

MORE'S FIRST WIFE...  
JANE? OR JOAN?

MRS. JOANNA BARKER, 22 CLARENDON RD, LONDON W11 3AB

My dear Joanna,  
Long ago, when your husband, as President of the *Amici Thomae Mori*, was preparing to celebrate the golden jubilee of More's canonisation, I told you that some day I would do for Jane Colt what he had done for Jane Shore, namely establish that she was never called *Jane* at all. On 22 July 1984, you wrote to me:

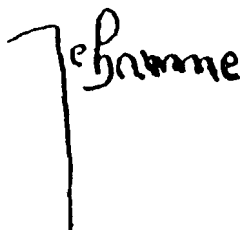
For many years I have had a 'holy' picture of St. Joan with 'St. Joanna of Arc' written under it, and as she is so called, have always thought of her as a special patron. So I am not surprised by your thesis that More's wife might have been called 'Joanna', and wonder when the name was first common in England. Though of course 'Joanna' is mentioned in the Gospel as we heard this morning in St. Luke, Chapter 8 Verse 3 as the wife of Herod's steward Chusa, so it must have been known as a name for a long time.

I leave out the rest of your letter, and yet reproduce the closing paragraph in your own hand to authenticate the document.

Please give my love to Mary  
& Marie Claude & we are so  
sorry to miss you.  
Love from Joanna.

Mary O'Neill, whom you greet, was then the scholar in residence at Moreanum. She fully shared my qualms about continuing to use Jane for Mrs. More. In a long article published in *Zealandia* of 10 February 1985, she refers to "Thomas More's first wife, Joanna". Her context is the tomb in Chelsea Old Church, with its Latin epitaph, which of course calls her *Joanna*. She arrived in Angers within a month of the completion of the *Index* for twenty volumes of *Moreana* (April 1984). There Mary and David Bradshaw humour the readers through an entry "COLT Jane", referring them to the MORE FAMILY column, where "JOANNA (Jane or Joan), née Colt" is immediately followed by "JOAN, More's sister". If they did not add "JOAN, More's paternal great-grandmother", it is because *Moreana* had never featured that good lady, to whom I shall return. Several readers responded with amazement to the triple form of a Christian name which they had been brought up to read and hear as *Jane*.

Your 'Joanna of Arc' must represent a great rarity. It reflects the Latin of her indictment, the Latin again of her rehabilitation process, and the Latin of her promotion into the calendar. During the half century between her canonization (1920) and the liturgical reform (1970), she was celebrated in the language of the Church. *Joanna, Virgo Aurelianensis*, in the antiphon for the first Vespers of her feast, would be englished instinctively as "Joan, the Maid of Orleans".<sup>1</sup> *Joan* is her name on Shakespeare's stage, which reflects popular usage. Yet, in *The Pastyme of Pleasure* (London, 1529), John Rastell writes of "a mayden called Jane".<sup>2</sup> Did More's brother-in-law wish to remain close to his Burgundian source? *Jane* in early Tudor English sounded very much like the French *Jeanne*. The Maid herself was illiterate, and learned to write in order to sign her name at the end of the letters she dictated to the clerks in her retinue. She must have spelt it as instructed by them, and they obeyed their ears, since there was no orthographic precedent for the name. Her first extant signature, reproduced here, is that of a halting beginner.<sup>3</sup>



Jehanne

The *h* looks like a sign of separation between two syllables, as it does in the *Johane* of contemporary English documents. The letter continued to be written after it had ceased to represent a sound, a tradition still reflected in the spelling of *John*<sup>4</sup>. Notice that Joan's flag carries an *h* even in the name of *JHESU*, no doubt deriving from the acronym *IHS* (for *Iesus Hominum Salvator*), which was beginning to spread – it became ubiquitous after the Jesuits made it the monogram of their Society<sup>5</sup>.

