



San Tommaso Moro

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The Family and Descendants of St Thomas More Martin Wood

This book, weaving together the history and genealogy of the More family and of the other families to which they allied themselves by marriage, provides an illuminating sequel to the various lives that have been written of St Thomas More. It tells the story of what happened to his family in the wake of his heroic witness against the tyranny of Henry VIII and how his descendants, inspired by his faith, were affected by their refusal to conform to the Church of England as, under successive monarchs, England was forcibly transformed from a Catholic to a Protestant country.

The story begins with St Thomas More's parents and through his sister Elizabeth traces a line of literary figures that includes John Rastell the printer, playwright, dramatist and designer of pageants, John Heywood the Court musician, dramatist and playwright, and John Donne, the poet.

After Thomas More's execution all the members of his immediate and extended family felt the force of Henry's fury. His stepmother and his widow, Dame Alice More, were both thrown out of their homes. His son, John, and son-in-law, William Daunce, both narrowly escaped the scaffold, but Giles Heron, another son-in-law, was executed at Tyburn on a trumped-up charge of treason. Others were called in for questioning and they, and their families, were carefully watched throughout their lives. Some sought refuge in Catholic Europe.

The book follows each generation down to the time when the Catholic Emancipation Act of 1829 finally brought relief from persecution. This is the story of a line of laymen and women, and of priests and nuns, all of whom had a deep faith



Martin Wood

is, on his mother's side, a descendant of St Thomas More. He was educated at Ratcliffe College, Leicester and obtained a degree in theology at the Pontifical Lateran University in Rome, later qualifying as a teacher at Matlock College of Education. He taught Religious Studies for some years before taking up a career in Social Care with Derbyshire and Leicestershire Social Services.

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