic doctrine, there was no marriage to bend or not to bend to. Besides, the question at issue was the Act of Supremacy, which is what makes it possible to appoint Henry Pope of a new church in which divorce is allowed—Henry married other four times.

Though the popular support for Fisher and More is remarkably different in Wikipedia, the process that led both to the scaffold is too similar. The two of them appealed to the strategy of silence when it came to taking the oaths. Apparently, they thought that such a legal trick could save them from the wrath of Henry. If they disparaged Henry so much that Henry wanted them decapitated not by decree but by trial, what was needed was to undermine the strategy of silence; in other words, a declaration that Henry was not the head of the Anglican Church, from which it follows that his wife, and therefore, Queen of England, was Catherine, and that his marriage to Ann was but an act. The strategy of Henry’s people was to produce a witness who testifies that the two men had denied the validity of the Act of Supremacy. In both cases, the witness who sent the two men to the axe was the notorious scoundrel Richard Rich. Here is what Wikipedia says about Fisher:

Fisher refused the oath and was imprisoned in the Tower of London on 26 April 1534. Several efforts were made to induce him to submit, but without effect, and in November he was attainted of misprision of treason a second time, his goods being forfeited as from the previous 1 March, and the See of Rochester being declared vacant as of 2 June following. He was to remain in the Tower for over a year, and while he was allowed food and drink sent by friends, and a servant, he was not allowed a priest, even to the very end. A long letter exists, written from the Tower by Fisher to Thomas Cromwell, speaking of the severity of his conditions of imprisonment.

For the food and drink sent by his friends were of not of very good quality, I guess. Despite that, the maneuver to wear Fisher down did not succeed and he remained stubborn in his silence.

Like Thomas More, Bishop Fisher believed that, because the statute condemned only those speaking maliciously against the King's new title, there was safety in silence. However, on 7 May he fell into a trap laid for him by Richard Rich, who was to perjure himself to obtain Thomas More's conviction. Rich told Fisher that for his own conscience's sake the King wished to know, in strict secrecy, Fisher's real opinion. Fisher, once again, declared that the King was not Supreme Head of the Church of England.

This story does not sound credible. The trap that Rich sets to lure Fisher into uttering the dirty words looks childish. Fisher must have known who Rich was, and if he made any confidence to him Fisher was suicidal and foolish. “Tell me what you really think (as if Henry did not know it) and I will tell it to the king in strict secrecy, for he is

very interested in your real opinion”. It was precisely the interest of the king in real opinions what had got Fisher incarcerated for over a year. The result of such a confidence of Fisher to Rich is that Fisher was allegedly decapitated on 22 June 1535.

Why hold Fisher and More imprisoned in the Tower for more than a year, when “a public outcry was brewing among the London populace”? Besides, as the trial of More showed, neither man had to say anything to get decapitated. Rich perjures on the trial of More, and not in the trial of Fisher because he obtains the self-incrimination of Fisher. Interestingly, no authority supports Fisher or More. The goal of the imprisonment is said to make the two men renege their faith, but was it rather to discourage and terrorize the Catholic people and thus to avoid a revolt, as it had happened in Germany? If Fisher and More were really an obstacle to the plans of Henry, why not proceed straight-away against them, accusing them of treason to England and of submission to the despot Pope of Rome? And of course getting the two of them beheaded. That would have taught a lesson to the Catholic people.

The kangaroo tribunal would have accepted anything from Rich. His approaches to Fisher and More were unnecessary. With a kangaroo tribunal, there is no need to lure anybody into declaring anything. Which strongly suggests that the two trials were so only in appearance.

There are a couple of things about Fisher that struck my attention:

Fisher's strategy was to assemble funds and attract to Cambridge leading scholars from Europe, promoting the study not only of [Classical Latin](#) and [Greek](#) authors, but of [Hebrew](#).

As far as I know, the Catholic Church is interested in the Old Testament only as a prelude to the New. The Christians who gave a new prominence to the Old Testament were the Protestants. Henry based his case of nullity not on the New, but on the Old Testament. Of course the Old Testament is in the canon of sacred books of the Catholic Church, and its original language is Hebrew, so it makes sense to have Catholics who know Hebrew. However, the core of Catholicism is the New Testament, the original of which is in Greek, not in Hebrew.

Secondly:

Fisher also engaged in secret activities to overthrow Henry. As early as 1531 he began secretly communicating with foreign diplomats. In September 1533 communicating secretly through the imperial ambassador [Eustace Chapuys](#) he encouraged [Holy Roman Emperor Charles V](#) to invade England and depose Henry in combination with a domestic uprising.

As if invading England was something that Charles could do based on the support of Bishop Fischer. This story does not sound credible either. Not only was it obvious high treason, but unfeasible. More is not said to have engaged himself in such activities.

