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The English Custody of Mary Queen of Scots

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ANOTACE

Bakalářská práce s názvem “The English Custody of Mary Queen of Scots” se zaměřuje na život Mary, královny Skotské a jejím zajetí na Anglickém území za vlády její sestřenice Alžběty I. První část práce je věnována Maryinu životu a dětství ve Francii. Druhá část porovnává její život a osobnost s Alžbětou I. Poslední část je zaměřena na její pobyt v zajetí. Dále popisuje podmínky daných míst během Maryina pobytu, její zkušenosti a v neposlední řadě její vliv na současnou podobu těchto míst.

Klíčová slova: Alžběta I, Internace, Mary Stuart, Rivalita, Vězení

ABSTRACT

The Bachelor thesis titled "The English Custody of Mary Queen of Scots" focuses on the life of Mary, Queen of Scots, and her captivity on English territory during the reign of her cousin Elizabeth I. The first part of the thesis is devoted to Mary's life and upbringing in France. The second part draws comparisons between Mary's life and characteristics with those of Elizabeth I. The final section focuses on her captivity. It also describes the conditions of the given places during Mary's stay, her experiences and, finally, her impact on the current state of these locations.

Key Words: Elizabeth I, Internment, Mary Stuart, Prison, Rivalry

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Introduction

Mary Queen of Scots entered history as a figure of political intrigue and personal tragedy. Her life was marred by royal struggles, complicated relationships, and trust in the wrong people. Her reign was characterised by a complex interplay of political intrigue, religious upheaval, and, ultimately, a struggle for survival. Despite her efforts, she spent most of her adult life in English custody. Even though her story is hundreds of years old, her fate interests many writers and historians to this day. For a broader understanding of her story, it is pivotal to explore the places she was kept in. Not only did it shape her personal experience, but it also affected her reign.

For this bachelor thesis, it is crucial to examine the conditions of the places which served Mary's captivity and compare them with their current condition. The locations of Mary's captivity serve as poignant symbols of her struggle for survival and autonomy in a world dominated by rivalries and betrayal. Each place holds a historical significance, defining her struggles, personal life, and experiences. This thesis seeks to portray Mary, Queen of Scots' captivity, by examining the physical, political, and psychological aspects of the places where she was imprisoned. It aims to address her physical as well as mental condition and how the individual locations affected her wellbeing. In the case of the locations that still exist today, it looks at whether, and how, Mary's local stay in custody is remembered and presented as part of their historic heritage.

1 Historical background

To understand Elizabeth I's and Mary Stuart's relationship, it is crucial to describe the preceding historical events between England and Scotland that determined it.

1.1 Relationship between Scotland and England during Mary's reign

The relationship between Scotland and England in the sixteenth century can be characterised as a combination of cooperation, conflict, and shifting alliances for several reasons. One of the main points was having two Queens claiming the English throne on one island. Furthermore, the conflict was worsened by their different religions. English parliament passed The Act of Supremacy in the year 1534, during the reign of King Henry VIII (1491-1547). This act marked a pivotal moment in English history and the English Reformation, which caused significant religious and political changes. The document declared the ruling English monarch to be the Head of the Church. This act caused the deepening of the tension between the two countries. (Kellar, 2005)

Subsequent political as well as religious changes affected England after the death of King Henry VIII, who was succeeded by his nine-year-old son Edward VI (1537-1553) from Henry's third marriage with Jane Seymour. During Edward's reign, England experienced a significant shift towards Protestantism. However, Edward VI's reign was relatively short, as he died, still underaged, only after six years on the throne. Mary I (1516-1558), also known as Bloody Mary, was Edward's half-sister. Her mother was Catherine of Aragon, the first wife of Henry VIII. Mary was a Catholic and fought for the restoration of the Catholic religion, for which she earned her nickname. To strengthen Catholicism in England, she married Phillip II of Spain. (Weir, 1997)

Because Mary I did not have an heir after her death, the throne was assigned to Elizabeth I (1533-1603), the daughter of Henry's second wife, Anne Boleyn. The period of Elizabeth's reign is often referred to as the Elizabethan era. In England, it was a time of significant cultural, economic, and political transformation. Her reign lasted from 1558 until her death in 1603 and is known as one of the most prosperous and dynamic periods in English history. Even though her reign was prosperous, it was also marked by many power and political conflicts. One of the long-lasting issues was the tension with Scotland. (Weir, 1998)

At the time of Henry VIII's reign, Scotland was ruled by James IV of the House of Stuart (1473-1513). James married Henry's older sister, Margaret Tudor (1489-1541), to secure and strengthen the relationship between England and Scotland. James IV is known to have been a capable, charismatic ruler with ambitions to modernise and innovate his country, especially regarding the military. Scotland's military improvement was also supported by its long-term ally - France. Despite James's achievements, he was also affected by challenges and difficult decisions. His last decision led to his death in 1513 at the Battle of Fodden. He decided to support France when England invaded France, despite the new sympathies with the Tudor Dynasty. One of the critical factors influencing James IV's decision was the Auld Alliance, a historic alliance between Scotland and France dating back to the late 13th century. After his death, the throne passed to his son James.

James V (1512-1542) became King only at the age of nine. Due to his young age, Scotland was ruled by his regents. First, it was his mother, Margaret Tudor, and later, John, Duke of Albany, James's second cousin, who took over. James started his reign without regents in 1528. (Wormald, 2005) According to Fraser (1969), James inherited the kingdom bankrupted by his mother. His reign was characterised by political instability as well as religious conflict. His main attempt was to restore royal power and uplift the kingdom of Stuarts. James V of Scotland ruled during a period of significant religious instability as the Protestant Reformation began to spread across Scotland. James, being a Catholic, refused to break from the Catholic church as Henry VIII insisted. That caused, once again, a strained relationship between England and Scotland. One of the most well-known Protestant reformers was John Knox, who, thanks to his preaching, gained tremendous support from society, especially among the most important groups, such as the nobility and intellectuals. Later he was exiled from Scotland and tried his chances in England. (Wormald, 2005)

James V married twice. The first of his marriages was to Madeleine of Valois, the daughter of King Francis I of France. However, due to Madeleine's early death in 1537, the marriage lasted only a few months. James chose Marie de Guise for his second wife, who was also recently widowed. Marie de Guise was a member of the French nobility. Both marriages were supposed to strengthen the ties between Scotland and France.

Finally, the only surviving and legitimate child of James V was Mary Stuart, who succeeded to the throne at only six days old because of James's death. Mary was born on 8 December 1542. (Fraser, 1969)

1.2 Childhood of Mary Stuart

1.2.1 Her Early Life

After King James' death, young Mary became Queen. At first, the regent of Scotland was Earl of Arran, who was later succeeded by Mary's mother, Mary de Guise. She ruled Scotland between the years 1554 and 1560 till her death. Understandably, her most important task was to protect the alliance between Scotland and France. Besides, she earned the trust of her people thanks to her known antipathy for the English. As she had to face many problems in Scotland, she sent her daughter to France for security and foreign policy. According to Fraser (1969), it is thought that Mary was born prematurely, as a private letter sent to King Henry VIII states that the born child is fragile and not likely to survive. Rumours about a fragile baby spread during the first days of Mary's life. During her early life, Mary experienced political conflicts as well as instability and English attacks; hence, she was at constant risk. (Wormald, 2005) She came to France at only six years old as she was betrothed to Francis II, the dauphin of France.

