

# Thomas More

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**Sir Thomas More** (/ˈmɔːr/; 7 February 1478 – 6 July 1535), known to Roman Catholics as **Saint Thomas More** since 1935,<sup>[1][2]</sup> was an English lawyer, social philosopher, author, statesman, and noted Renaissance humanist. He was an important councillor to Henry VIII of England and Lord Chancellor from October 1529 to 16 May 1532.<sup>[3]</sup> More opposed the Protestant Reformation, in particular the theology of Martin Luther and William Tyndale, whose books he burned and followers he persecuted. More also wrote *Utopia*, published in 1516, about the political system of an ideal and imaginary island nation. More later opposed the King's separation from the Roman Catholic Church and refused to accept him as Supreme Head of the Church of England, because such disparaged Papal Authority and Henry's marriage to Catherine of Aragon. Tried for treason, More was convicted on perjured testimony and beheaded.

Pope Pius XI canonized More in 1935 as a martyr of the schism that separated the Church of England from Rome; Pope John Paul II in 2000 declared More the "heavenly Patron of Statesmen and Politicians".<sup>[4]</sup> Since 1980, the Church of England has remembered More liturgically as a reformation martyr.<sup>[5]</sup>

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### The Right Honourable Sir Thomas More



#### Lord Chancellor

##### In office

October 1529 – May 1532

**Preceded by** Thomas Wolsey

**Succeeded by** Thomas Audley

#### Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster

##### In office

31 December 1525 – 3 November 1529

**Preceded by** Richard Wingfield

**Succeeded by** William FitzWilliam

#### Speaker of the House of Commons

##### In office

16 April 1523 – 13 August 1523

**Preceded by** Thomas Neville

**Succeeded by** Thomas Audley

#### Personal details

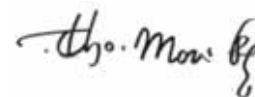
**Born** 7 February 1478  
City of London, London  
Kingdom of England

**Died** 6 July 1535 (aged 57)  
Tower Hill,  
Liberties of the Tower of London,  
Tower Hamlets  
Kingdom of England

**Religion** Roman Catholicism

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## Early life

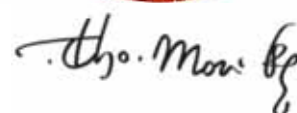
Born in Milk Street in London, on 7 February 1478, Thomas More was the son of Sir John More,<sup>[6]</sup> a successful lawyer and later judge, and his wife Agnes (*née* Graunger). More was educated at St Anthony's School, then considered one of London's finest schools. From 1490 to 1492, More served John Morton, the Archbishop of Canterbury and Lord Chancellor of England as a household page.<sup>[7]:xvi</sup> Morton enthusiastically supported the "New Learning" (now called the Renaissance), and thought highly of the young More. Believing that More had great potential, Morton nominated him for a place at Oxford University (either in St. Mary's Hall or Canterbury College).<sup>[8]:38</sup> Both Canterbury College and St Mary's Hall have since disappeared; Christ Church College grew over Canterbury's site, and Oriel College over the former St Mary's.

More began his studies at Oxford in 1492, and received a classical education. Studying under Thomas Linacre and William Grocyn, he became proficient in both Greek and Latin. More left Oxford after only two years – at his father's insistence - to begin legal training in London at New Inn, one of the Inns of Chancery.<sup>[7]:xvii</sup><sup>[9]</sup> In 1496, More became a student at Lincoln's Inn, one of the Inns of Court, where he remained until 1502, when he was called to the Bar.<sup>[7]:xvii</sup>

## Spiritual life

According to his friend, theologian Desiderius Erasmus of Rotterdam, More once seriously contemplated abandoning his legal career to become a monk.<sup>[10]</sup> Between 1503 and 1504 More lived near the Carthusian

### Saint Thomas More, T.O.S.F.

Medallion of Thomas More

#### Martyr

<b>Honored in</b>	Catholic Church; Anglican Communion
<b>Beatified</b>	29 December 1886, Florence, Kingdom of Italy, by Pope Leo XIII
<b>Canonized</b>	19 May 1935, Vatican City, by Pope Pius XI
<b>Feast</b>	22 June (Catholic Church) 6 July (Church of England) 9 July on the traditionalist Catholic (Latin Mass) calendar
<b>Attributes</b>	dressed in the robe of the Chancellor and wearing the Collar of Esses; axe

monastery outside the walls of London and joined in the monks' spiritual exercises. Although he deeply admired their piety, More ultimately decided to remain a layman, standing for election to Parliament in 1504 and marrying the following year.<sup>[7]:xxi</sup>

In spite of his choice to pursue a secular career, More continued ascetical practices for the rest of his life, such as wearing a hair shirt next to his skin and occasionally engaging in flagellation.<sup>[7]:xxi</sup> A tradition of the Third Order of St. Francis honors More as a member of that Order on their calendar of saints.<sup>[11]</sup>

**Patronage** Adopted children; civil servants; court clerks; difficult marriages; large families; lawyers, politicians, and statesmen; stepparents; widowers; Ateneo de Manila Law School; Diocese of Arlington; Diocese of Pensacola-Tallahassee; Kerala Catholic Youth Movement; University of Malta; University of Santo Tomas Faculty of Arts and Letters

## Family life

More married Jane Colt in 1505.<sup>[8]:118</sup> She was nearly ten years younger than her husband, quiet and good-natured.<sup>[8]:119</sup> Erasmus reported that More wanted to give his young wife a better education than she had previously received at home, and tutored her in music and literature.<sup>[8]:119</sup> The couple had four children before Jane died in 1511: Margaret, Elizabeth, Cicely, and John.<sup>[8]:132</sup>

Going "against friends' advice and common custom" within thirty days More had married one of the many eligible women among his wide circle of friends.<sup>[12]</sup> He chose the rich widow Alice Middleton as his second wife, having met her while working with her late husband who had been a prosperous merchant. The speed of the marriage was so unusual that More had to get a dispensation of the banns, which due to his good public reputation he easily obtained.<sup>[12]</sup> Alice More lacked Jane's docility; More's friend Andrew Ammonius derided Alice as a "hook-nosed harpy."<sup>[citation needed]</sup> Erasmus, however, called their marriage happy.<sup>[8]:144</sup> 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 a young girl named Anne Cresacre, who would eventually marry his son, John More.<sup>[8]:146</sup> 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.<sup>[8]:150</sup><sup>[13]:xiv</sup>

More insisted upon giving his daughters the same classical education as his son, a highly unusual attitude at the time.<sup>[8]:146–47</sup> His eldest daughter, Margaret, attracted much admiration for her erudition, especially her fluency in Greek and Latin.<sup>[8]:147</sup> More told his daughter of his pride in her academic accomplishment in September 1522, after he showed the Bishop a letter she had written:

When he saw from the signature that it was the letter of a lady, his surprise led him to read it more eagerly... he said he would never have believed it to be your work unless I had assured him of the fact, and he began to praise it in the highest terms... for its pure Latinity, its correctness, its erudition, and its expressions of tender affection. He took out at once from his pocket a portague [A Portuguese gold coin]... to send to you as a pledge and token of his good will towards you.<sup>[13]:152</sup>

More's decision to educate his daughters set an example for other noble families. Even Erasmus became much more favourable once he witnessed their accomplishments.<sup>[8]:149</sup>

## Early political career

In 1504 More was elected to Parliament to represent Great Yarmouth, and in 1510 began representing

London.<sup>[14]</sup>

From 1510, More served as one of the two undersheriffs of the City of London, a position of considerable responsibility in which he earned a reputation as an honest and effective public servant. More became Master of Requests in 1514,<sup>[15]</sup> the same year in which he was appointed as a Privy Councillor.<sup>[16]</sup> After undertaking a diplomatic mission to the Holy Roman Emperor, Charles V, accompanying Thomas Wolsey, Cardinal Archbishop of York, to Calais and Bruges, More was knighted and made under-treasurer of the Exchequer in 1521.<sup>[16]</sup>

As secretary and personal adviser to King Henry VIII, More became increasingly influential: welcoming foreign diplomats, drafting official documents, and serving as a liaison between the King and Lord Chancellor Wolsey. More later served as High Steward for the universities of Oxford and Cambridge.