#### JANE comes into its own

Two influences worked in favor of *Jane* and prepared its modern emergence. One comes from across the Channel, namely France and the Mediterranean: thus Joanna, daughter of Henry II and Eleanor of Aquitaine, who became Queen of Sicily in 1177, is entered as *Jone* or *Jane* in the *Dictionary of National Biography*. The other is France's traditional ally, Scotland. "The guid Scots tongue", which was the official language of Britain's northern kingdom, is partial to the so-called front (or palatal) vowel: it says *mair* for 'more', *braid* for 'broad', *laird* for 'lord', *laith* for 'loath', *ain* for 'own', etc. When More wishes to record this dialectal peculiarity, he represents it with the vowel *e*: thus *herne* for *home* in Friar Donald's sermons (*CW6*, p. 100), *ene la alene* for "one, lo, alone" on the lips of the eleven Northern jurymen arguing with the lone dissenter (*Rogers*, p. 523).

In such a phonetic context, it is no wonder that Joan Beaufort, the English bride of James I, should often be called Queen Jane of Scotland<sup>6</sup>. As "Jane or Johanna", she is the first of only three *Janes* in the *Dictionary of National Biography*, against nine *Joans*. The other two are the great harbingers of the shift which made *Jane* fashionable in mid-Tudor society. Jane Seymour, lady-in-waiting to Catherine of Aragon, then to Anne Boleyn, won the heart of the nation as well as that of Henry VIII: a natural death ended her sixteen months' queenship, ten days after she was delivered (13 Oct. 1537) of the future Edward VI. The same year saw the birth of Jane Grey, who in 1553 succeeded the boy king as Queen Jane for nine days, until the crown settled on Mary's head. A puppet in the hands of her ambitious father, Jane was both learned and beautiful: her execution more than washed away any odium that might have tainted her name on account of the attempted usurpation.

Two Janes can be added from ranks immediately below royalty. Jane Parker became Lady Rochford by marrying George Boleyn. She

gave to Cromwell much of the evidence he needed against Queen Anne Boleyn and her own husband. Eventually she, like them, was beheaded in the Tower, along with Queen Catherine Howard (13 Feb. 1542). In the next generation Jane Howard (1537-93), daughter of the Earl of Surrey, came near to losing her head after an abortive rebellion against Elizabeth.

The delicate and refined connotation of *Jane* asserted itself in literature even before Jane Seymour became queen, through John Skelton's delightful *Philip Sparrow*. The sweet owner of this pet – in days when sparrows were a domestic luxury – was Jane Scrope, born in a Norfolk manor, and schooled with other noble damsels by the 'Black Dames', that is the Benedictine nuns, of Carrow. The highly popular poem engendered more appeal for the name than did the real person whose plight inspired the poet.

In aristocratic families, *Jane* grew to be at least the equal of *Joan*, as can be seen in Kathy Lynn Emerson's *Wives and Daughters: The Women of Sixteenth Century England* (Troy, N.Y., 1984). Another index of their parity by the last decades of the century is the repertory *Recusants in the Exchequer Pipe Rolls 1581-1592*, ed. Hugh Bowler, OSB (London 1986). Both forms yielded an assortment of diminutives: *Janet*, *Jenetta*, *Jonetta*, *Jonnetta*, *Jennett*.<sup>7</sup>

Though *Jane* comes undoubtedly from *Joanna*, the English re-Latinized it into *Jana*: thus Jane Seymour, who in official records is *Joanna Semeria*, has become *Jana* in her epitaph at St George's Chapel, Windsor: "Phoenix Jana jacet"<sup>8</sup>. A manuscript, described by T.E. Bridgett<sup>9</sup>, has this entry in the Colt genealogy: "Jana, nupta Thomae Moore militi" (the bride's mother, too, is given as Jane).

Lady Jane Dormer (1538-1612) deserves our attention as having had two editions of More's works dedicated to her: in 1572 an anthology of his spiritual writings, and in 1573 *A Dialogue of Comfort*, both published by John Fowler at Antwerp. A sketch of her life appears in the appendix to *CW12*, pp. 483f. As gentlewoman of the Privy Chamber to Mary Tudor, she made the acquaintance of Don Gomez, Count of Feria, a trusted counsellor of King Philip II. She married him in December 1558. Self-exiled in Malines under Elizabeth, she gave birth (Sept. 1559) to a Pedro who was to become viceroy of Sicily. Her husband being stationed in Spain, where he was now Duke of Feria, she had to settle there. The generous support the duchess gave to Catholic recusants is praised in Fowler's dedicatory letters.