She stayed in France for thirteen years, which influenced her in many ways during her reign. She received an education, perfected her French, and practised other languages as well. She also developed an interest in the arts. She was not only educated but also brought up in a strictly Catholic manner. Furthermore, she created great friendships and political connections, which became useful later in life. Among the most influential people she befriended was, for example, Catherine de Medici, mother of Francis II, Mary's first husband. She and Francis married in 1558. (Fraser, 1969)

The following year, in 1559, the English Queen Mary Tudor died and was succeeded by her half-sister, Elizabeth Tudor. However, Mary Stuart was a granddaughter of King Henry VII. Therefore, she also possessed a claim to the throne. King Henry II of France supported Mary's claim to the English throne, viewing it as an opportunity to expand France's influence. Moreover, the Catholic Church preferred Mary on the throne as well. Since they viewed the marriage of Henry VIII and Anne Boleyn as illegitimate, Elizabeth I was not entitled to claim the English throne in their view.

The same year, King Henry II died, and Francis and Mary became King and Queen of France. (Fraser, 1969)

1.2.2 Her reign as the Queen of Scotland

The year 1560 spent in France greatly impacted Mary and her future, as she experienced the significant, devastating loss of several close family members. At first, her mother, Mary de Guise, died. Mary Stuart must have been devastated by the loss of her mother. Losing such an important figure in her life would have undoubtedly left a huge void, not just emotionally but also in terms of familial and political support. Mary de Guise played a significant role in the political affairs of Scotland and France. Therefore, losing her mother meant losing a key political ally and advisor, which could have had a significant influence on Mary Stuart's reign and alliances. The next tragedy happening in Mary's life was the death of her husband Francis at the early age of 16 (1560). She and Francis had been a close and fond couple. Not only did Mary lose her husband and friend, but she also lost her position as the Queen of France. After the death of Francis II, Mary Stuart's life took a significant turn, marked by numerous challenges and political upheavals. (Fraser, 1969)

When she returned to Scotland nine months following the passing of her husband, her main goal was to assume her position as Queen, manage her country, and restore her power. Upon her return and residence in Scotland, she initiated correspondence with Elizabeth, envisioning a potential friendship, which, however, began to worsen after some time. (Dunn, 2004) In her home country, she faced a lack of acceptance due to her Catholic faith, causing many of her subjects to view her with distrust. Moreover, the Scottish Parliament limited Mary's power and rights as Queen. Therefore, the return to her country disappointed Mary unpleasantly. (Fraser, 1969) When coming to Scotland, she brought with her a group of French advisors and attendants, causing apprehension among the Scottish nobility, who worried that Mary might prioritise her French allies. Despite this, Mary accepted the growing Protestant influence. She aspired to integrate Scottish nobility into her court and aimed to arrange positive relationships among key figures in her politics. (Wormald, 1991)

Mary's reign in Scotland is characterised by ambiguity of religion. Even though Scotland had been ruled by Protestants, there were still many Catholics. Because of her

intentions for the English throne, Mary decided not to follow the long-lasting tradition of religion similar to that of the ruler and the nation and kept the Protestant Council. Her primary motivation was the ambition to ascend the English throne. A council consisting mainly of Protestants was supposed to help Mary in her hopes for the English throne. (Wormald, 1991)

1.2.3 Events leading to her imprisonment in England

1.2.3.1 Marriage to Lord Darnley

Upon Mary's first husband's death, she felt lonely. Moreover, she understood the importance of remarrying not only to secure her position as Queen but also because of the need for an heir. For several reasons, she became one of the most desirable queens in Europe. Mary was aware of the great importance of the choice of her new husband. She had to consider whether he followed the Catholic or Protestant faith. Marrying a Catholic would mean disruption of the relationship with her people; however, if she married a Protestant, it would cause relation damage to some other Catholic countries. (Fraser, 1969)

After tremendous pressure from her family members, she finally decided to marry Lord Darnley, her half-cousin (1546-1567). The Queen's choice was influenced by several factors. Besides Lord Darnley's look, she opted for him because of his being a Catholic and a relative of Henry VII. Darnley's grandmother was Margaret Tudor; therefore, marrying him would strengthen Mary's claim to the throne. Mary and Darnley married in July 1565, and less than a year later, in June 1566, Mary's only child, the future James VI (1566-1625), was born. (Fraser, 1969)

Even though their marriage was, above all, a strategic move, it was initially happy, mainly due to Mary's love's blindness. However, after a short period of time, Darnley showed his character as untrustworthy, unreliable, and arrogant. Soon, his actions created tension between him and Mary and the Court. It was mainly because of his demand for the crown matrimonial, which would grant him equal power with Mary. He was known to be ambitious and fought for a more significant influence upon Scotland. Moreover, his opinions often clashed with Mary's and her advisors'. Therefore, he quickly gained enemies in the Scottish Kingdom. Over time, the tension between Mary and Darnley worsened. (Fraser, 1969) According to Wormald (1991), Mary became increasingly

irritated with Darnley's reluctance to cooperate with her in the governance of Scotland. Darnley found the marriage problematic as well. He was jealous. He highly disapproved of Mary's close friendship with her advisor, David Rizzio, who later became a victim of a murder (1566). It is believed that Darnley was implicated in the murder. (Wormald, 1991) The whole conflict culminated in February 1567 when Darnley himself was murdered. (Fraser, 1969) Darnley's murder is full of conjecture, questioning and insufficient evidence. Guy provides several hypotheses, including a conspiracy of murder by Darnley's House of Douglas. Another theory presents a Protestant conspiracy against Darnley along with Mary. The accusation was quickly levelled at Lord Bothwell, who was in Mary's favour but perceived as unpopular and arrogant by others. (Guy, 2005)

Guy (2005, p.298) states that Mary's ambassador in Paris informed her that information about her being "the motive principal of the whole of all" was spreading. The de Medici and the de Guise families turned against Mary at this time. Darnley's murder was condemned not only by Protestants but also by Catholics.

1.2.3.2 Marriage to Lord Bothwell

Already during Darnley's life, Mary became close to Bothwell. Rumours spread about Mary and Bothwell becoming lovers soon after Darnley's death. After Darnley's death and the decline of Mary's supporters, Bothwell became one of Mary's closest associates. (Guy, 2005) Even though Bothwell had been already married at that time, Cheetham (1999) states that Bothwell's wife did not desire to stay in his ways and divorced him immediately.

On 21st April 1567, Mary was returning from a visit of her son James back to her residence in Edinburgh. Suddenly, Bothwell and his eight hundred men confronted her and her cortege and insisted on escorting the queen to Dunbar Castle, as she was said to be in danger in Edinburgh. Cheetham (1999) states that thanks to Bothwell's manipulation, Mary left with him voluntarily, despite the protests of some members of her group. How they spent the night at the Castle is a subject of speculation. Historians talk about rape and abduction. Guy (2005, p.316) states that Bothwell believed that to assure his position, he must own Mary sexually, and if she would not yet marry him, he must conquer her." Regardless of the actual circumstances, their relationship turned intimate. After Bothwell's annulled marriage, he and Mary got married.