If the goal of Fisher was to stop the Lancastrian takeover of England, it seems that he was not knocking on the right door. Look at Charles' coat of arms. It is a Phoenix. Miles has convincingly argued that Charles was a Southern Phoenician. Thus it seems that in addition to the struggle between Lancastrians and Yorkists, we have here a struggle between Northern and Southern Phoenicians on English shores. By the way, the dead lamb hanging before the tail of the Phoenix is just sinister:



Wikipedia does not tell much about the decapitation of More:

More asked that his foster/adopted daughter [Margaret Clement](#) (née Giggs) be given his headless corpse to bury. She was the only member of his family to witness his execution. He was buried at the Tower of London, in the chapel of [St Peter ad Vincula](#) in an unmarked grave. His head was [fixed upon a pike over London Bridge](#) for a month, according to the normal custom for traitors. More's daughter Margaret later rescued the severed head. It is believed to rest in the Roper Vault of [St Dunstan's Church, Canterbury](#).”

More's body is conveniently buried in an unmarked grave, so there is no evidence that the body buried in the grave is More's. What is venerated of More is his head, which is supposed to be in the Roper Vault of Canterbury. As Miles was noted in other similar cases, after a month the head of More (if indeed it was his head) would have been made unrecognizable by the crows, so it would have been practically impossible for Meg (the favorite child of More) to tell whose the head was. By the way, why is it that Meg did not accompany her father in his last moments? Why only one member of the family, and a stepdaughter at that? Who else in addition to Margaret Clement witnessed the decapitation of More? The text of Wikipedia seems to imply that Margaret Clement witnessed the decapitation of her stepfather, but that his headless body was not given to her, but to the personnel of the Tower, who were the ones who moved it from the scaffold to the unmarked grave.

In the movie “A Man for All Seasons”, More urges his family to leave England for the Continent at night, in secrecy, on the assumption that they would suffer a reprisal

from the ones who were sending him to the scaffold, supposedly Henry and his agents. If the Mores were really in such a danger that they had to leave England for the Continent overnight and leave all their patrimony behind, does it make any sense for Meg to return from her safe shelter on the Continent to dangerous England in order to claim the remains of her father's head? It seems that scriptwriter Bolt departs here from historical record and that the Mores did not leave England. Besides, there is no mention of reprisals to the Mores, so it seems that nobody disturbed them.

Likewise, Wikipedia does not say anything about witnesses of the execution of Fisher:

His body was treated with particular rancour, apparently on Henry's orders, being stripped and left on the scaffold until the evening, 'when it was taken on pikes and thrown naked into a rough grave in the churchyard of All Hallows' Barking, also known as All Hallows-by-the-Tower. There was no funeral prayer. A fortnight later, his body was laid beside that of Sir Thomas More in the chapel of St Peter ad Vincula within the Tower of London [PMO: So the undertakers were the only ones who knew who were in the unmarked grave]. Fisher's head was stuck upon a pole on London Bridge but its ruddy and lifelike appearance excited so much attention that, after a fortnight, it was thrown into the Thames [PMO: Perhaps because the head in the pole did not look very much like Fisher?], its place being taken by that of Sir Thomas More.

Time to sum up. More does not look like a Yorkist. He was too close to Henry for too long to have been a Yorkist. Perhaps he was intimately close to Henry. His stay in the Carthusian monastery and his hesitations about becoming a monk do not sound credible, and look like a fake story designed to pave the way for the role of More as the heroic defender of the Catholic Church who ends up losing his head. The final demise of More would then be a direct message to the English people and to the Yorkist opposition to Henry, who may have planned to use popular discontent in order to undermine the Tudor/Lancaster dominance. The trial of More looks rather like an act than as a true trial. Same with that of Fisher. As a matter of fact, the stories on the passion and death of the two men look too similar: they look like two stagings of the same script. Fisher may have been an asset of the Southern Phoenicians and he looks Phoenician himself, perhaps like More. Fisher is said to have tried to gather some dissent against the Tudors, and the Bishops of Ely and Bath are said to have supported his opposition to Henry's plans for some time, but that operation, involving three Bishops only, looks like a planned failure. After having played his role, Bishop Fischer was withdrawn from the public scene. Like More.

More's heroic defense of the Catholic faith does not seem to have made a big impression in Rome, because More, the famous statesman and humanist, was not declared a saint until four centuries after his death.

Miles: Just to be sure you got it, Saint Thomas More was probably Henry's gay lover and handler. More was neither a lawyer nor a cleric, being only a clever Jew and tool of the Stanleys. He was an *advisor* and fellow actor. His trial and death were faked. Same for Fisher. Knowing that, Pope Pius nonetheless canonized More as a saint in 1935. Pius was Damiano Ratti (one of the most amusingly transparent names in history, I have to say), who—you will remember—is also famous for promoting the Nazis and signing concordats with them. Three decades later Hollywood sainted More in their own way, honoring him for his acting abilities.