In 1523 More was elected as knight of the shire (MP) for Middlesex and, on Wolsey's recommendation, the House of Commons elected More its Speaker.<sup>[16]</sup> In 1525 More became Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster, with executive and judicial responsibilities over much of northern England.<sup>[16]</sup>

## Chancellorship

After Wolsey fell, More succeeded to the office of Chancellor in 1529. He dispatched cases with unprecedented rapidity. Fully devoted to Henry and the royal prerogative, More initially co-operated with the King's new policy, denouncing Wolsey in Parliament and joining the opinion of the theologians at Oxford and Cambridge that the marriage of Henry to Catherine had been unlawful. But as Henry began to deny Papal Authority, More's qualms grew.

## Campaign against the Reformation

More supported the Catholic Church and saw the Protestant Reformation as heresy, a threat to the unity of both church and society. Believing in the theology, polemics, and ecclesiastical laws of the church, More "heard Luther's call to destroy the Catholic Church as a call to war."<sup>[17]</sup>

His early actions against the Reformation included aiding Wolsey in preventing Lutheran books from being imported into England, spying on and investigating suspected Protestants, especially publishers, and arresting any one holding in his possession, transporting, or selling the books of the Protestant reformation. More vigorously suppressed the travelling country ministers who used Tyndale's English translation of the New Testament.<sup>[citation needed]</sup> It contained translations of certain words—for example Tyndale used "elder" rather than "priest" for the Greek "presbyteros"—and some footnotes which challenged Catholic doctrine.<sup>[18]</sup> It was during this time that most of his literary polemics appeared.

Rumours circulated during and after More's lifetime regarding ill-treatment of heretics during his time as Lord Chancellor. The popular anti-Catholic polemicist John Foxe, who "placed Protestant sufferings against the background of... the Antichrist"<sup>[19]</sup> was instrumental in publicising accusations of torture in his famous *Book of Martyrs*, claiming that More had often personally used violence or torture while interrogating heretics. Later authors, such as Brian Moynahan and Michael Farris, cite Foxe when repeating these allegations.<sup>[20]</sup> More himself denied these allegations:

Stories of a similar nature were current even in More's lifetime and he denied them forcefully. He admitted that he did imprison heretics in his house – 'theyr sure keypyng' – he called it – but



Study for a portrait of Thomas More's family, c. 1527, by Hans Holbein the Younger





Sir Thomas More is commemorated with a sculpture at the late-19th-century Sir Thomas More House, opposite the Royal Courts of Justice, Carey Street, London.

he utterly rejected claims of torture and whipping... 'so help me God.'<sup>[8]:298</sup>

In total there were six burned at the stake for heresy during More's chancellorship: Thomas Hitton, Thomas Bilney, Richard Bayfield, John Tewkesbery, Thomas Dugate, and James Bainham.<sup>[8]:299–306</sup> More's influential role in the burning of Tyndale is reported by Moynahan.<sup>[21]</sup> Burning at the stake had long been a standard punishment for heresy—about thirty burnings had taken place in the century before More's elevation to Chancellor, and burning continued to be used by both Catholics and Protestants during the religious upheaval of the following decades.<sup>[22]</sup> Ackroyd notes that More explicitly "approved of Burning"<sup>[8]:298</sup> R. W. Chambers is also noted as saying that "More, while denying indignantly the cruelties attributed to him, 'wills all the world to wit on the other side' that he

believes that it is necessary to prohibit 'the sowing of seditious heresies', and to punish them, in extreme cases with death, those who defy such prohibition." And he goes on to say "It was the view, held by all parties alike, that open defiance of authority in spiritual matters, of such a kind as to lead to tumult and civil war, might be punished with death."<sup>[23]:274–275</sup> After the case of John Tewkesbury, a London leather-seller found guilty by More of harbouring banned books and sentenced to burning for refusing to recant, More declared: he "burned as there was neuer wretche I wene better worthy."<sup>[24]</sup>

Historians have been long divided over More's religious actions as Chancellor. While biographers such as Peter Ackroyd, a Catholic English biographer, have taken a relatively tolerant view of More's campaign against Protestantism by placing his actions within the turbulent religious climate of the time, other equally eminent historians, such as Richard Marius, a somewhat controversial American scholar of the Reformation, have been more critical, believing that persecutions—including what he perceives as the advocacy of extermination for Protestants—were a betrayal of More's earlier humanist convictions. As Marius writes in his biography of More: "To stand before a man at an inquisition, knowing that he will rejoice when we die, knowing that he will commit us to the stake and its horrors without a moment's hesitation or remorse if we do not satisfy him, is not an experience much less cruel because our inquisitor does not whip us or rack us or shout at us. . . More believed that they (Protestants) should be exterminated, and while he was in office he did everything in his power to bring that extermination to pass."<sup>[25]</sup> Many Protestants take a very different view from that of Marius – in 1980, despite being an opponent of the English Reformation that created the Church of England, More was added to the Church of England's calendar of Saints and Heroes of the Christian Church, jointly with John Fisher, to be commemorated every 6 July (the date of More's execution) as "Thomas More, Scholar, and John Fisher, Bishop of Rochester, Reformation Martyrs, 1535".<sup>[5]</sup>

The six executions for heresy should perhaps also be seen in the context of More trying to prevent a repetition in England of the up to 100,000 deaths in the German Peasants' Revolt of 1524–25. More and other conservatives (including Henry VIII at this time) openly blamed these deaths on the socially destabilising effects of Luther's heresy,<sup>[26]</sup> though clearly such conservatives were also trying to prevent other supposed ills less easily understood by our modern secular and ecumenical world, such as alleged eternal agony in Hell<sup>[27]</sup> for the souls of those allegedly misguided into heresy, as well as the suffering of souls in Purgatory supposedly caused by Luther's abolition of indulgences, as argued in More's 1529 work *Supplication of Souls*. It seems unlikely that modern Catholics, Protestants, and others, could ever easily agree on how many eventually died in Britain, Ireland, and elsewhere as an arguable result of the English Reformation that More was unsuccessfully trying to prevent, and whether or not this cost could be justified by arguable offsetting benefits. The modern Catholic attitude on the issue was probably best expressed by Pope John Paul II when honouring him by making him patron saint of statesmen and politicians in October 2000, when he stated "It can be said that he demonstrated in a singular way the value of a moral conscience