Need one suspect a lingering of mock-glamour and catch a tone

of parody in Dekker's *Shoemaker's Holiday* (1599), where Jane is the wife of Ralph the shoemaker? Jane actually possesses multiple distinction. "The gentle craft" of cordwainers, to which her husband belongs, was proud of its patrons, Crispin and Crispian, a king's sons. When Ralph leaves London for war-service, his master Simon Eyre couches his sympathy for Jane in revealing terms: "This fine hand, this white hand, these pretty fingers must spin, must card, must work" (Act I, end of scene 1). But precisely Jane will dodge coarse work. The reason why she did not stay with the shoemakers was, in the view of Margery her mistress, that she, "because she was married, grew more stately than became her" (III, 4): was it not rather inborn delicacy? As Jane sits at her sewing during Ralph's long absence, a wealthy citizen, Master Hammon, stands "in frosty evenings" outside the window "only to eye" the lovely seamstress: "How prettily she works, oh pretty hand!" (IV, 1). She can read, too, and she speaks in verse, as Margery does not. Not a whiff of this elegant aroma survives, I suppose, in the name of Agatha Christie's "Miss Jane Marple".

#### More's epitaph for his wife

More lost his first wife in the summer of 1511 and remarried almost at once. He did not wait until her body was removed to Chelsea Old Church (in the 1520s) before penning her epitaph, which appeared among his *Epigrammata* (Basel, 1518). Erasmus published it again, along with More's auto-epitaph, in *De praeparatione ad mortem* (Basel, 1534). There, the name is spelt *Ioanna*, as also in More's *English Works* of 1557 – see the apparatus of *CW3/II* (p. 270). In this Yale edition of More's *Latin Poems* (1984), an *h* features in the title, *Epitaphium in sepulcro Iohannaë*, as well as in the first line:

Chara Thomae iacet hic Iohanna uxorcula Mori.

Clarence Miller, like his predecessor and co-editor Leicester Bradner, retains the plebiscited *Jane*:

Here lies Jane, the beloved wife of Thomas More.

Since the epitaph is the only document known to us in which More names his wife, its earliest translation constitutes the weightiest piece in our dossier. It comes, in the 1557 *English Works* (p. 1421), immediately after the Latin text (remember that Tudor spelling makes no distinction between I and J, any more than between u and v):

**Here lieth Ione the welbeloued wife of me Thomas More.**

The translator may have been More's granddaughter Mistress Basset, née Mary Roper, whose version of *De Tristitia Christi* is printed in the same folio, or else William Rastell, editor of the *Works*, himself the nephew of Joanna Colt. Is it likely that More's family and circle, still including people who had lived under his roof, could be wrong about the Christian name of his wife?

Ro:Ba:, the first biographer of More to name his first wife, would seem, from the first syllable of his surname, to descend from Mary Basset. He writes: "Sir Thomas was twice married, as before I said: first to Ioan Colte, a yong maide". This comes on p. 130 of the critical edition of Ro:Ba:'s *Life of Sir Thomas More* by E.V. Hitchcock and P.H. Hallett, with additional notes by A.W. Reed (E.E.T.S., 1950). The margin, whether added by one of the successive editors (both dead before publication) or by some subeditor, reads: "More's first wife, Jane Colt". This modern gloss contradicts the text, with nothing in the apparatus or in the commentary to justify the substitution of *Jane* for *Joan*. Ro:Ba: is less than a century away from the death of Joanna Colt, and not a single piece of evidence in the interval suggests she was ever called *Jane*.

Cresacre More (1573-1649) is the first biographer, I think, to use *Jane* for the wife of his great-grandfather. The dates of his existence and his Northern connections, plus his ties with the Continent--especially Cambrai where his two daughters were nuns--and the name of his own sister Jane, can together account for the shift. His *Life and Death of Thomas More* was published in 1626 and 1642. In the 1726 edition, *Jane* occurs p. 30. The 1826 edition includes an Appendix (No. VI) on "Jane, the daughter of John Cowlt of Cowlt-Hall in Essex".

