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Now England, old England, still hold up thy head, who lately by popery long time has been led, and let the popes' actors that played all their pranks be gone in all haste, or will cripple their shanks, for in heart, voice, and loyalty, Mary will be in the crowning of William and brave Queen Mary. So they got up on horseback to Rome for to ride, and God bless great William that turnered the tide. He kicked those old mass mongers quite out of door, with a downfall forever to Babylon's whore. And now, Popa is banished as all men can see, in the crowning of William and brave Queen Mary. So that, Tom Holland, is a splendid broadside ballad, published in 1689 to celebrate the coronation of William III and Mary II.

Was it by any chance written by a Protestant?

I think it possibly was.

So that's in the aftermath of the Glorious Revolution, when James II, our last Catholic King, was kicked out.

The coronation oath that King Charles will be swearing at the weekend reflects the legacy of the Glorious Revolution.

And Tom, we think of coronations as timeless rituals, but as this reminds us, they are in fact reflections of changing political and religious passions.

And of course, what you make of a given coronation, I suppose, you know, that reflects who's writing the history, doesn't it?

It absolutely does.

And that is something that takes us actually, Dominic, very conveniently, you were talking about timeless coronation.

So in the previous episode, we were talking about how you can trace the order of service that is going to be used on Saturday,

all the way back to the 10th century, in the reign of Edgar.

And this order of service was drawn up by St. Dunstan, the great Archbishop of Canterbury in the 10th century.

But Dunstan featured in another coronation, and that was the coronation of Edgar's elder brother, Edwi.

And Dunstan and Edwi did not get on at all.

And the accounts that were written of Edwi's coronation seem to have been, well, if not written by Dunstan himself, then certainly by fans of Dunstan.

So this is the second canonical coronation, is it?

So Edgar was the first, and this is number two. Is that right?

No, Edwi is before. So Edwi is the elder brother.

Oh, right. Sorry, I'm completely out of kilter.

So Edwi is crowned in Kingston upon terms in 956.

So that's almost 20 years before Edwi's later coronation in Bath.

And according to the biography of Dunstan, he behaves very, very badly.

So he's been crowned.

And instead of hanging around and, you know, doing what a king should do after a coronation.

Shaking hands, lovely service, Fika.

Yeah, exactly. He goes off and has a threesome.

Oh no, Tom, who with?

With a very well-born lady and her adult daughter is the...

A mother and daughter threesome.

And the story is that he goes off and, you know, there's much embarrassment.

And so Dunstan and his relative, who's the Bishop of Lichfield, are the only ones brave enough to go and find out what's happened.

And they go in and apparently Edwi has thrown the crown off.

And this is actually the first mention of a crown in English history.

Oh, how embarrassing for England.

Yeah. And he's tossed it onto the ground.

And meanwhile, according to the hieroglyphs,

Edwi was desporting himself disgracefully between the two women as though they were wallowing in some revolting pigsty.

Oh, my word.

And Dunstan basically comes in and bollocks him and says, pull yourself together and kind of hauls Edwi off.

If that happens at the weekend, I will be astounded.

So, but the likelihood is that this is pro Dunstan and Edgar propaganda

because almost certainly the adult daughter is the woman who Edwi actually married of Gifu, who is his wife.

So it seems harsh and a reminder of the fact that the kind of the harsh stories that can be told of coronations do often reflect a bias and often can be back projected as well.

So there's a third coronation that Dunstan was involved in, which is the coronation of Edgar's son Ethelred,

who comes to be called Ethelred the Unready, notoriously a terrible reign.

At his coronation, Dunstan prayed that Ethelred be given the faithfulness of Abraham, the meekness of Moses, the courage of Joshua, the humility of David and the wisdom of Solomon, none of which he particularly seems to have displayed.

It was kind of presaged that Ethelred would be terrible because when Dunstan baptized him, Ethelred pissed into the font.

Oh, so this happens a lot in coronation stories.

So whether you get to the stewards, people say, oh, there were dreadful omens about coronation.

This such and such went wrong.

But as we'll see, something goes wrong in most coronations.

People don't turn up or they forget the crown or whatever.

I mean, again, maybe when we come to look at Shakespeare and how Shakespeare looks at coronations, this idea that the fate of the king is joined to the fate of the country is still very strong by the late Tudorelli-Stewart period.

So a very important idea.

So I suppose one thing with medieval coronations is that we actually don't know very much about most of them, do we?

Because the sources are so scant.

So the one that always sticks out in my mind, Tom, and you'll tell me whether this is an accurate description or not, is William I, where basically everybody dies.

William the Conqueror, is that fair?

Not everybody, but it doesn't go tremendously well because it's held in Westminster Abbey, the great abbey built by Edward the Confessor that we talked about in the first episode.

The king is hailed with kind of vivat, along with the king, the Norman soldiers who are outside, assume that a riot has broken outside in the abbey.

And for reasons that aren't entirely clear, they respond to this by rushing around, setting fire to the rest of London, which is quite odd behavior.

And everybody sees that houses and shops are on fire, so they all rush in and start looting it.

The whole thing is a disaster.

And what's interesting about this account, so it's by an English chronicler called Alderick Vitalis, he notes that the monks and the bishops who are doing the coronation, they stay in the abbey, but they're kind of very nervous.

And the other person who's very nervous is William, who trembles throughout the whole thing.

But that's not surprising, he's in a foreign country, he's beaten King Harold at Hastings, he's insecure, which is why there are so many soldiers guarding there at all.

But it's possible as well that he's trembling because he is nervous about whether God is truly blessing him, that maybe the disaster of the consecration is something that may reflect God's wrath.

And that really matters to William, because one of the reasons why he has so wanted to become King of England is that the consecration and anointing obviously raises him to a level almost equal to that of the King of France.