The official ceremony was held on 15 May 1567. The atmosphere of the ceremony was controversial, with tension rather than full of joy and celebration. Mary grew scepticism and disapproval of the Lords, which led them to get together to try to save Mary from Bothwell's supremacy. It did not take long for Mary to realise the consequences of her recent actions. By marrying Bothwell, Mary lost most of her supporters. Her action of marrying her second husband's probable murderer was condemned by both Catholics and Protestants. In a short time, almost the whole society turned against her. The marriage ultimately contributed to her downfall. (Cheetham, 1999)

Scottish nobles rose against her and took Mary and Bothwell into custody at Lochleven Castle. Here, according to later records by her secretary Claude Nau, she miscarried twins. Based on these records, the available timeline and expert assumptions, Smith (2008) develops a theory regarding Mary's sexual behaviour and pre-marital relationship with Bothwell. The circumstances of her children, their potential father, and time of conception are subjects of speculation. However, even Sir Nicholas Throckmorton, one of Elizabeth's most trusted ambassadors, describes in his letter to England that Mary did not want to renounce her union with Bothwell. As a reason, he states, "She would be with a bastard's child and lose her honour." (Throckmorton, *ctd.* in Smith, 2008, p. 126)

According to Smith (2008), considering the uncertainty of the conception, Elizabeth could have viewed Mary as an adulterer and liar. Elizabeth's knowledge about Mary's persuasive abilities and charm provides a better understanding of Elizabeth's later determination to keep Mary in captivity.

While Bothwell managed to escape, Mary was forced to abdicate, which she did in July 1567 in favour of her only child, James. James Stuart, Mary's half-brother, was chosen as the Regent. Mary was captured in Lochleven Castle for nearly a year. However, in May 1568, she escaped. In the end, she had no choice but to flee to England, seeking refuge with her cousin, Queen Elizabeth I. Upon her arrival in England, Mary did not receive the warm welcome she had expected. Her cousin Elizabeth I at first contemplated helping her. However, in the end, she chose to listen to her advisors. Consequently, Elizabeth determined it safest to detain Mary in various castles across England until the

investigation into Lord Darnley's murder concluded and the situation in Scotland stabilised. (Fraser, 1969)

1.3 Comparison of Mary Stuart and Elizabeth I.

In this chapter, I will compare Mary and Elizabeth in terms of their background, such as family relations, religion, and politics. Their relationship is peculiar mainly because the two never met in person, despite their related bloodline.

1.3.1 Childhood

Mary and Elizabeth came from the powerful royal family. Mary's Stuart family had strong ties to Scotland, while Elizabeth's Tudor family was firmly rooted in England. They were related, and their ties can be traced back to Margaret Tudor. Even though they never met in real life, their relationship was complicated by political and religious struggles.

Mary and Elizabeth were cousins (one generation removed) since Mary's Stuart grandmother, Margaret Tudor, had married James IV of Scotland. Their son, James V of Scotland, and his wife, Mary de Guise, Mary's parents, succeeded to the throne. Margaret Tudor was also the sister of Henry VIII, Elizabeth's father. Thus, Mary and Elizabeth were second cousins.

The age difference between Mary and Elizabeth was eight years. Mary was born on 17 November 1558 and lived to the age of 44. Elizabeth was born on 14 December 1542 and died on 24 March 1603 at the age of 69. (Fraser, 1969)

Mary became the Queen of Scotland at the age of only six days. She was the rightful heir, and nobody doubted her succession. When she was seven, she was taken to France, where she was raised. She received an excellent education and was well cared for at a young age. As a future Queen, she was taught etiquette, politics, history, and languages. She loved all kinds of Art such as dancing, poetry, and music. She was brought up in luxury and security. (Guy, 2021)

On the other hand, Elizabeth had to face many challenges during her childhood. Her young age was marked by struggles and uncertainty. She was a disappointment to her

father right at birth as he longed for a son. Three years after her birth, he had her mother executed. Despite this, Henry loved and cared for her, but she was left unnoticed after her half-brother was born. Elizabeth is said to possess many characteristics of her father. At a very young age, she showed signs of intelligence. She studied a lot and spoke many languages, such as Italian, Latin, and Greek. She was also well-behaved. Her education was mediated by tutors and guardians chosen by her father. After her mother's execution, she was not considered legitimate among Catholics. During her childhood, she lived with uncertainty about her future and fear of her exclusion from the family. However, her succession was secured by the Act of Succession of 1544 issued by her father. Elizabeth succeeded her half-sister Mary Tudor at 25. (Weir, 1997)

1.3.2 Claim to the throne and reign

When it comes to the claim to their throne, we can spot the difference between Mary and Elizabeth right in their childhood. Mary became the Queen of Scotland at the age of only six days. She was the rightful heir, and nobody doubted her succession. When it comes to her claim to the English throne, Guy (2005) states that it was supported by two facts. She had a direct lineage to the British throne. She could trace her ancestors and prove her royal bloodline, which proved her stronger hereditary claim to the throne. Additionally, she was a mother and had a son. Having an heir was highly valued as it secured the continuity of the dynasty. These factors sustained Mary's claim to the throne. As I have already mentioned, Elizabeth's claim to the throne was initially questioned due to the circumstances of her parents' marriage. Parliament eventually proclaimed her as the legitimate child of Henry VIII, which made her a rightful heir and successor to the English throne.

On the contrary, Elizabeth's accession to the throne was welcomed, as she replaced Mary Tudor, whose reign was characterised by tyranny and persecution. After the death of Mary Tudor, Elizabeth dismissed two-thirds of the council or replaced them with her own councillors. Mary's reign left the kingdom in a poor state and escalated religious conflict. Elizabeth had to earn respect from the council and the government. She was known for her unpredictability and demand for control. Her most trusted advisor was William Cecil. (Thomas, 1998) On the other hand, Mary Stuart was surrounded by unreliable people, such as her half-brother, James Stuart. In addition, Mary was not a

favourite among her people in Scotland. She also preferred her life in France over her life in Scotland.

The rivalry between Mary and Elizabeth may have started with Mary's father-in-law, the French king Henry II, who referred to Mary and Francis as Queen and King of England. However, the main reason for their rivalry is an offer made by Mary to Elizabeth in 1564 in which she proposed that Elizabeth designate her as her successor to the throne in exchange for Mary recognising her as the lawful Queen. (Weir, 1997)

Elizabeth had no offspring because she never married. Even though her life was marked by several romantic relationships, she never wed. She believed marriage would threaten her position and power. For those reasons, she is famously known as the Virgin Queen. (Weir, 1997) Mary had a different approach towards marriage. She was married three times: to Francis II of France, Henry Stuart, Lord Darnley, and James Hepburn, Lord Bothwell. She felt pressured into marriage and sought stability and power in her marriage. Mary's marriages were formed mainly because of political reasons and eventually led to her downfall. Mary had a son from her second marriage, which was important because it meant that her dynasty had an heir. Elizabeth I was childless. (Fraser, 1969)

Both queens were important rulers in terms of their status. However, while Elizabeth is known for her stable rule and for handling many challenges during her reign, Mary is known for her controversial rule and unfortunate choices.

1.3.3 Looks and Character

The queens also differed in their looks. Mary Stuart was described as a beautiful and elegant woman. Her beauty was considered a powerful tool in politics as she was able to charm many men in her surroundings. "She was also distinguished by her height. She was 5'11", which was considered a remarkable height at the time. She was likely one of the tallest women in Europe." (Smith, 2008.)