Henceforth *Jane* will retain the lead, though by no means undisputed until the beginning of the 19th century. Let the epitaph serve as an index to the fashion. In *An Historical and Topographical Description of Chelsea and Its Environs* (1810; 2nd edition, 1829), Thomas Faulkner (1777-1855) provides a translation, presumably his own, which Majie P. Sullivan reproduces in *Moreana Material I* (p. 346), as does Ada B. Teetgen in *The Footsteps of Sir Thomas More* (London, 1930, p. 103). Its retaining both *Joanna* and *Joan* deserves a prize for fidelity:

By Joan I had three daughters and one son  
... Such is Alicia, such Joanna was.

Meanwhile, though, Archdeacon Francis Wrangham (1769-1842) had contributed to Arthur Cayley's *Memoirs of Sir Thomas More* (London, 1808) a version which became an immediate hit. It begins:

**Within this tomb Jane, wife of More, reclines.**

I borrow it from the second edition (London, 1878) of Philomorus, i.e. J.H. Marsden, *Notes on the Latin Poems of Sir Thomas More*. The first edition of this book appeared in 1842. H.P. Dodd also quoted Wrangham in *The Epigrammatists* (London, 1870). In 1839, Joseph Walter, an Englishman writing at Philadelphia, also toes the Cresacre line:

Jane, More's dear wife, within this tomb reclines.

In *The Catholic Lawyer* of 1956, Richard O'Sullivan follows suit:

Here lies my Jane, dear wife of Thomas More.

In *The Field Is Won* (1968), E.E. Reynolds begins his prose translation with "Here lies Jane the dear little wife of Thomas More".

In 1976, *Moreana* published three versions of the epitaph, all agreeing on *Jane* though diverse in all other respects. In No. 50 (p. 36), Joe Berrigan, from Georgia University, begins:

Dear Jane, the little wife of Thomas More.

and (p. 38) Martin Haley from Australia:

Beloved Jane, my wife, lies here.

In No. 52 (p. 94), Victor Lo Pinto offers:

Thomas More's beloved wee wife Jane...

#### **An influential precedent: Jane Shore**

As you see, Joanna, the 'might' in the sentence where you state that "More's wife might have been called Joanna" can be safely struck off. The Latin *Joanna* (with or without *h*) is a certainty carved in the marble of her funeral slab and printed in the fat ink of Froben on more than one occasion. As Richard J. Schoeck writes, "to a lawyer of the Tudor period what would have mattered above all was the Latin name, for c. 1500 this was the official and legal form, and any vernacular variations were just that".<sup>10</sup>

In my mind, *Joan* too is a quasi-certainty, since it remains unchallenged until well into the 17th century, and does not yield the whole ground to its rival *Jane* until the 20th century. To show that the match was never canvassed with any unfair, let alone wanton, deliberation, requires some context, and a precious thread is provided by Jane Shore. That Edward IV's darling concubine, "Shore's wife", came by universal suffrage to be called *Jane Shore* constitutes a precedent rather than a parallel to the shift which later affected the name of More's wife. As a royal mistress and as a victim of Richard III, Mrs. Shore loomed much larger in literature than More's short-lived *uxorcula* ever could. She was firmly established as a mythical heroine by the end of the sixteenth cen-

tury, hence the popularity of a ballad such as *The wofull lamentation of mistris Jane Shore* (London, 1603). Her appeal crossed the Channel: Jacques Gury (*Moreana* 79-80, p. 123 f.) shows Harriett Smithson winning such applause on the Paris stage of 1827 in the role of Jane that she also won the heart of a young musician and thus became Mme Hector Berlioz. "Jane Shore" is what you expect in *A Child's History of England* by Charles Dickens, but you find it also in volume I of *The English Works of Sir Thomas More* (London, 1931): here three academics, A.W. Reed, R.W. Chambers and W.A.G. Doyle-Davidson, constitute a *funiculus triplex* in endorsing the *Jane* tradition.