So a century later, a canon lawyer writing in Bologna will note that properly only four kings

are anointed at their coronation,
so the King of France, King of Jerusalem,
King of Sicily and King of England.
And so that is what William is after.
And his coronation to the degree that we can tell
is, I mean, it's drawing on the kind of the Anglo-Saxon rituals,
that's important because he has to establish
his legitimacy as an English king.
But it's also very kind of imperial.
So he's crowned on Christmas Day,
as Charlemagne had been crowned.
His crown is inspired by Byzantine example.
So you remember those kind of dinky little crowns
the Byzantine emperors have with the pearls
that kind of hang down by their cheeks.
And the order of service is read in French as well as in English.
So for William, the coronation is the kind of,
is setting the seal on his great victory.
And therefore the fact that it doesn't go tremendously well,
you can understand why it would be cause of anxiety to him.
Yes, absolutely.
We don't know much about the coronations of William,
the first successors or some of the plantagenets.
But there's a slight sense of downplaying coronations at this point.
Well, so this is by the papacy going into the 11th century.
This is the period of the Gregorian Revolution,
when the papacy and the church more generally
is trying to stop kings from identifying themselves
with a kind of sacral role.
They're trying to get rid of the idea
that a king might have a priestly status.
Priests are priests, secular rulers are secular rulers,
and the division between them must be very secure.
And so this is a period when the church starts trying to stop
kings from being anointed with chrism,
which is this kind of awesome oil,
which can supposedly calm the sea and make fields fertile.
And they start kind of proclaiming kings
that they're kings by the grace of God,
which is therefore to kind of heighten the role
that is played by the bishop or by the archbishop.
So it emphasizes the role played by the church in all this.
Kings by and large go with this
chiefly because they're kind of forced to.

So Henry II, who at his coronation had insisted
in being proclaimed in very, very grandiose terms,
then blots his copybook by having Thomas Beckett killed.
And so he essentially has to kind of see terms.
Henry II's sons, Richard I and John,
both have calamitous coronations.
Oh, no, what happens?
Well, so Richard I's coronation, there's another riot,
because there are Jews in the audience outside,
Westminster Abbey, and they try to come in.
And this precipitates a massive riot.
And once again, all the houses of London get set on fire.
So there's no kind of multi-faith stuff with Richard I.
And John disgraced himself by laughing throughout
the entire coronation.
Laughing out of nerves?
Who knows?
I mean, that's the story.
A sort of Kendall Roy figure.
Yeah, very much Kendall Roy.
Yes.
And again, probably a back projection.
People looking at his disastrous reign
and saying it was kind of presaged.
One of the things that's really striking about
the relationship of kings to their coronation
is that it's often the kings who are in the weakest position,
who are understandably keenest on making the coronation
as grand and imposing as possible.
So John's reign is so disastrous
that he ends up losing all the crown jewels in the wash.
Yes, famously.
And then he dies leaving his son, Henry,
who was only nine years old when he becomes king.
And he can't go and be crowned in Westminster Abbey
because it's occupied by the French,
who have sent over the Dauphin Louis to become king.
Yeah.
And, you know, for a while it looks as though
a French king may replace the House of Plantageness
all together on the throne of England.
So desperate straits and the lords
and the backers of the young king Henry,
Henry III, have him crowned as urgent as they can.

And they do that in the great Abbey of Gloucester
that will in due course become the cathedral of Gloucester.
And because John has lost all the crown jewels,
Henry III has to be crowned with his mother's crown.
Oh, my word.
So in every respect, this is a very,
this is not a great coronation.
It's not a great coronation.
And Henry is so upset by this
that he asked for a papal dispensation
when in due course the whole of England has been recaptured
and he is undisputed king of England.
He asked for a special papal dispensation
to be crowned and anointed again in Westminster Abbey.
So he had two coronations.
He had two coronations, yeah.
A bit like Charles II had, as we'll discover,
he had two coronations, didn't he?
The first three stewards all have, you know,
they're the kings of Scotland as well as England,
and so they are crowned in Scotland as well as England.
This is slightly different because by and large
you can't have two anointings
because the anointing is so, I mean,
it's so freighted with holiness that you can't do it twice.
But Henry does get this special dispensation
and having been crowned in Westminster Abbey,
he then redevelops it.
So it's Henry III who basically builds the Abbey
as it stands now and is clearly, you know,
very keen that he have a stage commensurate
with the grandeur of his position,
having been so close to total ruin.
So after Henry III, pretty much all his successes,
I think I'm right in saying,
with just a couple of exceptions
are crowned in Westminster Abbey, aren't they?
Right, so Edward V, who's one of the princes in the tower,
he doesn't because he gets killed.
Yes.
And Edward VIII doesn't because he abdicates before
he becomes king,
but all the others get crowned in Westminster Abbey.
But what happens with, for example,

so Richard II, he's a Plantagenet,
but he's booted out by Henry IV,
who is a usurper.

So presumably his coronation is a pretty big deal for him
because he needs to assert his legitimacy.

They start to invent various stories
that kind of serve to leverage the awesome quality
of the ritual that is being performed at the coronation.

So Henry IV is anointed with an oil that supposedly,
well, it's the subject of a prophecy by Thomas Beckett.

Oh.

The martyred archbishop of Canterbury.

Who I played on stage.

Yes.

The Virgin Mary had appeared to him while he was in exile,
kind of hiding from Henry II,
and presented him with this eagle, eagle made of gold,
and inside there was a stone flask,
and it was filled with this incredibly holy oil.

And the Virgin told Thomas that at some future point,
this oil would be used for a wonderful new king
who would be coming.

This is the oil that is used in the coronation of Henry IV.

So it's this idea that Henry IV isn't a usurper at all.

He is the fulfillment of a prophecy, like Aragorn or something.