She is described as a tall figure with pale skin and long auburn hair. When it comes to her personality, she was known to be dramatic and emotional. However, she was also trusting, generous, and charismatic. (Guy, 1988)

Compared to Mary, Elizabeth was more down-to-earth and cautious. Unlike Mary, Elizabeth was valued more for her wisdom and intelligence than her beauty. She was known to have the qualities of a good ruler. She was determined and strategic. (Guy, 2021, 10:26) describes her in his lecture as “steely, reserved and distant.” She wanted to be independent, which she proved by never marrying. She had a tall body, ginger hair, and dark eyes. (Weir, 1997)

1.3.4 Religion

Even though Mary was tolerant towards Protestantism, she was brought up as a Catholic. When she returned to Scotland, she had to face many challenges because of the ongoing Protestant Reformation. Mary is supposed to have been tolerant towards Protestants to some extent. She understood the popularity of Protestantism among the Scottish population and wanted to maintain stability in her country and avoid conflicts. However, she remained Catholic and aimed to restore Catholicism as the dominant religion. (Wormald, 1991) After Mary’s arrival, Elizabeth was worried about her position because there were still many Catholics in England who wanted to dethrone her. Elizabeth was a Protestant. She was raised Protestant under the influence of her father, Henry VIII, and her mother, Anne Boleyn. During her reign, she pursued a moderate approach to religious politics to achieve stability, and she tried to compromise between the Catholic and Protestant groups in England despite being pressured by both Catholic and Protestant fractures. During her reign, she implemented settlements known as the Elizabethan Religious Settlement, which established the Church of England as a Protestant with elements of Catholic religion. (Guy, 2004)

1.3.5 Their Communication

Guy (2021, 4:25) explains their relationship as “fraught and tangled”. Their connection was only remote. The two Queens never met in person, despite plans. However, they communicated via letters, messengers, or their diplomats. At the beginning of their frequent correspondence, they exchanged their portraits. At that time, Mary was eighteen, and Elizabeth was twenty-five. In the beginning, they called each other “my dearest sister”, they exchanged gifts, and even talked about marrying each other out of their pure fondness for each other. After Mary’s birth of her son James, she

became seriously ill, and in her will, she committed her son James to Elizabeth. Thereupon, Elizabeth sent her diplomat with gifts to James' christening. (Guy, 2021)

1.4 Places of her imprisonment

Mary was imprisoned in England for 19 long years until her death. She stayed in a number of mainly aristocratic households of varying quality. In this section, I will describe the individual places of her imprisonment, their condition at the time of her stay, and their current state. I will also focus on the historical legacy associated with Mary Stuart as commemorated today.

1.4.1 Carlisle Castle, Cumbria

History

Carlisle Castle is located on the border between England and Scotland and has served as a fortress throughout history. (Cheetham, 1982) The name Carlisle developed in the Roman period from the word "cear", meaning fort or stronghold. (History Victorium, 2021) It referred to the Roman fort and settlement from 72 AD, which formed the basis of the castle built partially above the fort.

Several rulers participated in the construction and modifications of the castle over the years. The first castle, built by William II (William Rufus) in 1092, was in the shape of a ring, surrounded by a deep moat for defence. Henry I ordered the fortification of the castle with towers in 1122. After him, David I, King of Scotland, also participated in the construction of the castle, completed it, and turned it into a massive fortress. The inner part of the castle was modified in 1186 by Henry II of England. (English Heritage, n.d.a)

The entrance to the castle was protected by two wooden gates, a drawbridge, and a trapdoor. The castle is now 69 feet tall, although it used to be taller. The lowest floor was used for storage and prisoners. There was a great hall on the first floor, and the upper floor was used as a living space, along with a kitchen and fireplace for kings.

Due to its position, the castle served as an important border defence point for many years during the wars between Scotland and England. However, probably the most significant siege that the castle experienced was during the Wars of the Roses between the Houses of Lancasters and Yorks. The white rose of York can be found carved into the

wall along with other depictions. Nevertheless, the defence of the castle remained relatively unchanged. (History Victorium, 2021)

Mary's Captivity

Carlisle Castle was Mary's first prison in England, where she was moved on the second day of her arrival. (Cheetham, 1982)

Before leaving for England, Mary managed to send her cousin Elizabeth a letter asking for help and a ring as a sign of their friendship. After arriving in England, the governor of Cumberland (today's Cumbria) accompanied her to Carlisle Castle. From the beginning, Mary was guarded by an armed guard. (English Heritage, n.d.a)

As the Castle served as a fort, it was marked by war; therefore, it was not a very comfortable place to be kept in. Mary was respectfully welcomed, provided with as much comfort as possible and allowed to bring her company. A few days later, word was brought to Mary of Elizabeth's friendly greeting to Mary, assuring her that she was welcome. Elizabeth publicly offered Mary help and ordered for her to be treated with respect and politeness. In private, though, she still remembered that Mary had a rightful claim to the throne, and many Catholics would support her. Soon, it became apparent that Mary was held in Carlisle to restrict her freedom. (Cheetham, 1982)

Elizabeth partly sympathised with Mary as her relative, and a neighbouring queen. However, her advisors, led by her chief councillor Cecil, believed Mary was dangerous. Elizabeth sent one of her counsellors to keep an eye on Mary in Carlisle. He was taken with her, describing her as a pleasant woman who was not afraid to talk to everyone regardless of their rank. But he was worried that Mary might run away, for example, when she was walking or riding a horse. Some of Mary's belongings, such as clothes, were brought from Loch Leven to Carlisle. (English Heritage, n.d.a)

Mary was staying in the Warden's Tower, later known as Mary's Tower. The tower was built in 1308. It had a window from which Mary could look towards Scottish borders. (English Heritage, n.d.a)

According to Cheetham (1982), Mary experienced a football game between the Scottish and British servants.

Initially, she was surrounded only by a few people to help her, which caused her deprivation as, in the past, she was used to having many female companions. The arrival of Mary Seton, the last unmarried Mary of her group of four, was a great relief to her. (Fraser, 1999) Mary stayed at Carlisle for six weeks, until 15th July when she was moved to Bolton Castle, where her new custodian was Lord Scrope. (Cheetham, 1982)

At Carlisle Castle, Mary wrote many letters to Elizabeth I in which she asked for help, support, or her release from captivity. Mary hoped to gain Elizabeth's sympathy and support in her struggles to regain her freedom and authority over her kingdom. In her letters, she also included some poems addressed to Elizabeth. In her poems, she expressed her feelings of sadness and hope. One of the poems called 'Chère sœur' has survived to this day in French and Italian. (Fraser, 1999)

Today

Nowadays, most of Carlisle Castle is in good, preserved condition. However, Mary's tower was demolished in 1835 because of instability. Today, only an octagonal turret remains.

The castle is run by the English Heritage. Their website includes a detailed historical section about Mary Stuart. There is a list dedicated to her that offers information about her stay at Carlisle Castle, including the historical background. As a point of interest, they mention the price Elizabeth I paid weekly for Mary's stay at Carlisle. It was about £56 a week. The large dining table where Mary is said to have celebrated Mass has also been preserved.

The castle is open to the public on weekends, with an exhibition available for visitors. (English Heritage, n.d.a)

1.4.2 Bolton Castle, Yorkshire

History

Bolton Castle is located in Wensleydale, Yorkshire. It was built in 1379 by Sir Richard le Scrope, who was Chancellor of King Richard II at the time. Its construction was finished in 1399 at an enormous cost. The castle's original purpose was defence. Additionally, it was supposed to demonstrate Lord Scrope's family's status and power.

For its purpose, the castle was protected by two entrance gates. In the courtyard, behind the stone walls, there were slits for the arrows of the defenders. On the left, there is the tower where the castle guards were based. The ground floor was small and dark, while the upper floors were brighter. The Castle consists of four floors. (Bolton Castle, n.d.; Feel Design Ltd, 2023)

Mary's Captivity

Mary was relocated to Bolton Castle on 15 July 1568 and spent six months there. Even though its owner was Lord Scrope, Mary's official guardian was Sir Francis Knollys (The Tudor Travel Guide, 2019a). Elizabeth decided to move her from Carlisle to Bolton, which was further from the Scottish Borders.