... even if, in his actions against heretics, he reflected the limits of the culture of his time".<sup>[4]</sup>

## Resignation

As the conflict over supremacy between the Papacy and the King reached its apogee, More continued to remain steadfast in supporting the supremacy of the Pope as Successor of Peter over that of the King of England. In 1530, More refused to sign a letter by the leading English churchmen and aristocrats asking Pope Clement VII to annul Henry's marriage to Catherine, and also quarrelled with Henry VIII over the heresy laws. In 1531, Henry had isolated More by purging most clergy who supported the papal stance from senior positions in the church. In addition, Henry had solidified his denial of the Papacy's control of England by passing the Statute of Praemunire which forbade appeals to the Roman Curia from England. Realizing his isolated position, More attempted to resign after being forced to take an oath declaring the King the Supreme Head of the English Church, pursuant to Parliament's Act of Supremacy of 1534. He tried to limit the oath "as far as the law of Christ allows." Furthermore, the Statute of Praemunire made it a crime to support in public or office the claims of the Papacy. Thus, he refused to take the oath in the form in which it would renounce all claims of jurisdiction over the Church except the sovereign's. Nonetheless, the reputation and influence of More as well as his long relationship with Henry, kept his life secure for the time being and consequently, he was not relieved of office. However, with his supporters in court quickly disappearing, in 1532 he asked the King again to relieve him of his office, claiming that he was ill and suffering from sharp chest pains. This time Henry granted his request.

## Trial and execution

In 1533, More refused to attend the coronation of Anne Boleyn as the Queen of England. Technically, this was not an act of treason, as More had written to Henry acknowledging Anne's queenship and expressing his desire for the King's happiness and the new Queen's health.<sup>[28]</sup> Despite this, his refusal to attend was widely interpreted as a snub against Anne, and Henry took action against him.

Shortly thereafter, More was charged with accepting bribes, but the charges had to be dismissed for lack of any evidence. In early 1534, More was accused of conspiring with the "Holy Maid of Kent," Elizabeth Barton, a nun who had prophesied against the king's annulment, but More was able to produce a letter in which he had instructed Barton not to interfere with state matters.<sup>[citation needed]</sup>

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, but he steadfastly refused to take the oath of supremacy of the Crown in the relationship between the kingdom and the church in England. Holding fast to the teaching of papal supremacy, More refused to take the oath and furthermore publicly refused to uphold Henry's annulment from Catherine. John Fisher, Bishop of Rochester, refused the oath along with More. The oath reads:

...By reason whereof the Bishop of Rome and See Apostolic, contrary to the great and inviolable grants of jurisdictions given by God immediately to emperors, kings and princes in succession to their heirs, hath presumed in times past to invest who should please them to inherit in other men's kingdoms and dominions, which thing we your most humble subjects, both spiritual and temporal, do most abhor and detest;<sup>[29]</sup>



Rowland Lockey after Hans Holbein the Younger, *The Family of Sir Thomas More*, c. 1594

With his refusal to support the King's annulment, More's enemies had enough evidence to have the King arrest him on treason. Four days later, Henry had More imprisoned in the Tower of London. There More prepared a devotional *Dialogue of Comfort against Tribulation*. While More was imprisoned in the Tower, Thomas Cromwell made several visits, urging More to take the oath, which More continued to refuse.

On 1 July 1535, More was tried before a panel of judges that included the new Lord Chancellor, Sir Thomas Audley, as well as Anne Boleyn's father, brother, and uncle. He was charged with high treason for denying the validity of the Act of Succession. More, relying on legal precedent and the maxim "*qui tacet consentire videtur*" (literally, *who (is) silent is seen to consent*), understood that he could not be convicted as long as he did not explicitly deny that the King was Supreme Head of the Church, and he therefore refused to answer all questions regarding his opinions on the subject. Thomas Cromwell, at the time the most powerful of the King's advisors, brought forth the Solicitor General, Richard Rich, to testify that More had, in his presence, denied that the King was the legitimate head of the church. This testimony was extremely dubious: witnesses Richard Southwell and Mr. Palmer both denied having heard the details of the reported conversation, and as More himself pointed out:

Can it therefore seem likely to your Lordships, that I should in so weighty an Affair as this, act so unadvisedly, as to trust Mr. Rich, a Man I had always so mean an Opinion of, in reference to his Truth and Honesty, ...that I should only impart to Mr. Rich the Secrets of my Conscience in respect to the King's Supremacy, the particular Secrets, and only Point about which I have been so long pressed to explain my self? which I never did, nor never would reveal; when the Act was once made, either to the King himself, or any of his Privy Councillors, as is well known to your Honours, who have been sent upon no other account at several times by his Majesty to me in the Tower. I refer it to your Judgments, my Lords, whether this can seem credible to any of your Lordships.

However, the jury took only fifteen minutes to find More guilty.

More was tried, and found guilty, under the following section of the Treason Act 1534:

If any person or persons, after the first day of February next coming, do maliciously wish, will or desire, by words or writing, or by craft imagine, invent, practise, or attempt any bodily harm to be done or committed to the king's most royal person, the queen's, or their heirs apparent, or to deprive them or any of them of their dignity, title, or name of their royal estates...

That then every such person and persons so offending... shall have and suffer such pains of death and other penalties, as is limited and accustomed in cases of high treason.<sup>[30]</sup>

After the jury's verdict was delivered and before his sentencing, More spoke freely of his belief that "no temporal man may be the head of the spirituality". He was sentenced to be hanged, drawn, and quartered (the usual punishment for traitors who were not the nobility), but the King commuted this to execution by decapitation. The execution took place on 6 July 1535. When he came to mount the steps to the scaffold, he is widely quoted as saying (to the officials): "I pray you, I pray you, Mr Lieutenant, see me safe up and for my coming down, I can shift for myself"; while on the scaffold he declared that he died "the king's good servant, but God's first."<sup>[31]</sup>



Site of scaffold at Tower Hill where More was executed by decapitation



Commemorative plaque at the site of the ancient scaffold at Tower Hill, with Sir Thomas More listed among other notables executed at the site.



## Relics

Another comment he is believed to have made to the executioner is that his beard was completely innocent of any crime, and did not deserve the axe; he then positioned his beard so that it would not be harmed.<sup>[32]</sup> More asked that his foster/adopted daughter Margaret Clement (née Giggs) be given his headless corpse to bury.<sup>[33]</sup> 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. His daughter Margaret (Meg) Roper rescued it, possibly by bribery, before it could be thrown in the River Thames.

The skull is believed to rest in the Roper Vault of St Dunstan's Church, Canterbury, though some researchers have claimed it might be within the tomb he erected for More in Chelsea Old Church (see below). The evidence, however, seems to be in favour of its placement in St Dunstan's, with the remains of his daughter, Margaret Roper, and her husband's family, whose vault it was.

Among other surviving relics is his hair shirt, presented for safe keeping by Margaret Clement(1508–70), his adopted daughter.<sup>[34]</sup> This was long in the custody of the community of Augustinian canonesses who until 1983 lived at the convent at Abbotskerswell Priory, Devon. It is now preserved at Syon Abbey, near South Brent.