The dictate of consensus carried *Jane* into the most examined books. It needed Nicolas Barker's article in *Etoniana* of 1972 before Richard Sylvester knew the maiden name to be Elizabeth Lambert. He duly acknowledges the information in the third printing of More's *History of Richard III*, and in its Selected Works edition (1976); yet even here, he continues to call her *Jane*. Daniel Kinney uses inverted commas in *Moreana* 86 (1985) to make it clear that he is making allowance for common parlance. The index to his critical edition of *Historia Richardi Tertii* (CW15, 1986) repeats these cautious quotation marks for "Jane" and adds in parenthesis "*née* Elizabeth Lambert". I have for many years pleaded with *Moreana* authors for accuracy, asking them to choose between "Shore's wife" or "Mistress Shore" or to use both, as do More and Shakespeare in their respective treatments of *Richard III*.

Tell your husband, Joanna, that his Shorean note proved an Ariadne's thread in my determination to negotiate the maze of *Joan vs Jane*. The 1557 *Ione* could be used as a hatchet to cut one's way out through the hedges of the labyrinth, but walking step after step along the convoluted by-ways is not without its rewards, as I trust you will agree. The delay in redeeming my 1984 pledge to you was partly due to some fear lest our more serious readers may reckon this onomastic game below the dignity of an old priest. Yet didn't *Saint Thomas More* have fun with names and play around Luther/*Luderus*, Tom Truth, John Goose the gagger, Simple Simon, and Kittie's keys, to use but samples?<sup>11</sup> His very last work, composed in the shadow of death, expatiates on the significance of Olivet, Cedron, Gethsemani, Simon, Cephas, Malchus.

While granting that biblical names are fraught with a higher mystery, I chose the title "*Arcanes d'un nom*" for a disquisition about More/Moor/Môros/sophomore/oxymoron etc. which appeared in *Moreana* Nos. 2, 3 and 5, complete with postscripts garnering welcome additions from our public. Erasmus had led the way by making much

of *Morus*; the fabric I wove around his references and allusions drew also on Pliny, Budé, Vivès, Lope de Vega and a score of other classics. The result, to my surprise, was singled out for inclusion in the *Essential Articles for the Study of Thomas More* (1977) on the ground that it was a humanist call *ad fontes* and a pleasant-cum-useful exercise in comparative philology. The new title, *A Name for All Seasons*, witnesses to the vogue of Bolt's catchphrase, and to how susceptible scholars are to "modern instances" even when dealing with ancient lore. Twelve years of accretions also made it the longest item in the volume--30 pages with 102 end-notes. At the same unhurried pace, yet held in some check by a shorter tether, I hope to present *Joan* as likewise a name for all the seasons of England's history, in contrast to the later phenomenon called *Jane*.

#### Modern scholars carried away

The English editors who glossed Ro:Ba's *Joan* with their own *Jane* were typical rather than exceptional. A very serious American historian, Margaret Hastings, emulated them in her otherwise excellent article on "The Ancestry of Sir Thomas More", first published in *The Guildhall Miscellany* (July 1961) and reprinted in *Essential Articles* (p. 92-103). The last will of Sir John More, written "with his own hand" on 26 Febr. 1527, is there transcribed with exemplary fidelity. The ailing patriarch mentions "Johane...my grauntmother" (p. 101), "Johane my daughter" and "my daughter Johane" (p. 102). Whatever the extent to which the *h* was audible, the vowels lead quite clearly to *Joan*. Now, Professor Hastings, in her introduction to the document, refers to the grandmother as *Johanna* (p. 96-97), which is hardly objectionable, but to the daughter (that is, More's sister) as *Jane*, which would be perverse were it not that the learned editrix is blown off her feet by the mighty wind of fashion.

Thomas Edward Bridgett, in his ground-breaking *Life and Writings of Blessed Thomas More* (London 1891, 2nd ed. 1892), writes: "The young lady's Christian name was Joan or Jane" (p. 54). This wording was unchanged in the 1935 reprinting of the book. But twenty years later, E.E. Reynolds, asked by the publishers to update and correct Bridgett's now standard biography, struck off the syllables "Joan or": thus *Jane*, from its position as a second alternative, became sole occupant of the ground. R.W. Chambers (1935) had already bowed to the modern tradition. Surprisingly, however, though he deals at some length with More's

first marriage (pp. 94-96), he manages to withhold the bride's name until he reaches her death (p. 108).

