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GOD SAVE THE QUEEN

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## Charges against terrorist Maria Stuart

The Babington Conspiracy is the name given to a Catholic conspiracy in 1586 to assassinate the Protestant Queen Elizabeth I. and free Maria Stuart from Chartley Manor Prison in order to bring her to the English Throne. The conspirators trusted that Philip II. of Spain and the Catholic League in France would support them. Although Anthony Babington is named after him, John Ballard is considered the real mastermind of the conspiracy. The Babington Conspiracy ultimately led to the execution of Maria Stuart. The first goal of the conspiracy was the liberation of Maria Stuart. Letters were exchanged with her which were hidden in the hollowed bung of a barrel and encoded with a nomenclature. Unfortunately for the conspirators, the messenger was Ambassador Gilbert Giffon, a spy of Queen Elizabeth of England, who made sure that all the letters came to Francis Walsingham, the Security Minister of Elizabeth. Since the letters were encrypted, Walsingham hired the experienced code breaker Thomas Phelippes as secretary, who managed to decipher the messages with the help of frequency analysis. The letters brought to light the news of the planned murder of Elizabeth. But Walsingham was still waiting because he wanted to know the names of everyone involved. In order to achieve this, he gave Phelippes the order to forge the letters of and for Maria and to supplement them with another text. On 17 July 1586 Maria answered the conspirators and signed her own death sentence. The „Act of the Queen’s Safety“ stipulates that in an attack on the Queen not only the perpetrators, but also those, domestic and foreign powers are regarded as guilty, in their favour an attack would have failed and was decided in 1584. The trial against Maria Stuart took place at Fotheringhay Castle on 15 October. Although she denied all the accusations, the judges decided guilty on the basis of the evidence in the form of the decoded letters and Elizabeth signed the death sentence ten days later. Maria Stuart was beheaded on 8 February 1587.

## The Scottish grip on London

Maria Stuart was born on 8 December 1542 in Linlithgow as the daughter of King James V. of Scotland and Maria de Guise. Her grandmother was the English princess Margaret Tudor, a sister of Henry VIII. Because of this relationship Maria also had a claim to the English throne, which would prove to be extremely critical in the course of her life. For Queen Elizabeth I. did not want Maria to dispute her place as Queen of England. When Maria was six days old, her father died in the Battle of Solway Moss, and since her two brothers had already died, she was appointed Queen of Scotland.

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The Catholic Maria Stuart and the Protestant Elisabeth Tudor ruled in Scotland and England. Perhaps there could have been a peaceful existence side by side if Henry II., the French father-in-law of Maria, had not proclaimed her Queen of England in 1558 after the death of Maria I., disregarding Elizabeth's claims to the throne. Maria Stuart Never gave up her claim to the English throne either, after all she was a great-granddaughter of Henry VIII.. In the end, Maria Stuart became a conspiracy against Elizabeth fatal.

When Elizabeth was born on 7 September 1533, she was not only a girl to the disappointment of her father Henry VIII., but also of his advisors. In the eyes of the whole Catholic Europe she was a „whore bastard“. Her father was not officially divorced from his first wife Katharina of Aragon when he married Elizabeth's mother, the court lady Anne Boleyn. Three years later Henry had Anne Boleyn beheaded because she had not given birth to a male heir to the throne. Elizabeth's rights to the throne and her recognition as a Queen were repeatedly reflected in her father's politics and way of life. In 1536 Elizabeth was not only excluded from the throne like her older half-sister Maria, but was also declared illegitimate. In 1544 Elizabeth was reassigned to the throne by a parliamentary resolution. At this point the succession to the throne is already secured by a male heir. Henry VIII. married Jane Seymour the day after the execution of Anne Boleyn and had a son with her, Edward, born on 12 October 1537. Maria Stuart was a threat to Elizabeth. The Pope had never legitimized the marriage of Elizabeth's parents, so for Catholic Scotland and Maria Stuart Elizabeth was illegitimate and Maria Stuart, as great-granddaughter of Henry VIII., the legitimate Queen of England. The Edinburgh contract is the subject of disputes between Elizabeth I. and Maria Stuart. The origin of the treaty dates back to John Knox's extensive reformations in Scotland and his desire to see England approach Scotland. Finally this was no longer Catholic, but Protestant. In the treaty, 1560 ended the Auld Alliance between Scotland and France. The connection between France and Scotland has deep roots and was also sealed by the marriage of Maria Stuart with Francis II.. For a long time, the Treaty was the subject of conflicts between Elizabeth I. and Maria Stuart. It included the withdrawal of French troops from Scotland one month after the death of Maria de Guise and the recognition of the rule of Elizabeth I. over England. But Maria Stuart refused to sign this contract. The Treaty is important for a number of reasons. Had Maria Stuart renounced her throne and abandoned her claim to England, the dispute would have ended immediately and Maria would probably not have been expropriated. But the contract must have worked as a mockery for Maria. After all, according to the Catholic Church and thus also according to the common opinion of many citizens, she is the rightful heiress of the throne. She is entitled of the throne because of the fact that her mother would actually have obtained the English throne, since King Henry VIII. turned away from the Church to marry his love Anne Boleyn.