## Scholarly and literary work

### History of King Richard III

Between 1512 and 1519, Thomas More worked on a *History of King Richard III*, which he never finished but which was published after his death. The *History of King Richard III* is a Renaissance history, remarkable more for its literary skill and adherence to classical precepts than for its historical accuracy. Some consider its an attack on royal tyranny, rather than on Richard III himself or the House of York. More and his contemporary Polydore Vergil both use a more dramatic writing style than most medieval chronicles; for example, the shadowy King Richard is an outstanding, archetypal tyrant more like the Romans portrayed by Sallust. The *History of King Richard III* was written and published in both English and Latin, each written separately, and with information deleted from the Latin edition to suit a European readership. It greatly influenced William Shakespeare's play *Richard III*. Contemporary historians attribute the unflattering portraits of King Richard III in both works to both authors' allegiance to the reigning Tudor dynasty that wrested the throne from Richard III in the Wars of the Roses. More's version also barely mentions King Henry VII, the first Tudor king, perhaps for having persecuted his father, Sir John More.

## Utopia

*Main article: Utopia (book)*

More's best known and most controversial work, *Utopia* is a novel written in Latin. More completed and Erasmus published the book in Leuven in 1516, but it was only translated into English and published in his native land in 1551 (long after More's execution), and the 1684 translation became the most commonly cited. More (also a character in the book) and the narrator/traveller, Raphael Hythlodæus (whose name alludes both to the healer archangel Raphael, and 'speaker of nonsense', the surname's Greek meaning), discuss modern ills in Antwerp, as well as describe the political arrangements of the imaginary island country of Utopia (Greek pun on 'ou-topos' [no place], 'eu-topos' [good place]) among themselves as well as to Pieter Gillis and Jerome de Busleyden. Utopia's original edition included a symmetrical "Utopian alphabet" omitted



by later editions, but which may have been an early attempt at cryptography or precursor of shorthand.

Utopia contrasts the contentious social life of European states with the perfectly orderly, reasonable social arrangements of Utopia and its environs (Tallstoria, Nolandia, and Aircastle). In Utopia, there are no lawyers because of the laws' simplicity and because social gatherings are in public view (encouraging participants to behave well), communal ownership supplants private property, men and women are educated alike, and there is almost complete religious toleration (except for atheists, who are allowed but despised). More may have used monastic communalism (rather than the biblical communalism in the Acts of the Apostles) as his model, although other concepts such as legalizing euthanasia remain far outside Church doctrine.

Hythlodæus asserts that a man who refuses to believe in a god or an afterlife could never be trusted, because he would not acknowledge any authority or principle outside himself. Some take the novel's principal message to be the social need for order and discipline rather than liberty. Ironically, Hythlodæus, who believes philosophers should not get involved in politics, addresses More's ultimate conflict between his humanistic beliefs and courtly duties as the King's servant, pointing out that one day those morals will come into conflict with the political reality.

*Utopia* gave rise to a literary genre, Utopian and dystopian fiction, which features ideal societies or perfect cities, or their opposite. Early works influenced by *Utopia* included *New Atlantis* by Francis Bacon, *Erewhon* by Samuel Butler, and *Candide* by Voltaire. Although Utopianism combined classical concepts of perfect societies (Plato and Aristotle) with Roman rhetorical finesse (cf. Cicero, Quintilian, epideictic oratory), the Renaissance genre continued into the Age of Enlightenment and survives in modern science fiction.

## Religious polemics

In 1520 the reformer Martin Luther published three works in quick succession: *An Appeal to the Christian Nobility of the German Nation* (Aug.), *Concerning the Babylonish Captivity of the Church* (Oct.), and *On the Liberty of a Christian Man* (Nov.).<sup>[8]:225</sup> In these books, Luther set out his doctrine of salvation through grace alone, rejected certain Catholic practices, and attacked abuses and excesses within the Catholic Church.<sup>[8]:225–6</sup> In 1521, Henry VIII formally responded to Luther's criticisms with the *Assertio*, written with More's assistance. Pope Leo X rewarded the English king with the title 'Fidei defensor' ("Defender of the Faith") for his work combating Luther's heresies.<sup>[8]:226–7</sup>

Martin Luther then attacked Henry VIII in print, calling him a "pig, dolt, and liar".<sup>[8]:227</sup> At the king's request, More composed a rebuttal: the *Responsio ad Lutherum* was published at the end of 1523. In the *Responsio*, More defended papal supremacy, the sacraments, and other Church traditions. More's language, like Luther's, was virulent: he branded Luther an "ape", a "drunkard", and a "lousy little friar" amongst other insults.<sup>[8]:230</sup> Writing as Rosseus, More offers to "throw back into your paternity's shitty mouth, truly the shit-pool of all shit, all the muck and shit which your damnable rottenness has vomited up".<sup>[16]</sup>

Confronting Luther confirmed More's theological conservatism. He thereafter avoided any hint of criticism of Church authority.<sup>[8]:230</sup> In 1528, More published another religious polemic, *A Dialogue Concerning Heresies*, that asserted the Catholic Church was the one true church, established by Christ and the Apostles, and affirmed the validity of its authority, traditions and practices.<sup>[8]:279–81</sup> In 1529, the circulation of Simon Fish's *Supplication for the Beggars* prompted More to respond with *The Supplication of Souls*.

In 1531, a year after More's father died, William Tyndale published *An Answer unto Sir Thomas More's Dialogue* in response to More's *Dialogue Concerning Heresies*. More responded with a half million words: the *Confutation of Tyndale's Answer*. The *Confutation* is an imaginary dialogue between More and Tyndale, with More addressing each of Tyndale's criticisms of Catholic rites and doctrines.<sup>[8]:307–9</sup> More, who valued structure, tradition and order in society as safeguards against tyranny and error, vehemently believed that Lutheranism and the Protestant Reformation in general were dangerous, not only to the Catholic faith but to the stability of society as a whole.<sup>[8]:307–9</sup>

## Correspondence

Most major humanists were prolific letter writers, and Thomas More was no exception. However, as in the case of his friend Erasmus of Rotterdam, only a small portion of his correspondence (about 280 letters), survived. These include everything from personal letters to official government correspondence (mostly in English), letters to fellow humanist scholars (in Latin), several epistolary tracts, verse epistles, prefatory letters (some fictional) to several of More's own works, letters to More's children and their tutors (in Latin), and the so-called "prison-letters" (in English) which he exchanged with his oldest daughter, Margaret Roper while he was imprisoned in the Tower of London awaiting execution.[17] More also engaged in controversies, most notably with the French poet Germain de Brie, which culminated in the publication of de Brie's *Antimorus* (1519). Erasmus intervened, however, and ended the dispute.[18]

More also wrote about more spiritual matters. They include: *A Treatise on the Passion* (a/k/a Treatise on the Passion of Christ), *A Treatise to Receive the Blessed Body* (a/k/a Holy Body Treaty), and *De Tristitia Christi* (a/k/a The Agony of Christ). More handwrote the last which reads in the Tower of London while awaiting his execution. This last manuscript, saved from the confiscation decreed by Henry VIII, passed by the will of his daughter Margaret to Spanish hands through Fray Pedro de Soto, confessor of Emperor Charles V. More's friend Luis Vives received it in Valencia, where it remains in the collection of Real Colegio Seminario del Corpus Christi Museum.