During Mary's stay at Bolton, the York-Westminster conference (1568-1569) occurred. The conference was to reveal the authenticity of the recently found letters attributed to Mary. The so-called Casket letters allegedly written by Mary to Lord Bothwell while she was still in Scotland were used to incriminate her for planning the murder of her second husband. (Fraser, 1999) The letters would be the only evidence against Mary to support the accusation that she was part of Lord Darnley's murder. It was enough to prove their truth to accuse her. If the letters had been true, Mary would have been rightfully dethroned and would not have been a threat to Elizabeth anymore. If they had been falsified, Mary could have been released and returned to her throne in Scotland. (Guy, 2005)

The Casket Letters was a collection of eight letters and 12 sonnets allegedly written by Mary. The sonnets are supposed to reflect Mary's view on her adultery. However, according to Guy (2005), experts question the authenticity of the sonnets due to their poor linguistic and artistic quality. At the same time, these sonnets could be translated as religious songs. (Guy, 2005) This part of the poem can be interpreted in two ways, either as a declaration of love to her lover or an expression of loyalty to God.

In his hands and in his full power,
I put my son, my honor and my life,
My country, my subjects, my soul all subdued
To him, and none other will I have
For my goal, which without deceit
I will follow in spite of all envy
That may ensue. For I have no other desire,
But to make him perceive my faithfulness.

(Mary Stuart, ctd. in Guy, 2005, p. 387)

James Stuart, Earl of Moray and Regent of Scotland after Mary's forced abdication in 1567-1570 was one of the leading figures who tried to discredit Mary, claim his power, and claim to the throne. He tried to use the letters as evidence against Mary. However, she denied their authenticity and veracity. The authenticity of the letters remains unknown, as the original documents were destroyed in the early 17th century. Only Scottish and English translations have been preserved. (Fraser, 1999) The conference ended without a resolution.

Throughout Mary's captivity, she tried to escape multiple times, including from Bolton Castle. The plan for the escape was devised by her supporters. The plan involved the group managing to smuggle a set of keys. Mary used these keys to unlock her chambers, but the castle's outer gates were heavily guarded, making her escape impossible. Despite her efforts, Mary's escape attempts were unsuccessful, and she remained imprisoned. (Guy, 2005) After this incident, Elizabeth decided to move Mary even further away from Scotland's border to a place where she would not have a chance to escape or find a seaport. (Cheetham, 1982)

In 1569, Mary sought a way to gain alliances and strengthen her claim to the English throne through marriage. Thomas Howard, the 4th Duke of Norfolk, was one of the few who wanted to marry Mary. Their plan was a significant political move that could have changed the course of English history. However, Norfolk's and Mary's intrigues led to his arrest and execution in 1572. The failure of the plot further isolated Mary and intensified tensions between Catholics and Protestants in England. (Fraser, 1999)

Today

Bolton Castle is in private ownership nowadays. Its current owner is Harry Orde-Paulet, the eighth Lord of Bolton. There is only a brief mention of Mary on the official webpage of the Castle. However, an audio tour on their app is available, which introduces the Castle and its history. It describes each floor and discusses Mary and her life at Bolton Castle. (Bolton Castle, n.d.) Cheetham (1982) adds that in the castle, there are several rooms connected to Mary Stuart, such as Mary's room, the State Chambers, and the Secret Chamber. The Great Chamber is located on the second floor, where Mary spent many evenings. However, the location of her bedroom is not precisely known. It may have been in the northwest tower nursery or Lady Scrope's room. In Lady Scrope's room, there is a copy of the letter Mary sent to her half-brother, James Stuart, in 1568 on the table, Lady

Scrope's room has a copy of the letter Mary sent to her half-brother in 1568, displayed on the table. In the letter, she reminded him of his promise to take care of Mary's son. One of her embroideries is also displayed by the fireplace. The rooms are open to visitors. (Feel Design Ltd, 2023)

There were several reasons for choosing Bolton Castle as Mary's next residence. It was not only a greater distance from the Scottish border, but Bolton was also an isolated place with no town nearby. (Cheetham, 1982) The audio tour also mentions another practical reason. Mary was accompanied by retinue and guards; Bolton was adapted for a larger number of people as it included a bakery and a brewery. (Feel Design Ltd, 2023)

1.4.3 Tutbury Castle, Staffordshire

History

Even though Tutbury Castle, located in North Staffordshire, was Mary's third location, it was her first official prison. (Smith, 2008.) It has an extensive history dating back over 1,000 years, however, most of the building is now in ruin. The Castle is located on a hill over the river Dove. It is situated in a strategic place for defence with a view of the plains and hills. Commissioned by Hugh d'Avranches, it was constructed as a Norman fortress in the 11th Century after the Norman Conquest. Throughout the 12th and 13th centuries, the castle suffered several damages because of attacks by rebels. Edmund, the Earl of Lancaster, repaired the castle in 1266. In the Middle Ages, it was used as a hunting lodge. (Crazy About Castles, n.d.)

Mary's Captivity

Cheetham (1982) claims that it was a dark and cold place even at the time of Mary's incarceration. It was a medieval castle that Mary hated probably the most out of all her prisons. According to Fraser (1999), this was the first time she felt like being in prison. It was a large building that resembled a fortress situated near a preserved swamp. Mary described this castle as an ancient structure that was drafty, cold, and freezing in winter.

Her new custodian was the Earl of Shrewsbury, who would be responsible for her custody over the next 15 years, and his wife, Bess of Hardwick. The Countess of Shrewsbury was known to be stubborn, arrogant, and of masculine manners. Even though

she was the complete opposite of Mary, the two of them got along well. Bess even started spending time with Mary doing needlework together in her chamber. Mary liked this activity very much and often spent long moments during her imprisonment needling. Many of her embroideries carried some symbolism from her life, such as her son James or her marriage to Francis II. Mary even sent some of her embroideries along with letters to Elizabeth I. Mary was also newly accompanied by Sir John Morton, a Catholic Priest, whom she surely appreciated. (Cheetham, 1982)

Although Mary was provided with as much comfort as possible, in such conditions, she soon developed rheumatism, which she suffered from for the rest of her life. Consequently, the Earl of Shrewsbury wrote a letter to Elizabeth to suggest Mary's relocation to one of his more suitable residences. Tutbury was one of the worst places Mary was kept in, and she must have felt relieved to leave. (Cheetham, 1982)

In a letter written on 1 October 1569 from Tutbury, Mary described her experiences while imprisoned:

I hoped, according to your promises, to receive your favourable determination in my affairs, I could only lament that my confidence in you, and my friendship and desire to please you, have brought me a result so unhopd for and evil.

(Mary Stuart, ctd. in Turnbull, 1845, p. 173)

She hoped that Elizabeth would trust her and believe in her innocence. Nevertheless, Mary was surrounded by armed guards who did not allow her to go outside and searched her personal belongings, as recorded in the same letter: "Instead of which, they have forbid me to go out, and have rifled my trunks, entering my chamber with pistols and arms, not without putting me in bodily fear." Mary further asks to be released to France and hopes that Elizabeth will consider her requests.