Right.

Because if he's got this fancy oil,

Exactly.

That's definitely a sign that he's legitimate.

And then with Henry V, this story gets kind of elaborated
and it gets said that furthermore,

the king who will be anointed with this holy oil of St. Thomas
will go on to reconquer Normandy and Aquitaine,
which is what Henry V then goes on to do.

So fancy that.

Wow.

Who would have thought that?

That is definitely true.

I mean, absolutely.

So I think you can absolutely see there that kings who feel
that the foundations of their power are unstable
really enjoy beefing up coronation rituals and stories
to try and solidify their sense of legitimacy.

But then what do you do, Tom,

when you have a king who can't even speak?
So Henry VI, who succeeds Henry V in 1422,
he's 10 months old.
How do they crown him?
Yeah, well, and adding to that problem is the fact
that things start to go quite badly in France.
So Henry VI is the son of Henry V
and the daughter of Charles VI of France.
And Henry V and Charles VI both die in 1422,
which means that by virtue of the treaty
that Henry V and Charles VI had signed,
Henry VI is king by right of both England and France.
But Charles VI has a son, the Dauphin, Charles VII,
who has been delegitimized.
But a lot of people in France want him to be king.
And famously among the people who want him to be king
is Joan of Arc.
And so she leads him deep into enemy territory,
crowns him in the traditional site of coronations in France,
and then kind of takes him back to continue the fight.
And that means that the English government in France
obviously needs to trump this in an urgent manner.
And so they get the very young Henry VI,
who by this point must be what, about six, I think?
Yeah.
Maybe eight.
I mean, he's still a very young boy.
Or even seven.
Maybe seven. Who knows? Who can say?
Yeah.
Anyway, so in 1430, he crosses over to France.
He hangs out in France for a fair amount of time.
And then at the end of 1431,
he basically gets smuggled into Paris,
gets crowned in Notre Dame,
and hurrah, hurrah, you know, he's the king of France.
French coronation held by English, of an English king.
Yes.
Surrounded presumably by English soldiers.
And also crowned by his great-uncle,
who is a cardinal but very English.
Right.
And so that doesn't go down well.
And what ultimately blots Henry VI's copybook is that

the feast that is held to celebrate his coronation,
all the French complain about the quality of English cooking,
which is...
Oh, my gosh.
That is terrible.
And nationalistic prejudice can come into things like this,
isn't it, Tom?
And so Henry VI is the only king to have been
formally crowned and anointed as king,
both of France and of England
in two separate and distinct ceremonies.
And his reign goes on to be absolutely disastrous.
So it kind of precipitates the Wars of the Roses.
Yeah.
You have Yorkists and then Castrians and then Castrians
and Yorkists all busily succeeding each other.
And again, you see this process whereby
it's usurpers who have to emphasize
in their coronations
just how potent a ritual is being staged.
So when Henry VII, the first Tudors,
defeats Richard III at Bosworth, the last Yorkist king,
and he goes to London and he meets with his mother,
Lady Margaret Beaufort,
for the first time in 14 years at his coronation.
So it must have been a very emotional occasion for them all.
A very high pressure occasion, yeah.
According to the Bishop Rochester, who was her confessor,
when she saw Henry being crowned,
when the king was crowned in all that great triumph and glory,
she wept marvelously.
But she might also have been very impressed by the crown
that Henry chooses to be crowned with,
which is an imperial crown.
And an imperial crown, Dominic,
is the kind of crown that has kind of arches
that go up from the coronet and an orb on the top.
And these are called imperial crowns
because these arches are symbolic of a rule of an empire.
Right.
So you're enclosing all the world.
And mounted by the orb, which symbolizes the world.
So it's Henry VII, who has himself crowned imperialy.
But of course, it's his son, Henry VIII,

who initiates the Reformation
and declares England an empire.
The Pope has no jurisdiction over England,
who sets the monarchy, the country,
and the coronation ritual on a kind of slalom ride.
A rollercoaster ride, what might I say.
And a veering all over the place, ideologically.
Those are two very different things,
a rollercoaster and a slalom ride.
You know what I mean.
Okay, I don't know what you mean.
Well, Henry VIII's coronation will just do that
because it's the last pre-Reformation coronation, isn't it?
So that's 1509.
We do have descriptions of that.
So the closer we get in time to the present day,
the more lavish the descriptions of coronation.
So we know that Henry VIII,
so he's married Catherine of Aragon.
He's decided to marry her just beforehand
because he needs a bride straight away.
So it's the coronation of the two of them.
With all these coronations,
they have this great parade through the streets of London
on one day, and then the coronation is on the next.
And it's a kind of double header for the spectators.
Actually, it's the parade and the procession
and the pageants and the stalls and the plays
and the songs and all that stuff.
The mumming.
The mumming, exactly.
It's just as exciting.
The tremendous robes and all of this sort of stuff.
They have it on a midsummer Sunday, the actual coronation.
So it's perfectly timed.
And he's very much a Renaissance prince at that point, isn't he?
Brashing and slim and playing the lute and jousting.
Exactly.
So Margaret Beaufort is still there.
So that's his grandmother.
And she's there, you know, wiping her eyes.
Obviously, everything's gone tremendously well for the Tudors.
We know the oath that he swears.
With good will and devout soul,