## Canonisation



Statue of Thomas More at the Ateneo Law School chapel.

Pope Leo XIII beatified More, John Fisher and 52 other English Martyrs on 29 December 1886. Pope Pius XI canonised More and Fisher on 19 May 1935, and More's feast day was established as 9 July. This day is still observed as his feast day by traditionalist Catholics [Latin Mass]. In 1970, following post-Vatican II reforms, the Catholic calendar of saints celebrates More and Fisher jointly with St John Fisher on 22 June (the date of Fisher's execution). Fisher was the only remaining bishop (owing to the coincident natural deaths of eight aged bishops) who, during the English Reformation, maintained, at the King's mercy, allegiance to the Pope.<sup>[35]</sup> In 2000, Pope John Paul II declared More "the heavenly Patron of

Statesmen and Politicians".<sup>[4]</sup> In 1980, despite their opposing the English Reformation that created the Church of England, More and Fisher were jointly added as martyrs of the reformation to the Church of England's calendar of Saints and Heroes of the Christian Church, to be commemorated every 6 July (the date of More's execution) as "Thomas More, Scholar, and John Fisher, Bishop of Rochester, Reformation Martyrs, 1535".<sup>[5]</sup>

## Legacy

The steadfastness and courage with which More maintained his religious convictions, and his dignity during his imprisonment, trial, and execution, contributed much to More's posthumous reputation, particularly among Catholics. However, his zealous persecution of Protestants while Lord Chancellor contravenes modern notions of religious liberty as discussed below. Many historians consider More's treason conviction



Statue of Thomas More by Leslie Cubitt Bevis in front of Chelsea Old Church, Cheyne Walk, London.

unjust, or at least his execution heavy-handed.<sup>[*citation needed*]</sup> His friend Erasmus defended More's character as "more pure than any snow" and described his genius as "such as England never had and never again will have."<sup>[36]</sup> Upon learning of More's execution, Emperor Charles V said: "Had we been master of such a servant, we would rather have lost the best city of our dominions than such a worthy councillor."<sup>[37]</sup> G. K. Chesterton, a Catholic, predicted More "may come to be counted the greatest Englishman, or at least the greatest historical character in English history."<sup>[38]</sup> Hugh Trevor-Roper called More "the first great Englishman whom we feel that we know, the most saintly of humanists, the most human of saints, the universal man of our cool northern renaissance."<sup>[39]</sup>

Jonathan Swift, an Anglican, wrote that More was "a person of the greatest virtue this kingdom ever produced".<sup>[40][41][42]</sup> Some consider Samuel Johnson that quote's author, although neither his writings nor Boswell contain such.<sup>[43][44]</sup> The metaphysical poet John Donne, also honored as a saint by Anglicans, was More's great-great-nephew.<sup>[45]</sup>

While Catholic scholars maintain that More used irony in *Utopia*, and that he remained an orthodox Christian, Marxist theoretician Karl Kautsky considered the book a shrewd critique of economic and social exploitation in pre-modern Europe; More thus influenced the early development of socialist ideas.<sup>[46]</sup> Others thought *Utopia* mythologised Indian cultures in the New World at a time when the Catholic Church was still debating internally its view toward those decidedly non-Christian cultures.<sup>[*citation needed*]</sup>

Several authors criticised More for his war against Protestantism. Brian Moynahan, in his book *God's Messenger: William Tyndale, Thomas More and the Writing of the English Bible*, criticised More's intolerance, as does Michael Farris<sup>[*citation needed*]</sup> Richard Marius also criticised More for Anti-Protestantism and intolerance.<sup>[*citation needed*]</sup> Jasper Ridley, who wrote biographies of Henry VIII and Mary Tudor, goes much further in his dual biography of More and Cardinal Wolsey, *The Statesman and the Fanatic*, describing More as "a particularly nasty sadomasochistic pervert."<sup>[*citation needed*]</sup> Joanna Denny in her 2004 biography of Anne Boleyn also criticised More.<sup>[*citation needed*]</sup>

## Literature and popular culture

William Roper's biography of More was one of the first biographies in Modern English.

More was portrayed as a wise and honest statesman in the 1592 play *Sir Thomas More*, which was probably written in collaboration by Henry Chettle, Anthony Munday, William Shakespeare, and others, and which survives only in fragmentary form after being censored by Edmund Tylney, Master of the Revels in the government of Queen Elizabeth I (any direct reference to the Act of Supremacy was censored out).

The 20th-century agnostic playwright Robert Bolt portrayed Thomas More as the tragic hero of his 1960 play *A Man for All Seasons*. The title is drawn from what Robert Whittington in 1520 wrote of More:

More is a man of an angel's wit and singular learning. I know not his fellow. For where is the man of that gentleness, lowliness and affability? And, as time requireth, a man of marvelous mirth and pastimes, and sometime of as sad gravity. A man for all seasons.<sup>[39]</sup>

In 1966, the play was made into the successful film *A Man for All Seasons* directed by Fred Zinnemann, adapted for the screen by the playwright himself, and starring Paul Scofield in an Oscar-winning performance. The film won the Academy Award for Best Picture for that year. In 1988, Charlton Heston starred in and directed a made-for-television film that followed Bolt's original play almost verbatim, restoring for example the commentaries of "the common man".

Catholic science fiction writer R. A. Lafferty wrote his novel *Past Master* as a modern equivalent to More's

*Utopia*, which he saw as a satire. In this novel, Thomas More travels through time to the year 2535, where he is made king of the world "Astrobe", only to be beheaded after ruling for a mere nine days. One character compares More favourably to almost every other major historical figure: "He had one completely honest moment right at the end. I cannot think of anyone else who ever had one."

Karl Zuchardt's novel, *Stirb du Narr!* ("Die you fool!"), about More's struggle with King Henry, portrays More as an idealist bound to fail in the power struggle with a ruthless ruler and an unjust world.

The novelist Hilary Mantel portrays More as a religious and masochistic fanatic in her 2009 novel *Wolf Hall*. *Wolf Hall* is told through the eyes of a sympathetic Thomas Cromwell. Literary critic James Wood calls him "cruel in punishment, evasive in argument, lusty for power, and repressive in politics".<sup>[46]</sup>

Aaron Zelman's non-fiction book *The State Versus the People* includes a comparison of *Utopia* with Plato's *Republic*. Zelman is undecided as to whether More was being ironic in his book or was genuinely advocating a police state. Zelman comments, "More is the only Christian saint to be honoured with a statue at the Kremlin."<sup>[citation needed]</sup> By this Zelman implies that *Utopia* influenced Vladimir Lenin's Bolsheviks, despite their brutal repression of organised religion.

Other biographers, such as Peter Ackroyd, have offered a more sympathetic picture of More as both a sophisticated philosopher and man of letters, as well as a zealous Catholic who believed in the authority of the Holy See over Christendom.

The protagonist of Walker Percy's novels, *Love in the Ruins* and *The Thanatos Syndrome*, is "Dr Thomas More", a reluctant Catholic and descendant of More.