Mary returned to Tutbury Castle three more times. When Mary returned to Tutbury in 1585, Sir Amyas Paulet was her custodian. It was with him that Mary experienced incredibly challenging times. He was a Puritan, while Mary was a Catholic. Mary was subjected to very harsh conditions. She experienced strict surveillance, restricted movement, and freedom. His strict attitude towards Mary contributed to the deterioration of her health. (Guy, 2005)

Today

The castle is owned by the Duchy of Lancaster, hence King Charles III. (Wikipedia Contributors, 2024) Although today the castle is in ruins, it is open for visitors. The castle's curator is the historian Lesley Smith, a specialist in Tudor history. She organises public events and exhibitions at Tutbury Castle and portrays historical characters, including Mary Stuart. Lesley tells her story and explains how and where she spent most of her time at Tutbury. While on the tour, visitors can see the authentic Tudor Garden, the Castle's great hall, and the King's lodging, which is equipped with original furniture from the 16th and 17th centuries. (Crazy About Castles, n.d.; Lesley Smith Historians LTD, n.d.)

Near the castle, there is a museum where a hoard of coins belonging to Thomas of Lancaster is preserved. (Crazy About Castles, n.d.)

The great hall in Tutbury Castle is said to be haunted by Mary Stuart. (Britain Express. n.d.).

1.4.4 Wingfield Manor, Derbyshire

History

Wingfield was built in the middle of the 15th century by Lord Cromwell. Initially, the castle served as a hunting lodge, but it became a magnificent residence over time. After Cromwell's death, the manor was sold to the Earl of Shrewsbury. In 1660, Wingfield Manor was sold to the Halton Family and later was used as a farm. (Burkinshaw, 2012; English Heritage, n.d.b)

Mary's Captivity

She was imprisoned at Wingfield three times in total, in 1569, 1584, and 1585. Moving from Tutbury Castle to Wingfield Manor was a great relief to Mary. She arrived there on 20 April 1569. Wingfield Manor and many other residences belonged to the Earl of Shrewsbury. It was quite a comfortable place surrounded by meadows with a flowing river. The mansion consisted of the main buildings, which were surrounded by an outer

and an inner courtyard. The residence was further surrounded by other small buildings and stables. (English Heritage, n.d.b)

After Mary's arrival, she was assigned the northwest part of the building. It was a much more comfortable place to be kept in in comparison to Tutbury. Her health condition slowly began to improve. Mary wrote many letters to Elizabeth there. However, Mary also started correspondence with the Earl of Norfolk, who gradually gained Mary's favour. He sent her many presents, including a diamond ring. (Cheetham, 1982)

During her correspondence with Norfolk, the Earl of Shrewsbury fell ill. He and his wife went to Buxton for treatment while Mary stayed at Wingfield Manor. When Elizabeth discovered the situation, she became furious and demanded that they return to Tutbury Castle. Mary was also to be transferred there under much stricter conditions this time. Mary was assigned a room facing the sewers. No visits were allowed. (Cheetham, 1982)

Today

Wingfield Manor is a property of English Heritage. Their official webpage states that public access is currently prohibited. After an inspection, it was determined that the entrance was not safe. Work is currently being done to improve the security of the area. As Wingfield Manor is under renovation, there is no reference to Mary the Queen of Scots or any other historical facts on the official website. (English Heritage, n.d.b)

Wingfield Manor incorporates a working farm nowadays. The great hall and the High Tower have been preserved among the ruins of Wingfield Manor. (Burkinshaw, 2012)

1.4.5 Chatsworth House, Derbyshire

History

Chatsworth House was another property of Lord Shrewsbury, acquired through the marriage to Elizabeth of Hardwick. Bess became rich through her previous marriages. All three of her previous husbands died, leaving her with an inheritance. (Cheetham, 1982)

The history of Chatsworth Manor dates to the second half of the sixteenth century when it was acquired by Sir William Cavendish, Bess of Hardwick's second husband. Previously, when the estate was owned by the Leche family, there used to be a small manor house on the current site. The Cavendish family built a new mansion with a large courtyard, a tower gate, and a great hall. In the 17th century, the place was repaired, and new apartments were added. The Chatsworth House guidebook mentions that each owner from 17 generations modified or reconstructed the residence in some way. (Fowler, 2015)

Mary's Captivity

Mary was moved to Chatsworth House, Derbyshire, in May 1570. Mary must have enjoyed spending time there compared to Tutbury Castle. In comparison to her previous captivity, Chatsworth was surrounded by hills, a vast garden with seven ponds, and a view of villages. Therefore, Mary could enjoy spending her time outside in the sun.

Cheetham (1982) remarks that Mary continued her skilful needlework; some examples are still exhibited in Hardwick Hall in Derbyshire. Bess, the Countess of Shrewsbury, would again be her frequent companion.

Some of Mary's and Bess's work was remade into wall hangings and curtains, known by their location as the Oxburgh hangings. They are a set of square-shaped embroidery panels with a plant or an animal in the centre. The panels have Mary's monogram MA and the animals usually symbolise her family members or her feelings at the time (Victoria and Albert Museum, n.d.).

Despite the improvement in her living conditions, Mary's health was not optimal even after moving to Chatsworth House. Her body was weak, and her disease so serious that the doctors who were called to her feared for her life. Mary remained ill and frail for the rest of her life. (Fraser, 1969)

In a letter dated 16 October 1570, Mary replies to letters sent by Elizabeth through her secretary, Cecil. Mary expresses her pleasure at the fact that Elizabeth has decided to write to her. Mary states in her letter that she is willing to entrust her son's education and care to Elizabeth as proof of her sincerity. She follows her letter with intentions to agree upon conditions between them:

In proof of which I consent to place in your hands the most valued jewel which God has given me in the world, and my sole comfort, — * my only and dear son; whose education, desired by several, is entrusted to you, and by him and me preferred before all others to your good pleasure. According to which I have willingly agreed to all obligations reasonably required, the more readily so that my intention is sincere to observe the conditions agreed upon between us.

(Mary Stuart, ctd. in Turnbull, 1845, p. 177)

At the end of her letter, Mary expresses her hope that Elizabeth will visit her and that the two of them can meet soon in person:

Then, Madam my good sister, do not refuse this my very humble request to see you before my departure, so as to remove from me all fear of being undeservedly in your disfavour; and thus, relying altogether on your goodwill, I shall have an indissoluble bond of friendship between us.

(Mary Stuart, ctd. in Turnbull, 1845, p. 178)

Even though Mary's life at Chatsworth was much more comfortable than her previous one, her supporters started to plot for another escape. The plan was for Mary to flee on horseback during a hunt, followed by a boat. However, the plan failed due to the betrayal of one of the plotters. Before the plan, Mary had received an offer from Elizabeth proposing to restore her crown in Scotland in exchange for sending her son James to England as a hostage. However, the offer was turned down.

Mary left Chatsworth House on 28 November 1570. Her next prison was to be Sheffield Castle. (Cheetham, 1982)

Today

Nowadays, the place is owned by Peregrine Cavendish, the Duke of Devonshire, with his wife, the Duchess of Devonshire. They are the seventeenth generation of the family to own the house. It is open to the public and offers 25 rooms to explore. Special events are also held occasionally. (Chatsworth House, n.d.)

Mary's rooms were on the east side. They have been completely rebuilt but still are called The Queen of Scots Apartment. (Fowler, 2015) Another monument related to Mary is Queen Mary's Bower. It is preserved from the 16th century and is said to have been built around the time Mary Stuart was at Chatsworth. It is possible that the raised platform was constructed to provide space for the Queen's exercise. (Chatsworth House, n.d.)