I promise I shall keep the privilege of the law,
canon and of holy church.
And I shall by God's grace defend you
and each one of you, bishops and abbots,
through my realm, blah, blah, blah.
Well, that turned out well, didn't it?
Well, exactly.
The nice irony there.
But that's going back to what you were saying in our first podcast
about the importance of the oath
and the idea of the king as the servant of his people.
Then they leave.
Henry and Catherine, they go and have this tremendous banquet
and they have festivities for days.
And we've got a nice little moment
which anticipates so many moments to come.
People are very excited and they go and they tear up the carpet.
So there's a huge scarlet runner kind of carpet.
And people go and rip out bits of the carpet as souvenirs.
Nice.
I was wondering why they were ripping the carpet up,
but that makes perfect sense.
I don't know whether any of those bits still survive.
One last thing about Henry VIII.
Henry VIII also does something very unusual.
He has Anne Boleyn crowned in 1533.
Why is that unusual?
I thought queens were being crowned.
Yeah, but normally you don't then marry a queen later on.
Oh, I see, of course, yes.
So she's crowned separately.
Yes.
So she has a separate coronation.
Now, that doesn't normally happen.
She has a separate coronation presided over by Thomas Cranmer.
So the Reformation is now underway, the break with Rome.
With hilarious consequences.
Well, not hilarious for Anne Boleyn,
because unlike with Catherine of Aragon,
where everyone's delighted to see Catherine of Aragon,
they're very displeased to see Anne Boleyn.
And she complains to Henry afterwards and says...
Sort of that.
Nobody cheered.

No, not enough cheers.

And we all know what happened to her, Tom.

Nothing good.

Nothing good.

So let's come back after the break and do more Tudor coronations.

And then we get into the stewards and it all really starts to kick off.

Brilliant.

Let's move forward to that.

Hello.

Welcome back to our coronation themed romp through centuries of English history.

And we have reached the 16th century, the Tudors,
and don't want it more specifically, the Reformation,

which is all about kicking out papery and superstition and idolatry

and nonsense and ritual and all that kind of thing as Protestants would put it.

And I suppose one of the things that's interesting about when Edward VIII dies

and is succeeded by his very young son, Edward VI,

is that nobody thinks, well, should we get rid of the coronation?

Isn't the coronation with all its anointings

and it's bowing before the altar and things?

Isn't this all just kind of papist mummery?

No, they don't think that, do they?

Well, I suppose you have to have some form of inauguration of the mnemonic, don't you?

You need some...

But there are, you know, there are absolutely, there are Protestants,

radical Protestants who argue that it's all idolatry

and clearly standing at the head of a tradition that is still very much alive today,

which would absolutely say, well, should we be spending money on coronations

when we can give it to the poor and it's all just nonsense.

Well, you know my views of that, Tom.

Well, Edward VI has a slimmed-down coronation, to be fair.

Not quite Scandinavian bicycling monarchy, but...

Well, they're worried, aren't they, that he'll get too tired?

Well, he's any... What is he, nine?

They admit themselves at this point.

It's the first time I think you can find somebody admitting that coronation
actually can be quite boring.

Well, Richard II, who was also young when he got crowned, he fell asleep in his.

Right. So they say, because of the tedious length

which would weary and be hurtful to the king's majesty being yet of tender age,
they should cut it down from 12 hours to seven hours.

Imagine that 12-hour...

He has a procession, too, the day before, as his father did,

as he's supposedly very impressed by a man,

a man from the nation of Aragon, an acrobat,

who slides down a tightrope from the steeple of St. Paul's Cathedral as swiftly as if he had been a bird.

Well, we were talking about roller coasters.

I'd like to see more acrobatics at the king's coronation.

And this is the backdrop to Mark Twain's novel, The Prince and the Pauper.

Tom Carty, is that the name of the character?

Tom Canty.

Where the pauper and the prince, they kind of look alike, and swap-platers, yeah.

They do indeed.

But, of course, what would fascinate you about this, Tom, is that it's the first Protestant coronation.

Yes.

So they get rid of lots of sort of rituals and stuff like that.

There's lots of talk of idolatry and tyranny and superstition and...

But, yeah.

I mean, Edward is laid on the altar for his anointing

and Krammer anoints him on the back,

and he takes the oath on the sacrament.

So there's still kind of hangovers.

But doesn't Krammer say to him,

you're God's vice regents and Christ's vicar.

So you're the big man, you know?

Yes.

And there's a strong implication that...

Well, it's not an implication.

I mean, it's stated that the anointing is not to sacralize the young king.

It's not to kind of make him, you know, to dignify him,

give him a new dignity that you wouldn't otherwise have.

It's just something that's done to him

because he already has this power by virtue of descent.

Oh, right.

That's interesting.

It's a kind of subtle shift.

So, essentially, it's about the focus of the ritual is changed

from the idea of a king as a kind of priestly figure

to king as an absolutely royal figure.

So in his sermon, Krammer says,

Edward is the second Josiah.

I'm ashamed to admit I don't really know what Josiah did.

So Josiah is the young king who overthrows idols in the Old Testament.

There you go.

Because he says,

we look forward to you having the tyranny of the bishops of Rome

banishing your subjects and images removed.

Yes.

Which, of course, then happens, doesn't it?

So again, I mean, that's an example of how kings in Christian Europe look to Old Testament kings for exemplars.

But of course, Edward doesn't last very long.

So in 1553, we have the coronation of Mary, his sister, and now it's a complete turnabout because she is a Catholic.

So she has the sermon.

This is given by the Bishop of Chichester, a man called George Day.

And he had been in prison under Edward VI.

He had been in prison for arguing about altars and prayer books.

He'd been in the fleet prison.

Mary lets him out.

The Archbishop of Canterbury, Thomas Crammer, by contrast, is in prison.

And will shortly be in a fire.

Yes.

Will shortly be burned, exactly.

So Mary is anointed not by the Archbishop of Canterbury, but by the Bishop of Winchester.

He's a guy called Stephen Gardner, who is the villain in all Tudor dramas.

Yes.

Isn't he?

Because he's sort of quite a weasly...

Well, unless they're written by Catholics.

He's always been played by people like Mark Gatiss and things.

Yes.

Sort of smooth and sinister.