More is the focus of the Al Stewart song "A Man For All Seasons" from the 1978 album *Time Passages*, and of the Far song "Sir", featured on the limited editions and 2008 re-release of their 1994 album *Quick*. In addition, the song "So Says I" by indie rock outfit The Shins alludes to the socialist interpretation of More's *Utopia*.

Jeremy Northam depicts More in the television series *The Tudors* as a peaceful man, as well as a devout Roman Catholic and loving family patriarch. He also shows More loathing Protestantism, burning both Martin Luther's books and English Protestants who have been convicted of heresy. The portrayal has unhistorical aspects, such as that More neither personally caused nor attended Simon Fish's execution (since Fish actually died of bubonic plague in 1531 before he could stand trial), although More's *The Supplicatyon of Soulys*, published in October 1529, addressed Fish's *Supplication for the Beggars*.<sup>[47][48]</sup> The series also neglected to show More's avowed insistence that Richard Rich's testimony about More disputing the King's title as Supreme Head of the Church of England was perjured.

The cultus of More has been satirised. In the *The Simpsons* an episode, "Margical History Tour", contains a parody of both Henry VIII and More. King Henry (Homer Simpson) is depicted as a gluttonous slob who stuffs his face while singing "I'm Henery the Eighth, I am". He then wipes his mouth with the *Magna Carta* and sets out to dump Queen Catherine (Marge Simpson). Sir Thomas (Ned Flanders) objects, "Divorce! Well, there's no such thing in the Cath-diddly-atholic Church! But it's the only Church we got, so what are you gonna do?" King Henry retorts, "I'll start my own Church... Where divorce will be so easy, more than half of all marriages will end in it!" When a horrified Sir Thomas refuses to go along, King Henry has him shot out of a cannon.

## Institutions named after More

*Main article: List of institutions named after Thomas More*

## Historic sites



## Westminster Hall

A plaque in the middle of the floor of London's Westminster Hall commemorates More's trial for treason and condemnation to execution in that original part of the Palace of Westminster. The building, which houses Parliament, would have been well known to More, who served several terms as a member and became Speaker of the House of Commons before his appointment as England's Lord Chancellor.

## Crosby Hall

The Crown confiscated More's home and estate along the Thames in Chelsea after his execution. Crosby Hall, which was part of More's London residence, was eventually relocated and reconstructed there by conservation architect Walter Godfrey. Rebuilt in the 1990s, the white stone building stands amid modern brick structures that attempt to recapture the style of More's former manor on the site. Crosby Hall is privately owned and closed to the public. The modern structures face the Thames and include an entry way that displays More's arms, heraldic beasts, and a Latin maxim. Apartment buildings and a park cover the former gardens and orchard; Roper's Garden is the park atop one of More's gardens, sunken as his was believed to be. No other remnants exist of the More estate.

## Chelsea Old Church

Across a small park and Old Church Street from Crosby Hall is Chelsea Old Church, an Anglican church whose southern chapel More commissioned and in which he sang with the parish choir. Except for his chapel, the church was largely destroyed in the Second World War and rebuilt in 1958. The capitals on the medieval arch connecting the chapel to the main sanctuary display symbols associated with More and his office. On the southern wall of the sanctuary is the tomb and epitaph he erected for himself and his wives, detailing his ancestry and accomplishments in Latin, including his role as peacemaker between the Christian nations of Europe as well as a curiously altered portion about his curbing heresy. When More served Mass, he would leave by the door just to the left of it. He is not, however, buried here, nor is it entirely certain which of his family may be. It is open to the public at specific times. Outside the church, facing the River Thames, is a statue by L. Cubitt Bevis erected in 1969, commemorating More as "saint", "scholar", and "statesman"; the back displays his coat-of-arms. Nearby, on Upper Cheyne Row, the Catholic Church of the Holy Saviour and St. Thomas More, honours the martyr.

## Tower Hill

A plaque and small garden commemorate the famed execution site on Tower Hill, London, just outside the Tower of London, as well as all those executed there, many as religious martyrs or as prisoners of conscience. More's corpse, minus his head, was unceremoniously buried in an unmarked mass grave beneath the Royal Chapel of St. Peter Ad Vincula, within the Tower's walls of the Tower of London, as was the custom for traitors executed at Tower Hill. The chapel is accessible to Tower visitors.

## St Dunstan's Church and Roper House, Canterbury

St Dunstan's Church, an Anglican parish church in Canterbury, possesses More's head, rescued by his daughter Margaret Roper, whose family lived in Canterbury down and across the street from their parish church. A stone immediately to the left of the altar marks the sealed Roper family vault beneath the Nicholas Chapel, itself to the right of the church's sanctuary or main altar. St Dunstan's Church has carefully investigated, preserved and sealed this burial vault. The last archaeological investigation revealed that the suspected head of More rests in a niche separate from the other bodies, possibly from later interference.

<sup>[*citation needed*]</sup> Displays in the chapel record the archaeological findings in pictures and narratives. Catholics donated stained glass to commemorate the events in More's life. A small plaque marks the former home of William and Margaret Roper; another house nearby and entitled Roper House is now a home for the deaf.

## See also

- English Reformation
- A Man for All Seasons (1966 film)

## Works

NOTE: The reference “CW” is to the relevant volume of the Yale Edition of the Complete Works of St. Thomas More (New Haven and London 1963–1997)

### Published during More’s life (with dates of publication)

- A Merry Jest* (c. 1516) (CW 1)
- Utopia* (1516) (CW 4)
- Latin Poems* (1518, 1520) (CW 3, Pt.2)
- Letter to Brixius* (1520) (CW 3, Pt. 2, App C)
- Responsio ad Lutherum* (1523) (CW 5)
- A Dialogue Concerning Heresies* (1529, 1530) (CW 6)
- Supplication of Souls* (1529) (CW 7)
- Letter Against Frith* (1532) (CW 7)
- The Confutation of Tyndale's Answer* (1532, 1533) (CW 8)
- Apology* (1533) (CW 9)
- Debellation of Salem and Bizance* (1533) (CW 10)
- The Answer to a Poisoned Book* (1533) (CW 11)

### Published after More’s death (with likely dates of composition)

- The History of King Richard III* (c. 1513–1518) (CW 2 & 15)
- The Four Last Things* (c. 1522) (CW 1)
- A Dialogue of Comfort Against Tribulation* (1534) (CW 12)
- Treatise Upon the Passion* (1534) (CW 13)
- Treatise on the Blessed Body* (1535) (CW 13)
- Instructions and Prayers* (1535) (CW 13)
- De Tristitia Christi* (1535) (CW 14)

## Translations

- Translations of Lucian* (many dates 1506–1534) (CW 3, Pt.1)
- The Life of Pico della Mirandola* (c. 1510) (CW 1)