However, there is no other mention of Mary Stuart on the official Chatsworth webpage or in the book by the Devonshire family. (Fowler, 2015)

1.4.6 Sheffield Castle, South Yorkshire

History

The first indication of a built settlement in the Sheffield area comes from the Domesday Book from the Norman era. William de Lovelot is thought to be the initial Norman Lord to construct the castle. The first mention of Sheffield can be traced back to the year 1184. However, the initial castle was destroyed in the second half of the 13th century. The second castle, constructed in stone, was built by the De Furnial Family. In the sixteenth century, the castle was passed to the family of Shrewsbury, who owned the Castle for many years, including the time when Mary Stuart was captured there.

The castle was composed of two parts at the confluence of the Don and Sheaf rivers. The castle was massive. It was about 4 acres in size. (Friends of Sheffield Castle, n.d.) It was used as a medieval hunting lodge.

Sheffield Castle also included Sheffield Manor, which was located near the castle. The two rivers near the Castle served as a moat. The Manor House complex featured buildings situated around courtyards. Stone, timber, and brick structures were built around the mansion. The main entrance was located between two towers. The great hall and long gallery were situated in the same direction and accessible via a staircase. (Cheetham, 1982)

Mary's Captivity

Mary spent fourteen long years in this castle, which was a third of her life. The only time she could leave the place was when travelling to other Shrewsbury mansions or Buxton for treatment of her rheumatism. (Cheetham, 1982) Buxton Spa was a famous resort that provided treatment thanks to its hot springs and healing water. Mary requested her first visit in 1572. However, she also spent her summers there in 1573 and 1584. (Guy, 2005)

Mary arrived at Sheffield Castle in 1570 and stayed there until 1584. A guard closely watched her there. The sixth Earl of Shrewsbury was the castle's administrator.

Over the years, Mary's stay alternated between Sheffield Castle and Sheffield Manor. This meant more servants and guards were needed to prevent any other escape attempt. Despite being in prison, Mary still held on to royal prerogatives and strictly followed the protocol. This applied to the choice of food as well as the furnishings of the rooms. Mary had two rooms in Sheffield, which she had richly furnished. In her room, there were globes and a chandelier with candles. Mary was known for staying up until one in the morning. The bed was fitted with a canopy, and there was a large armchair next to it. After visiting Sheffield, one of Cecil's ambassadors described her as a charming woman still mindful of court manners. (Guy, 2005)

Despite the comfort provided, she still suffered from illness and pain. She often complained of abdominal pain. Some of her illnesses are believed to have been caused by stress. She also frequently asked for more freedom and space to move and exercise, which she had very limited. (Guy, 2005)

Mary wrote Elizabeth on the 2nd of May 1580 from Sheffield. In her letter, she complains about the conditions provided in the castle, especially when it comes to her mistreatment: "I have written to you several times during the last year, to lay before your consideration the unworthy and rigorous treatment which I have received in this captivity." (Mary Stuart, ctd.in Turnbull, 1845, p. 293)

Further in her letter, she pleads to be released from custody and to be acquitted of the charges she is currently facing:

Thus I am constrained to beg and entreat you, as I humbly do, by my liberation out of this prison, to relieve yourself from the charge which I am to you, and from the continual suspicions, mistrusts, and prejudices with which they daily trouble you against me ; since by no other way do I see that you can order things better.

(Mary Stuart, ctd. in Turnbull, 1845, p. 294)

She describes her fragile state of health to Elizabeth. She begs her to allow her to stay at Buxton Spa:

I have had for some years, and the state in which I am at present with my health, which cannot much longer support the treatment to which I have been accustomed in time past when younger and stronger, that in a short while death will deliver me from it, if you do not prevent it by receiving in time some better reward and advantage from my long captivity. And for the present I entreat you to allow me to go to the baths of Buxton, inasmuch as I have not found here any remedy more efficacious for the complaint in my side, with which I am excessively tormented.

(Mary Stuart, ctd.in Turnbull, 1845, p. 295)

Mary was transferred from Sheffield Castle to Wingfield Manor and then, for the last time, to her most hated Tutbury Castle in January 1585, where her custodian was Sir Amyas Paulet. This time, she was not allowed to leave the castle. Walks and other activities were forbidden, and Mary was under strict surveillance. During her imprisonment at Tutbury Castle, Mary was already very weak and showed signs of age, sickness, and fatigue. Therefore, in winter, she was moved to Chartley Manor. (Guy, 2005)

Today

Sheffield Castle was a magnificent fortress, but it was almost completely destroyed during the Civil War. Only a few walls have remained to this day. The Turret House has been preserved among the ruins and houses a museum today. The Turret House was built during Mary's captivity in Sheffield. Even the original plaster of the building has been preserved. The museum features an exhibition on the history of Sheffield Castle and Mary Queen of Scots. Cheetham (1982) suggests that the Turret House may have been built explicitly for Mary. This statement is supported by the fact that there was only one exit from the building, so it was easily guarded. Additionally, patterns of the Scottish emblem have been discovered on the ceiling. The Turret House was restored in 1873. (Cheetham, 1982)

1.4.7 Chartley Manor, Staffordshire

History

Chartley Castle was built in the 13th century by Ranulph de Blondeville, the 4th Earl of Chester. Chester is situated on a hill between Stafford and Uttoxeter. The building consisted of two towers and was surrounded by a moat. After Blondeville, the castle was owned by the de Ferrers family, who owned it for more than six centuries. The Manor was built around the same time as the Castle. The manor also included other buildings that were built later. During Mary's stay at Chartley, her landlord was Robert Devereux, 2nd Earl of Essex. (Cheetham, 1982; Dent, 1975)

Mary's Captivity

Mary was kept at Chartley Hall. She was already seriously ill during that time. Her body was weakening, and she showed signs of exhaustion and old age. Nevertheless, Elizabeth's advisers still believed Mary was a threat to the English throne. They tried to convict Mary once and for all. So, they sent Gilbert Gifford, a former Catholic who was now working with them, to Chartley Manor to gain Mary's trust and spy on her. (Cheetham, 1999)

At Chartley Manor, Mary's followers made one last attempt to free her, ultimately contributing to her downfall. The main organiser of the plan was Anthony Babington, who met Mary at Sheffield Castle. He had been brought up a Catholic, and therefore, Mary was glad of his presence. He became the intermediary for Mary's messages. They created a secret method of carrying letters. The long-term goal of the Babington plot was to kill Queen Elizabeth and restore Catholicism in Britain. News of the plot spread to Catholic Spain and France as well. (Cheetham, 1999)

However, among Mary's allies was Elizabeth's spy, who monitored each step of intrigues. After compiling the evidence against Mary, she was offered a ride around Chartley Manor for a secret search of her room. All her diaries and letters were taken from her room as evidence. On the ride, they came across a group of men. At first, Mary thought they were her saviours. But they were Elizabeth's men who were tasked to take Mary from Chartley Manor. Mary stayed at Chartley Manor till the 21st of November 1586. Then, she was transferred to her final prison, Fotheringhay Castle. (Cheetham, 1999)

Today

Today, only ruins remain of the castle and manor, which are privately owned, and access to them is prohibited. (DiCamillo, n.d.)