Smooth, plausible and villainous.

But there's an issue with oil at Mary's, because the oil that they've got left over from Edward VI, they regard as Protestant oil and therefore not fit for consumption.

So they have to order some oil, especially.

The Imperial Ambassador orders some oil from the Bishop of Arras.

And there was also a big hullabaloo about celebrating Mass.

You know, it's the absolute centre part of Mary's coronation.

Well, it's interesting about the oil,

because when in due course Mary dies and gets succeeded by her sister, Elizabeth, is the daughter of Anne Boleyn and a Protestant.

The oil that's used for her is rancid.

It's gone off.

Rancid oil?

Yeah.

But what is the oil?

Tom, this is the key question.

It's not olive oil, obviously.

Surely?

Yeah.

So one of them is under the Tudors.

Okay.

And Puli, they are called...

So they're kind of anointing vessels.

So one is full of pure oil,

and the other is full of chrism,

which is kind of a mixture of olive oil and kind of various elements.

What are the elements?

Spices or something?

Yeah.

Balm, I think it is.

Balms of various kinds.

Balms of various kinds.

Right.

But then in the stewarts, they mix them together.

They kind of create a holy oil cocktail.

A metaphor there for the stewartiness, Tom.

Yes, absolutely.

So going back to Elizabeth,

I mean, Elizabeth also has a...

The real deal is not so much in some ways the coronation.

We'll just talk about that in a second,

but the procession is the day before,

because they are so stage managed, aren't they?

Huge crowds.

I mean, obviously with all the Tudors and the stewarts,

because of all the religious ructions

and the political kind of controversies of the day,

it's really important for the regime to assert its legitimacy

and to do so in this very, very public, spectacular way.

So Elizabeth, for example, she has, I think,

there are five pageants that she goes past.

So the first one is all about her Englishness,

comparing her with her sister's Spanishness.

So it harks back to the Wars of the Roses

and has a sort of tableau of her descent.

The second one shows her the four virtues of true religion,

love of subjects, wisdom and justice.

And true religion is symbolized by the Bible, isn't it?

By the Protestant religion, exactly.
They're trampling on superstition and ignorance.
And as you say, at one point there's a figure of truth
carrying a Bible written in English.
And actually, truth presents the Bible to Elizabeth as she passes,
and she kisses it and all the crowd cheer and say,
you know, hurrah for the true faith, all this kind of thing.
Throwing their caps in the air.
Throwing their caps in the air as presumably they've been paid to do.
I mean, that's the thing with all these.
I mean, the interesting thing, contrasting that with the coronation,
is that we don't know very much about the coronation.
And there's some confusion as to exactly what the status of Catholic rituals,
what's going on there.
So there is a mass is held.
So it's the last mass that is held at a coronation.
And in Latin, it's the last one in Latin, yeah, for a while anyway.
Until George I comes, yeah.
But Elizabeth is saying that there is a mass,
but she didn't participate in it.
And so there's a general sense of muddled and confusion.
And so I've read several scholars who suggest that this confusion was kind of deliberate,
that she hasn't yet entirely worked out how she's going to fuse the various elements.
Because basically, it's kind of the Church of England will end up looking Catholic,
and its doctrines will be Protestant.
Yes, I suppose that's being very, very reductive.
Elizabethan settlement is a model, isn't it?
Yeah.
And that the coronation is awkward for Elizabeth.
You know, she knows that whatever she does, she'll be sending out signals.
And it may be that at that point, she's not yet ready to send out signals.
And so a veil is discreetly drawn over it,
and people are encouraged not to write about it.
And instead, it is actually the procession that matters.
That's where the messages are going out,
which in turn would suggest that the key thing for Elizabeth is less what's going on in the abbey
than what's happening on the streets.
Yeah.
And her Englishness, I think, is the fact that the first of those pageants
is about her descent from Elizabeth of York and Henry VII, Henry Tudor.
You know, the people who ended the Wars of the Roses
and brought national unity and all this sort of thing.
And that she's not, she has no Spanish blood.
And that's also really important that they're sort of heavily emphasizing

her kind of native-born Englishness.

Yes.

So in 1561, she tells the Scottish ambassador, the Mary Queen of Scots ambassador, and shows him her finger on it.

It is the coronation ring that had been given to her at the ritual by the Archbishop of Canterbury, and she's still wearing it.

And she says that,

I am already married to the realm of England when I was crowned with this ring, which I wear continuously in token thereof.

So before we come to another Scott, James I, or James VI of Scotland, obviously Shakespeare has a fair bit to say about anointing and balms and oils and all this, doesn't he?

Absolutely.

So we're talking about how the coronation ritual under Elizabeth is the look of it as Catholic, the doctrine of it is becoming Protestant.

What, therefore, is the role of the coronation?

What is the role of the anointing?

Does it make a king or a queen someone holy?

Or does it not?

And Shakespeare's history plays relentlessly explore that issue.

So Shakespeare writes a play about Richard II, who gets deposed by Henry IV, and has probably the most famous expression of this idea that an anointing transfigures the person to whom it's done.

So not all the waters in the rough rude sea, Richard II says, can wash the balm off an anointed king. But of course, Richard II does end up deposed.

And in fact, at one point, when the Earl of Essex is staging his rebellion and he pays for Richard II to be staged,

Elizabeth says, I am Richard II.

No, you're not that.

So she's very alert to the kind of political implications of these historical stories and the way that Shakespeare is framing it.

But of course, Shakespeare is absolutely still alert to this idea that a king or queen who is anointed, thereby, in a way, his or her fate will determine the fate of the kingdom.

So whether that's in Richard II, where all kinds of terrible things are reported or Macbeth or whatever,

that idea is really fundamental.