## Notes

- <sup>^</sup> St. Thomas More, 1478–1535 (<http://savior.org/saints/more.htm>) at Savior.org
- <sup>^</sup> Homily at the Canonization of St. Thomas More ([http://www.thomasmorestudies.org/rep\\_canonization.html](http://www.thomasmorestudies.org/rep_canonization.html)) at The Center for Thomas More Studies at the University of Dallas, 2010, citing text "Recorded in The Tablet, June 1, 1935, pp. 694–695"
- <sup>^</sup> Linder, Douglas O. The Trial of Sir Thomas More: A Chronology (<http://law2.umkc.edu/faculty/projects/ftrials/more/morechrono.html>) at University Of Missouri-Kansas City (UMKC) School Of Law
- <sup>^</sup> <sup>*a*</sup> <sup>*b*</sup> <sup>*c*</sup> Apostolic letter issued *motu proprio* proclaiming Saint Thomas More Patron of Statesmen and Politicians, 31 October 2000 Vatican.va ([http://www.vatican.va/holy\\_father/john\\_paul\\_ii/motu\\_proprio/documents/hf\\_jp-ii\\_motu-proprio\\_20001031\\_thomas-more\\_en.html](http://www.vatican.va/holy_father/john_paul_ii/motu_proprio/documents/hf_jp-ii_motu-proprio_20001031_thomas-more_en.html))

5. <sup>^</sup> <sup>*a b c*</sup> "Holy Days" (<http://www.churchofengland.org/prayer-worship/worship/texts/the-calendar/holydays.aspx>). *Worship – The Calendar*. Church of England. 2011. Retrieved 20 April 2011.
6. <sup>^</sup> Jokinen, A. (13 June 2009). "The Life of Sir Thomas More." (<http://www.luminarium.org/renlit/morebio.htm>) Luminarium. Retrieved on: 19 September 2011.
7. <sup>^</sup> <sup>*a b c d e*</sup> Rebborn, Wayne A, ed. (2005), "Introduction", *Utopia*, Classics, New York: Barnes & Noble.
8. <sup>^</sup> <sup>*a b c d e f g h i j k l m n*</sup> Ackroyd, Peter (1999), *The Life of Thomas More*, New York: Anchor Books.
9. <sup>^</sup> Harpsfield, Nicholas (1931), *The Life and Death of Sr Thomas More*, London: Early English Text Society, pp. 12–3.
10. <sup>^</sup> Erasmus, "Letter to Ulrich von Hutten", in Adams, Robert M, *Utopia*, New York: WW Norton & Co, p. 125.
11. <sup>^</sup> "Franciscan Calendar" (<http://taucrossregion.org/calendarfranciscansaints.htm>). *Tau Cross Region of the Secular Franciscan Order*.
12. <sup>^</sup> <sup>*a b*</sup> Gerard B. Wegemer (1995). *Thomas More: A Portrait of Courage*. Scepter Publishing.
13. <sup>^</sup> <sup>*a b*</sup> More, St Thomas (1961), Rogers, Elizabeth Frances, ed., *Selected Letters*, New Haven and London: Yale University Press.
14. <sup>^</sup> "History of Parliament" (<http://www.historyofparliamentonline.org/volume/1509-1558/member/more-thomas-i-147778-1535>). History of Parliament Trust. Retrieved 13 October 2011.
15. <sup>^</sup> Magnusson (ed.) Chambers Biographical Dictionary (1990) pg 1039
16. <sup>^</sup> <sup>*a b c d*</sup> Rebborn, W. A. (ed.) pg xviii
17. <sup>^</sup> Gerard B. Wegemer, "Portrait of Courage", p. 136.
18. <sup>^</sup> Moynahan, Brian, *God's Bestseller: William Tyndale, Thomas More, and the Writing of the English Bible – A Story of Martyrdom and Betrayal*, St Martin's Press; 1st edition (23 August 2003).
19. <sup>^</sup> Diarmaid MacCulloch, 277.
20. <sup>^</sup> Farris, Michael (2007), *From Tyndale to Madison*.
21. <sup>^</sup> Moynahan, B., *William Tyndale: If God Spare My Life*, Abacus, London, 2003
22. <sup>^</sup> Guy, John A. *Tudor England* Oxford, 1988. pg 26
23. <sup>^</sup> Chambers, R. W., *Thomas More*, Jonathan Cape, London, 1976,
24. <sup>^</sup> More, Thomas (1973), Schuster, LA; Marius, RC; Lusardi, JP et al., eds., *The Confutation of Tyndale's Answer*, Complete Works **8**, Yale, p. 20 .
25. <sup>^</sup> Marius, R (1986), *Thomas More: A Biography*, Fount Paperbacks, London: Collins, p. 407.
26. <sup>^</sup> Marius (1999), p.307 ([http://books.google.ie/books?id=DdAYSzj20t0C&pg=PA307&lpg=PA307&dq=%22Thomas+More%22+%22Peasants+revolt%22&source=bl&ots=Wm502C7nPV&sig=C-4dnQTCpYyTr6kXoNDWTB\\_CvW8&hl=en&sa=X&ei=ji-kUYvCHsrF7Aa-4IG4Cw&ved=0CDkQ6AEwAg#v=onepage&q=%22Thomas%20More%22%20%22Peasants%20revolt%22&f=false](http://books.google.ie/books?id=DdAYSzj20t0C&pg=PA307&lpg=PA307&dq=%22Thomas+More%22+%22Peasants+revolt%22&source=bl&ots=Wm502C7nPV&sig=C-4dnQTCpYyTr6kXoNDWTB_CvW8&hl=en&sa=X&ei=ji-kUYvCHsrF7Aa-4IG4Cw&ved=0CDkQ6AEwAg#v=onepage&q=%22Thomas%20More%22%20%22Peasants%20revolt%22&f=false)) and p.437 (<http://books.google.ie/books?id=DdAYSzj20t0C&pg=PA437&dq=%22Thomas+More%22+%22Peasants+revolt+in+Germany%22&hl=en&sa=X&ei=oTCKUcrzB8mK7AbDsYGwBw&ved=0CDEQ6AEwAA#v=onepage&q=%22Thomas%20More%22%20%22Peasants%20revolt%20in%20Germany%22&f=false>)
27. <sup>^</sup> See, for example, 'To foresee and consider the everlasting fire of Hell.' from A Prayer by St. Thomas More (<http://www.apostles.com/moreprayer.html>)
28. <sup>^</sup> Eric W. Ives, *The Life and Death of Anne Boleyn* (2004), p. 47. More wrote on the subject of the Boleyn marriage that "[I] neither murmur at it nor dispute upon it, nor never did nor will... I faithfully pray to God for his Grace and hers both long to live and well, and their noble issue too..."
29. <sup>^</sup> Elton, Geoffrey Rudolph (1982). "The Crown" (<http://books.google.com/books?id=CJZZzoBJOfwC&lpg=PA7&pg=PA1>). *The Tudor constitution: documents and commentary* (<http://books.google.com/books?id=CJZZzoBJOfwC&pg=PA7>) (2nd ed.). Cambridge, Cambridgeshire: Cambridge University Press. p. 7. ISBN 0-521-24506-0. OCLC 7876927 (<http://www.worldcat.org/oclc/7876927>). Retrieved 24 July 2009.
30. <sup>^</sup> "Annotated original text" (<http://home.freeuk.net/don-aitken/ast/h8a.html#149>).
31. <sup>^</sup> "Account of trial" (<http://www.law.umkc.edu/faculty/projects/frials/more/moreaccount.html>). Retrieved 27 July 2007.
32. <sup>^</sup> David Hume, *The history of England* (1813) p 632
33. <sup>^</sup> Guy, John, *A Daughter's Love: Thomas & Margaret More*, London: Fourth Estate, 2008, ISBN 978-0-00-719231-1, p. 266.
34. <sup>^</sup> *Catholic Encyclopaedia* (<http://www.newadvent.org/cathen/14689c.htm>).
35. <sup>^</sup> Diarmaid MacCulloch, *The Reformation*, (New York: Viking, 2004), 194
36. <sup>^</sup> Daniel J. Boorstin (1999). *The Seekers: The Story of Man's Continuing Quest to Understand His World* (<http://books.google.com/books?id=B35joCqtHIwC&pg=PA154>). Random House Digital, Inc. p. 154.
37. <sup>^</sup> Quoted in *Britannica – The Online Encyclopedia*, article: *Sir Thomas More* (<http://www.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/392018/Sir-Thomas-More>)