1.4.8 Fotheringhay Castle, Northamptonshire

History

Fotheringhay was built by Simon de St. Liz. The castle was later rebuilt by Edmund Langley and owned by the Lords of York. It became a prison during the reign of Mary Tudor. The castle was demolished in the 17th century, and only earthworks were preserved. There are very few references to how the castle came to be. The surroundings of the castle were probably bounded by a moat and a stretching river. A buried hole marks the site of the then trapdoor. In the middle of the castle was a courtyard. An important room was the spacious hall where Mary's execution took place. (Bradley, 1886)

The entrance to the castle was made possible through a large gate on the northern side. The castle housed the usual rooms, such as the great hall, a chapel, and other staterooms. In the middle of the castle was a large courtyard, and around the castle, the building was encircled by two rows of ditches and a river flowing around. However, apart from the defence system, the castle was surrounded by a flat landscape. (Fraser, 1999)

Mary's Captivity

Fotheringhay Castle in Northamptonshire was Mary's final residence. She arrived there on 25 of September. The trial began on the 15th of October 1586 in Fotheringhay's Great Chamber. All of Mary's custodians attended the trial. However, Lord Shrewsbury came involuntarily. Queen Elizabeth did not come to the trial. (Cheetham, 1999)

Today

The castle had already begun to deteriorate fifty years after the execution of Mary Stuart, and soon, it was almost completely demolished. Only the earthworks remain of the castle nowadays. The castle belongs to the Scheduled Monuments and is open to access. There are three plaques near the original building. One of them commemorates the death of Mary Stuart. Fotheringhay is classified as a Scheduled Monument under the Heritage Category and is open to the public. (Historic England, n.d.; The Tudor Travel Guide, 2019b)

1.5 Execution and Death

Political circumstances eventually led to Mary's downfall. Elizabeth hesitated over Mary's fate for a long time. She tried to delay her decision. After all, Mary was her cousin and a former queen. If she had the queen executed, it would set a precedent that would be dangerous for her as well. So, she was reluctant to take this step out of sheer fear for her life. After a long debate, Elizabeth finally accepted her advisers' advice and the demands of the people and agreed with Mary's execution. Her main reasons were Mary's political intrigues during her captivity, and involvement in plots against herself, including a plan for assassination and seizing the English throne. Mary denied being anyhow responsible to Elizabeth and claimed her sovereignty and independence. Even though Mary denied all the accusations, she was nevertheless convicted. (Fraser, 1999)

Mary's trial took place in October 1586 at Fotheringhay Castle in England. The trial was neither fair nor impartial. The prosecution against Mary presented letters that were supposed to convict her of „compassing and imagining since June 1st matters tending to the death and destruction of the Queen of England.” (Fraser, 1969, p. 517) She was found guilty of treason and sentenced to death.

Before the execution, Mary spent her time in her chamber, praying. She wrote two letters to her brother-in-law Henry III in France, declaring her will:

I am to be executed like a criminal at eight in the morning. I have not had time to give you a full account of everything that has happened, but if you will listen to my doctor and my other unfortunate servants, you will learn the truth and how, thanks be to God, I scorn death and vow that I meet it innocent of any crime, even if I were their subject.

...

Concerning my son, I commend him to you in as much as he deserves it, as I cannot answer for him. I venture to send you two precious stones, amulets against illness, trusting that you will enjoy good health and a long and happy life.

(Mary Stuart, ctd. in Guy, 2004,

p. 501)

According to witnesses, she entered the courtroom, the great hall, with dignity and bravery. She wore a black velvet dressing gown and put a crucifix around her neck as a symbol of her faith. She delivered a speech explaining her innocence and declared her lifetime loyalty to Christianity afterwards. She also forgave her executioner. When it came to the act itself, it took as far as three attempts to separate her head from her body. Mary Queen of Scots died on 8 February 1587. (Abbott, 1901)

She was originally buried in Peterborough Cathedral. After her son became King of England, he ordered to transfer her remains to Westminster Abbey in London, where Elizabeth Tudor was also buried (Royal Museums Greenwich, n.d.).

The news of her execution spread around and shocked Europe. Newspaper articles about her execution were also spread—the reaction among people diverted. Catholics grieved the loss of Mary, whereas Protestants celebrated her death. (Shore, n.d.)

2 *CONCLUSION*

This bachelor's thesis aimed to describe Mary Stuart's life with particular focus on her captivity in England.

The first part of the work is dedicated to Mary's life and the main events that shaped it. In the second part, Mary's life and personality are compared with those of her cousin, Elizabeth I. The closing part of the work scrutinises the places where Mary Stuart was imprisoned between the years 1568 and 1587. The places where Mary was incarcerated are described in chronological order. Their current conditions and references to Mary Stuart are based on a survey of their official websites as available.

The Queen of Scots was mostly captured in castles or manors. Mary's location was changed as she was gradually transferred further away from the Scottish border because of fears of Mary's possible escape. Although Queen Elizabeth I assured Mary of friendship upon her arrival in England, Mary soon understood she was being captured involuntarily.

The long captivity influenced Mary not only physically but also mentally. Many factors contributed to her poor health. Her freedom was considerably limited, which was very hard for her as she was used to riding a horse for a great distance. Her possibilities and freedom differed with each location. At Carlisle Castle, she was allowed to go out or ride a horse, which we learn from Elizabeth's counsellor, who was sent to keep an eye on Mary. On the other hand, Mary experienced most restrictions at Tutbury Castle, which was her most hated location, mainly due to its cold and wet building. Mary started suffering from rheumatism there. Nevertheless, even with the changes of the captivity locations and improved conditions, she never fully recovered. After the captivity at Tutbury Castle, she was relocated to Wingfield Manor and Chatsworth House, where she was surrounded by gardens and meadows. Even though her health slowly started to improve, during her captivity at the Sheffield castle, she wrote a letter to Elizabeth, begging her to allow her a treatment stay at Buxton spa. Another factor that affected her health was the change of her custodians. The most known one is the Earl of Shrewsbury, who spent the longest time with Mary. However, the worst experience came with her latest custodian at Tutbury castle, Sir Amyas Paulet. Their different religion affected their relationship, and Mary greatly suffered during those times. Additionally, Mary's mental state was determined also by her loneliness and longing for her son.

The last focus of the thesis concerns the current conditions of the places where Mary spent her captivity, and the ways in which they present their historical legacy linked with her. Carlisle Castle, Mary's first residence, includes a section with much interesting information about her. The section describes in detail Mary's stay at the Castle and provides the most abundant information out of all the places' websites. The Castle is open to the public and offers tours.

Bolton Castle is unique not only because of its private ownership but also because of its app, which includes facts about Mary's time in the Castle and an online audio tour. Although the app provides many facts about Mary, the webpage mentions her briefly.

Tutbury Castle is run by its curator and historian, Lesley Smith, who specializes in Tudor history. She presents essential figures of the time, including Elizabeth I, Henry VIII, and others. She also focuses on Mary Stuart. Of these three castles, Tutbury Castle appears to draw the most from Mary's legacy.

In contrast, access to Wingfield and Chartley Manor is prohibited, and their websites do not mention Mary Stuart at all. Chatsworth House is a similar case. Although unlike Wingfield and Sheffield Manor, Chatsworth House provides at least brief information about Mary's Bower.

A museum built in Sheffield is focused on the castle's history, including Mary Stuart's stay there. Fotheringhay Castle, where Mary died, preserves her memory with one of three plaques built near the castle's ruins.

Mary Stuart, Queen of Scots, played a significant role in English history. Many historic sites now draw on her legacy. Nevertheless, its presentation and attractiveness differ within the places associated with her captivity. In each of them, Mary's presence is utilised in various degrees, from none at all to a modern approach by Bolton Castle or Tutbury Castle, which stands out the most by its creative presentation.

3 *Bibliography*

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