But at the same time, you're getting the idea that is actually expressed by Henry V in the play named after him,

that, you know, that all the crown and the mace and the whatever the robes and the swords and the sceptres and things are really nothing.

That what matters is the man within.

Yeah, because he calls it the farcid title running for the king.

So in other words, this is all flammery.

This is all wallpaper and just spin and nonsense.

And actually what matters is the is the character.

Yeah.

And so that is a division, you know, does an anointing make a king holy, or is it the character of a king and is all the anointing simply the window dressing?

Well, see, what's fascinating to me about this, Tom,

and actually what reading about this brought home was we know that all these people, they have their reins, we know the story.

What it really reinforces is for so much of this period how insecure they all are.

Yeah.

You know, even Elizabeth I, there's been tutors before her,

but the Tudor dynasty are not that old.

And she's still there's that insecurity, there's the anxiety,

there's the need for massive security often, massive spectacles,

you know, the propaganda and all that.

And isn't, doesn't that shed a kind of interesting light on the 17th century in a way that I'd never thought of before?

That the course, the two extremes that you come to have in the 17th century are the divine right of kings,

that kings are absolutely appointed by God,

that they have a sacral status that is greater than that of bishops even.

Yeah.

Or that there should be no king at all and there should be a republic.

Well.

And those are the twin poles around which so much happens in the 17th century.

When James I comes down in 1603.

James VI of Scotland.

James VI of Scotland.

So he's been crowned already.

Massive security, so we know that he pays 500 soldiers,

they're paid eight pence a day to guard against tumults and disorder in Westminster because of course there's a lot of anxiety.

How will the English crowds put up with, you know, admittedly a Protestant, admittedly of royal blood,

but a Scottish king.

So he's come south with his wife Anne of Denmark.

Right from the beginning, there's a degree of sort of trouble and disappointment because there's an outbreak of plague in London.

So the procession is hugely cut down and they tell spectators, you know, do social distancing, which people obviously ignore because that's as people so often do.

They make a special new translation of the Libba Regalis,

that thing that you were talking about, the Order of Service.

Yeah, the first episode.

Yeah.

And they take out a lot of the Tudor stuff and they take out anything that they think is contrary to

Church of England doctrine.

So anything that is too Catholic.

They translate it into English, although the oath he still makes, the coronation oath he makes in Latin and English.

And also interestingly, this surprised me in French because he is still technically King of France. King of France.

Yeah.

So he makes in French, massive crowds despite the fact it's raining.

Obviously, he's reunited with the Stone of Destiny, which is a nice moment.

Nice for him, yeah.

Yeah, it's lovely.

But there's trouble with his wife, Anne of Denmark.

She's Catholic, isn't she?

So this is a really...

So she had originally been Lutheran and then clearly exposure to the Scots drove her to the opposite extreme.

Because then she sort of seems to have secretly become a Catholic.

Even the Pope himself said, it's very hard to work out what game she's playing.

Is she Catholic or not?

But she refuses to take communion.

And she's the first of three queens that do that.

Yeah.

So Henrietta Maria, who then marries Charles I and Catherine of Braganza, who marries Charles II, all Catholic,

all refused to have anything to do with the coronation regime.

In 1626, when Charles I takes over, now Charles I needs less security than James I.

You know, James I, there have been plots and all sorts of the gunpowder plot.

But he's got away with it.

He's got through and died peacefully in his bed.

Charles I takes over, a general sense of sort of, you know, there's rejoicing and there's all this sort of stuff.

But Henrietta Maria, who he's just married, he thinks they'll have a joint coronation as kings and queens usually do.

But Henrietta Maria refuses to go.

She watches because she's a strict Catholic.

She says, I'm not doing any of this Protestant nonsense.

So she just watches apparently from a window while he is crowned.

Well, she wouldn't want anything to do with heresy, would she?

So we were talking about omens.

They're all stories now told about Charles I coronation.

And do these date after 1649?

Of course.

Yeah, I found them in a Victorian book.

So there's some sort of golden dove that is part of the regalia.

Very sinister.

And a wing breaks off and falls to the floor with a clatter.

The dove from above.

I read you this Victorian book.

It says, the bishop of Carlisle, Richard Sennhouse, made an inexcusable blunder, Tom.

No.

He took as the text of his coronation sermon, be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life.

See, I don't see that as an inexcusable blunder because I don't really know what that means.

But anyway.

You'll be martyred.

Presumably, this was an anticipation of Martin.

But also the thing, Charles was later regarded to have worn the wrong clothes.

So he turned up in a suit of white satin.

And of course, he wears a white shirt on the day of his execution when it is also snowing and very cold.

So eagle-eyed observers said, could see that no good would come of this white suit.

Now we're about to go on to Charles's thing.

But before we do that, Cromwell has a kind of coronation, doesn't he?

Well, he does.

He said in the previous episode that he becomes Lord Protector sitting on the throne, the throne of St. Edward over the Stone of Skuun.

So I dug this out.

It's his second investiture in 1657, is the really big one.

The first one is a bit of a sort of, they do it in a cupboard or something.

Yeah, hug a mugger.

Yeah.

The second one, he's been off of the crown and he said no.

Reluctantly.

But they say, well, we'll have a coronation anyway.

You know, who cares?

So they have a big ceremony in Westminster Hall.

He wears velvet robes, ermine.

There's a big sword.

There's a scepter.

The spectator hands all this stuff over to him in the Bible, the scepter and the robe and the sword.

He swears an oath.

I do in the presence and by the name of God Almighty promise and swear that to the uttermost of my power, I will uphold and maintain the true reformed Protestant Christian religion, blah, blah, blah, blah, blah.

I swear by my power, I was chief magistrate of these three nations.

I uphold the maintenance and preservation of the peace and safety and the rights and privileges of the people.

So in other words, he's got an oath that looks very like a coronation oath.