38. ^ Chesterton, G. K. (1929). *The Fame of Blessed Thomas More*. London: Sheed & Ward. p. 63.
39. ^ <sup>a</sup> <sup>b</sup> Cited in Marvin O'Connell, "A Man for all Seasons: an Historian's Demur," *Catholic Dossier* 8 no. 2 (March–April 2002): 16–19 online (<http://www.catholiceducation.org/articles/politics/pg0078.html>)
40. ^ *Writings on Religion and the Church*, Chapter 14 "Concerning that Universal Hatred which prevails against the Clergy" by Jonathan Swift, 1736 (<http://www.online-literature.com/swift/religion-church-vol-one/14/>)
41. ^ Jonathan Swift, *Prose Works of Jonathan Swift* v. 13, Oxford UP, 1959, p. 123)
42. ^ *Reputation* (<http://www.thomasmorestudies.org/reputation.html>), Thomas More Studies.
43. ^ Kenny, Jack (2011). "A Man of Enduring Conscience" (<http://www.catholicculture.org/culture/library/view.cfm?recnum=7769>). *Resource Center*. Catholic Culture via Trinity Communications.
44. ^ Chambers, R. W. (1929). *Sir Thomas More's Fame Among His Countrymen*. London: Sheed & Ward. p. 13.
45. ^ Colclough, "Donne, John (1572–1631)", *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, Oxford University Press
46. ^ Thomas More and his Utopia (1888)
47. ^ Online Text Version of Fish's Supplycation for the Beggar ([http://books.google.com/books?id=30al\\_tR6\\_e0C&dq=%22simon+fish%22&printsec=frontcover&source=web&ots=OZx98r1-PW&sig=YXAYizrF6WzrUL\\_5kpzfbg8-Xfw#PRA1-PA19,M1](http://books.google.com/books?id=30al_tR6_e0C&dq=%22simon+fish%22&printsec=frontcover&source=web&ots=OZx98r1-PW&sig=YXAYizrF6WzrUL_5kpzfbg8-Xfw#PRA1-PA19,M1))
48. ^ see Fish, Simon. Supplycation for the Beggar. 1529 in Carroll, Gerald L. and Joseph B. Murray. The Yale Edition of the Complete Works of St. Thomas More. Vol. 7. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1990, pp1-10. See also Pineas, Rainer. "Thomas More's Controversy with Simon Fish." *Studies in English Literature, 1500–1900*, Vol. 7, No. 1, *The English Renaissance*, Winter, 1967, 13–14.

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- Roper, William. *The Life of Sir Thomas More (1556)* ed. by Gerard B. Wegemer and Stephen W. Smith (Center for Thomas More Studies, 2003)[2] (<http://www.thomasmorestudies.org/docs/Roper.pdf>)
- More, Thomas. *Utopia* (Norton Critical Editions) ed. by George M. Logan and Robert M. Adams (3rd. ed. 2010)
- More, Thomas. *Saint Thomas More: Selected Writings* ed. by John F. Thornton (2003)
- More, Thomas. *The Last Letters of Thomas More* ed. by Alvaro de Silva (2001)
- More, Thomas. *A Thomas More Source Book* ed. by Gerald B. Wegemer and Stephen W. Smith (2004) Catholic University of America Press

## External links

- Archival material relating to Thomas More (<http://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/nra/searches/subjectView.asp?ID=P20321>) listed at the UK National Archives
- Portraits of Sir Thomas More (<http://www.npg.org.uk/collections/search/person.php?LinkID=mp06288>) at the National Portrait Gallery, London
- The Center for Thomas More Studies (<http://thomasmorestudies.org/>) at the University of Dallas
- Thomas More Chambers (<http://www.thomasmore.co.uk>) – The Chambers of Mr Geoffrey Cox QC, MP.
- Thomas More Studies database (<http://www.thomasmorestudies.org/library.html>): contains several of More's English works, including dialogues, early poetry and letters, as well as journal articles and biographical material
- Works by Thomas More ([http://www.gutenberg.org/author/Thomas\\_More](http://www.gutenberg.org/author/Thomas_More)) at Project Gutenberg
- Sir Thomas More, or, Colloquies on the Progress and Prospects of Society* at Project Gutenberg
- Sir Thomas More by William Shakespeare (spurious and doubtful works)* at Project Gutenberg
- Sir Thomas More: A Man for One Season* (<http://www.luminarium.org/renlit/wood.htm>), essay by James Wood. Presents a critical view of More's religious intolerance
- More and *The History of Richard III* ([http://www.richard111.com/sir\\_thomas\\_more.htm](http://www.richard111.com/sir_thomas_more.htm))
- Thomas More and his Utopia* (<http://www.marxists.org/archive/kautsky/1888/more/index.htm>) by Karl Kautsky
- Thomas More and Utopias (<http://www.bl.uk/learning/histcitizen/21cc/utopia/more1/moreutopia.html>) – a learning resource from the British Library
- Integrity and Conscience in the Life and Thought of Thomas More* (<http://www.thomasmoreinstitute.org.uk/?q=node/34>) by Professor Gerard Wegemer
- "St. Thomas More". *Catholic Encyclopedia*. New York: Robert Appleton Company. 1913.
- Works by or about Thomas More (<http://worldcat.org/identities/lccn-n79-56176>) in libraries (WorldCat catalog)
- body (<http://www.findagrave.com/cgi-bin/fg.cgi?page=gr&GRid=6848>) and head (<http://www.findagrave.com/cgi-bin/fg.cgi?page=gr&GRid=27568996>) of Thomas More at Find A Grave (<http://www.findagrave.com/>)
- Patron Saints Index entry (<http://saints.sqpn.com/saint-thomas-more>) – Saint Thomas More biography, prayers, quotes, Catholic devotions to him.
- Trial of Sir Thomas More (<http://www.law.umkc.edu/faculty/projects/ftrials/more/more.html>) at the University of Missouri-Kansas City (UMKC) School of Law

<b>Political offices</b>		
Preceded by <b>Sir Thomas Neville</b>	<b>Speaker of the House of Commons</b> 1523	Succeeded by <b>Sir Thomas Audley</b>
Preceded by <b>Sir Richard Wingfield</b>	<b>Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster</b> 1525–1529	Succeeded by <b>Sir William Fitzwilliam</b>
Preceded by <b>Thomas Wolsey</b>	<b>Lord Chancellor</b> 1529–1532	Succeeded by <b>Sir Thomas Audley</b> <b>(Keeper of the Great Seal)</b>

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