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## The Lovers of Maria Stuart

Her first marriage to the French King Francis II., Maria Stuart became Queen of France. When her husband died, she was just 17 years old. The union of her marriage ran from 1558 to 1560 and she remained childless. In 1565 Maria Stuart fell in love with her cousin Henry Stewart, Lord Darnley. He was only 19 years old and was considered a Catholic. But the marriage between the two wasn't a good one. His way of life and the scandals, to which Maria had only granted him a royal title but no power, caused considerable tension. Stuart also maintained a close friendship with her private secretary and favourite David Rizzio, her husband heard rumours that he was the lover of his wife.

Finally he allied himself with the Protestants. The climax of the conspiracy happened on 9 March 1566. David Rizzio was stabbed to death. The pregnant queen was placed under house arrest, but escaped. Although with the help of her husband, Lord Darnley, but the relationship between the two was decidedly shattered. The birth of their son James on 19 June 1566 could not put some more cement to this. Whether Maria was involved in the murder of her husband or had knowledge is unclear. But she probably knew that there was a conspiracy against Lord Darnley, who was found murdered on 10 February 1567. The reputation of Queen Maria was destroyed by the murder of her husband.

James Hepburn, 4th Earl of Bothwell, who was regarded as the mastermind of the murder, was acquitted in a mock trial. After the assassination of her second husband, she married the main wife puller James Hepburn. This marriage was also childless and lasted from 1567 to 1578. The marriage with him turned out to be her biggest mistake.

A large part of the Scottish population regarded Maria as the murderer of her husband Henry and demanded her abdication. She was also suspected of adultery and complicity in the murder of her husband. The cassette letters are 8 letters which Stuart allegedly wrote to James Hepburn, the Earl of Bothwell. These were major evidence in the investigation in the York and Westminster conference. The Scottish nobility that Maria had disposed tried to frame her for Henry's murder. All the letters weighed heavily on her, but she was acquitted for lack of evidence. Maria was captured and forced to abdicate in favour of her son, James I.. One year later she managed to escape and tried to regain the throne. 1568 she was crushed and fled to Carlisle in England to her cousin Elizabeth Tudor. Robert Dudley, Earl of Leicester, is the favoured lover of Queen Elisabeth I.. He corresponded with Maria's confidants and gave only the Poisoning Council. The queen's Colonel-Hofstallmeister did this in order not to make her death planned by poison appear conspicuous. Maria Stuart was to marry Thomas Howard, the 4th Duke of Norfolk, and restore Catholicism as the predominant Religion England (Ridolfi conspiracy, plot of English Catholics around Roberto Ridolfi in the years 1570 to 1571. The aim was to murder Queen Elizabeth I. and replace her with Maria). Also in England one was interested to get Maria Stuart with a marriage under control and so Queen Elizabeth I. suggested Robert Dudley, 1st Earl of Leicester, as marriage candidate. He was a Protestant and was the favourite of the English queen. The marriage project failed, among other things because Dudley himself had no interest in the Scottish Catholic. Perhaps because he hoped to marry Queen Elisabeth I. herself. But not only England, also other foreign powers had an interest to connect their houses with the Stuart's (Sweden, Denmark, France, Austria, Spain...).

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