And when it's all done, there's heralds, there's trumpets and they say his Highness Oliver Cromwell, protector of England and the crowds outside.

Again, almost certainly money has changed hands or capons or whatever people are being bribed with.

They shout, long live his Highness, long live his Highness, ha-zah, ha-zah, ha-zah.

I would definitely say ha-zah.

You know my views on the law protector, Tom.

Yeah.

And would you wear a cap and throw it at the air?

Undoubtedly.

And then I would go and rip off a bit of the carpet as a souvenir, I think, just to...

And start a riot.

Exactly.

Start setting fire to things.

Exactly.

But meanwhile, of course, there is a king, a real king.

So Charles II had been crowned in Scotland, hadn't he?

On New Year's Day, 1651, at Schoon, traditional place.

So he's had one coronation already.

He comes back in 1660 and then he's finally crowned in April 1661.

Do you know what the Bishop of Winchester, how the Bishop of Winchester described Charles at his coronation?

The new King John, a barrel of laughs.

As a figure like Christ.

Really?

Who had risen from the dead.

You amazed me.

But I mean, Charles II, the comparisons between him and Jesus aren't obvious.

Well, Charles II's coronation, Tom, not, you know, not inappropriately for the restoration, is attended by some quite bad behavior.

So Samuel Peeps writes an absolutely splendid description of going to Charles II's coronation.

He goes to the Abbey and he says, king in his robes, bareheaded, it was very fine.

Peep says, all sorts of rituals and ceremonies, but in very amusing peeps where he says, I couldn't actually see them

because the crowd was too thick and I couldn't see over all the partitions and stuff.

So that's very disappointing.

Peeps, here's a big shout.

Interestingly, a good sign of his political talents at the coronation.

Charles II has this Lord chance to read out a general pardon to people for their behavior in the Civil War.

So he's got one eye on, you know, conciliating the disagreements.

People throw medals around.

Why are they doing that?

They're gifts, you know, throwing out little silver coins.

That's a bit dangerous.

Peeps is disappointed because he doesn't get any himself.

So again, he's missed out.

The music strikes up.

Peeps says, so great a noise that I could make but little of the music and indeed it was lost to everybody.

And then he says, but I had so great a lust to piss that I went out a little while before the king had done all his ceremonies.

So peeps has missed almost everything.

That's a tradition, isn't it?

Of people who attend coronations being advised not to drink.

Exactly.

Because if you're going to be 12 hours or even seven hours.

So then peeps goes to the banquets.

And this I had not realized until delving into the subject.

They would always have the banquet at Westminster Hall, but there would be thousands of spectators who were behind rails watching everybody have the feast.

So peeps is one of the spectators and he sees somebody who knows who gives him some bread and then somebody else who, you know, some other big week gives him a bit of rabbit.

So he has a sort of sandwich with some friends.

A little snack.

I wouldn't watch other people have a bank.

I mean, watch Prince Harry have a.

You know perfectly well that it's quite hard to persuade me to leave my house to go for a dinner, which I'm actually going to eat.

Let alone one in which I'm going to watch other people eating.

Yeah, I do.

So then they all go.

He goes off with his wife and he describes characteristically as a pretty lady, a doctor's wife and various other people and they go out drinking and stuff.

And he says, it's strange to think that these two days have held up fair till now that all is done and the king gone out of the hall.

And then it fell a raining and thundering and lightning, which people did take great notice of.

And they said it was God's blessing of the work of these two days.

And he says, it's a forgery to take too much notice of these things.

So peeps says.

Skeptical spirit of the Royal Society.

Exactly.

These are mugs.

However, peeps then disgraced himself.

Tommy hasn't finished his wife goes off to bed.

He goes out with some gallants and they drink the king's health.

So this is coronation evening.

And then he says, we did this and nothing else to one of the gentlemen fell down stark drunk and lay

their spewing.
Peace goes to bed with one of these blokes.
But not the one he's vomited.
No, a different one.
That would be horrible.
And then peeps says, but then my head began to harm a night of vomit.
And if ever I was foxt, it was now because I fell asleep and slept till morning.
Only when I waked, I fell, I found myself wet with my spewing.
Thus did the day end with joy everywhere.
It's interesting because peeps was very sympathetic to the Commonwealth, wasn't he?
So he's kind of jumped ship.
Peeps is a bit of a trimmer though, isn't he?
I mean, that's one of the nice things about peeps.
Right.
And so talking of trimming, Charles II is followed by his brother James II, who is Catholic.
Yes.
He has two coronations.
It's a secret coronation.
Private one.
Yeah.
The Catholic one.
Then he has the one in Westminster Abbey.
Yes.
And his reign goes horribly wrong and he gets replaced by his daughter and her husband,
William and Mary.
That's right.
I will say one thing about James II's coronation though, Tom.
We have the most amazing description of it by a girl called Francis Sanford, whose book
I think is in the British Library.
And he has that list that's been circulating on Twitter in the last week or so with all
the everything that people at.
Yes.
So there's hundreds and hundreds of dishes, crayfish, fricassees, ragus.
Ragus.
Yeah.
Well, you can tell he's a rotter.
Exactly.
I'm going to end up going to France.
Frenchified.
Pure absolutism.
Absolutely.
So if you've listened to our podcast on the Rosebeef of Old England, you will know that
the Rest is History podcast is not a friend of the ragu or the fricassee.
Well, no, I am.

Well, Tom is because of his Frenchified Holland house, Wiggish Ways.

Yes.

But you, with your russet coat.

Yeah.

Precisely.

I'm very much Team 1657.

Team K-pop.

Right.

So yeah, James has kicked out and now his daughter, Mary, is going to be crowned along with William III.

And so this is what you opened with the episode.

A broadside ballad, The Crowning of William and Brave Queen Mary.

This is an unusual one because they are joint monarchs which England has never had.

Right.

So the question of whether it's 40 or 38 monarchs that have been crowned in Westminster Abbey depends on whether you include Harold Godwinson.

Which you'd surely do.

Well, there's no hard evidence though.

That's never stopped us in the past, Tom.

That's not us.

I'm saying the canonical list.

Okay.

The list to get on the ruler.

You just bundle William and Mary in as one, whether they're crowned separately.

And I think they are crowned separately.

Yeah, because they have separate crowns.

Yeah.

There's a great discussion about whether or not she will have Mary of Modernist.

Because a whole new set of regalia had to be made for Charles II because it was all smashed up in the interregnum in the Cromwell years.

So is Mary II going to have Charles II's wife's crown or is the consort's crown not really good enough?

And actually, at first, people say consort's crown is not good enough, but they basically run out of time and money.

Part, because it's been the Glorious Revolution, there's a real rush to have the coronation to establish their legitimacy.

So they say, listen, stop fuffing around with the crown, just get on and crown them.

So she does have a basically a bit of a sort of...

And knock me down.

A bit of a pound shop crown.

Yeah.

Yeah.

It's very sad.

And this is the first one at which you get the coronation oath that is the Glorious

Revolution, revolutionary settlement, coronation oath that basically Charles III will be inheriting this weekend.

That they have to defend the Protestant Reformed religion established by law.

Exactly.

So that's still part of the deal.

So that broadside ballad that I read out at the beginning, I mean, that spirit is enshrined in law to this day, kicking out, opry, all that sort of stuff.

And of course, when William and Mary get succeeded by Anne, Mary's sister, and then she dies without issue because she's just been having rabbits, as people will remember who's seen.

What's that film called?

Oh, The Favourite.

The Favourite.

Anne, poor old Anne.

I mean, Anne is...

I know, poor old Anne.

Anne is 37 when she's crowned, 1702.

She couldn't walk there, could she?

She was...

She's so large.

So portly.

She has to be...

Carried in a litter.

She has to be carried into the coronation.

She's wearing a wig and false curls, maybe a Mrs. Dukehaler.

We know from her account books, a petticoat that cost 30 shillings made by Mrs. Banks.

And everyone says she looks splendid, lots of jewels, lots of gold, all this sort of stuff, a special crown, flaming with diamonds, apparently.

Great.

The thing about Anne, I mean, some people like to think of Anne as a very important political player, wigs and tauries.

I know you like Anne because of the King's Evil.

Yes.

So that becomes a marker of the sacral status of a monarch, is that they can cure scruffier.

They have supernatural powers.

They touch you.

Yes.

And then...

Which is a result of being anointed.

Right.

So they're still, for a defender of the Protestant reform religion established by law, the idea that you get anointed and then go around and cure in people of scruffier is, it's kind of doesn't entirely gel with that.

And one of the people that she's meant to have cured is the young, the future Dr. Johnson.

When he was two, I think.

So you would be given a coin called a touch piece, a special souvenir, better than a piece of carpet.

Also better than a medal.

And he wore it around his neck for the rest of his life.

He was a very, very devout Tory Church of England man.

Exactly.

He was.

So because I knew you're interested in this, I thought this would never sustain an entire podcast, the King's Evil.

So I'll find a fact to surprise Tom with.

Okay.

Great.

Who do you think touched more people than any other for the King's Evil?

Charles II.

Oh, have you been doing your own research?

No, I know that.

Do you know how many people he touched for the King's Evil?

How many did you touch?

92,000.

92,000?

Okay.

Not all at once.

Wow.

Were they all very pretty?

That's right.

And women.

Exactly.

Exactly.

Don't hear my darling.

Another 20-year-old actress with the King's Evil?

Surely not.

You all got scruffy, though.

Yeah.

No, incredible.

So it had not been a thing, but the stewards really went all in on it, because it had only actually been quite a niche activity until the stewards.

And then Charles II, I suppose you can obviously understand why he's been restored.

He's a bit insecure.

Well, it's like we've been talking throughout this episode, that it's the usurpers and the people who worry that the foundations of their regime aren't secure, who have to go all in with the sacral stuff.

Exactly.

So, we've come to the end of the stewards.

Tom, of all the coronations we've done so far, which would you most like to have been

present at?

That's a very, very good question.

Apparently Richard II was brilliant.

Really?

He wore slippers that supposedly had been owned by Edward the Confessor, and there was a kind of general aura of sophistication and class.

So maybe that one.

What about you?

I think it's hard to beat the one we started with.

The Edwi.

The revolt and pigsty behaviour.

Goes off and has a threesome.

Yeah, but you wouldn't get to see the threesome unless you went in with St. Dunstan.

I can't imagine you hanging out with St. Dunstan.

I didn't really put up with you for long, don't I?

Really?

I mean, no offence.

Oh, great.

Thank you for that.

Maybe I'll go with, I don't know, I'd go in the Oliver Cromwell one just so I could shout hazaar and throw my cap in the air and...

Rather the Lord Protector.

Yeah, wear my kind of russet coat of a yeoman.

All that stuff.

Yeah, but then I'd turn my coat, obviously, in time to go drinking with peeps.

Just drink, drink for King's health.

Wake up in the morning.

Exactly.

Right.

So we will be back next time with some absolutely tremendous coronations.

So the Georges, they're excellent coronations generally.

There's some very ludicrous behaviour at those, there's massive overspending, there's lots of things going wrong and things being dropped.

And then we'll go right up to the coronation of our DLA Queen in 1953 and we'll end with some suitable sentiments about the new Carolian age.

I think, will we, Tom?

Looking forward to that?

I think so, yes.

Why not?

Why not?

All right, so we shall see you next time.

Bye-bye.

Bye-bye.

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