No need to make a full survey of later lives. Ruth Norrington's *In the Shadow of a Saint: Lady Alice More* (1983), so rich in details about the Colt family, does not record a single Joan: More's little wife, his sister Mrs. Stafferton and his mother-in-law Mrs. John Colt, all are Janes.

In Majie Padberg Sullivan's Index to her pluri-volume *Moreana Material* (Los Angeles, 1971), the More family includes no Joan. We have Jane Colt More; Jane Joye More (possible mother of old John); Jane Leicester More, grandmother of old John; Jane More Staverton, and Jane More, sister of Cresacre. The one exception is More's niece, "Elizabeth or Joan Rastell".

Fiction lends a magic hand to history. *The Love Letters of Phyllis McGinley* (New York, 1954) consolidate Jane's position with a charming rhyme. One stanza of poem No. 8, *Paterfamilias* (reproduced in *Moreana* 79, p. 43), ends with this memorable couplet:

For he loved these bounties with might and main:  
God and his house and his little wife Jane.

### The Witness of Folklore



This rather crude woodcut from a book of More's day<sup>12</sup> illustrates the spelling *Ione*, which we have encountered in the 1557 version of Joanna Colt's epitaph. It is one of many witnesses to the popularity of the names *Tom* and *Joan*. Another is the nursery rhyme where the choice of "Little Jumping Joan" as the female counterpart to "Little Johnny" (or "Little Shawn") is dictated by usage and sealed by rhyme:

When nobody's with me,  
I'm always alone.

"Tom the tailor" can help us to catch the ring of More's voice wooing his teenage country bride, then addressing his young city wife. Though Thomas and Joanna belonged to the gentry, they were commoners, and would not ape the accents of the aristocracy. Other Londoners

may on occasion have used the trendier *Jane* for a neighbor who was no longer "a country Joan". Now that she could speak Latin and play music, Joanna was certainly not "any Joan", if I may allude to the Bastard's quip in Shakespeare's *King John* (I,i.184): here Philip Faulconbridge, just dubbed "Sir Richard, and Plantagenet" by the king, and acknowledged as grandson by Elinor, relishes his lordly prerogative of bestowing titles:

Now can I make any Joan a lady.<sup>13</sup>

A much better-known instance of 'degree' connotation in Christian names graces the final song of *Love's Labour Lost*:

When icicles hang by the wall,  
And Dick the shepherd blows his nail,  
And Tom bears logs into the hall, ...  
While greasy Joan doth keel the pot.

### Joan's impressive credentials

In the English of More's youth, no bifurcation had driven *Joanna* to go one of two diverging roads. In Caxton's translation of *The Knight of the Tower* (written in 1372 by the Angevin Chevalier de la Tour-Landry), chapter cxj is intitled "Of the quene Iohane of Fraunce", and begins: "The good quene Iane of Fraunce" (EETS, 1971 edition, p. 148). An 1868 edition of the work (EETS, O.S. 33, p. 153) reads *Iohanne* for *Iohane*. Eventually *Joan* and *Jane* were felt to be different enough to designate two sisters within a single household.

John More entered the births of his children, in his own hand, on a Latin manuscript. The eldest child, born *in vigilia sancti gregorii pape*, i.e. 11 March 1475, was *Johanna More, filia Johannis More Gent*. Her Latin name was englished as *Johane* in Sir John's last will, quoted above. E.E. Reynolds rightly makes it *Joan* (in *The Field Is Won*, p. 20). More's youngest sister, Elizabeth, born on 22 September 1482, became Mrs. John Rastell. Their daughter (b. 1504) was christened Joan (like her auntie More) because her godmother was Joan Symonds (d. 1507), who had acted *loco parentis* to young John Rastell. Joan Rastell married John Heywood the playwright, and their daughter again was named Joan.<sup>14</sup> A grandchild of More's by his daughter Cecily was Joan Heron.

In the currency of its Christian names--John, Thomas, Alice, Margaret, Elizabeth, Cecily--the More family was a prism of English society. So, too, with *Joan*. The concubine of the future Cardinal Wolsey was a Joan Larke<sup>15</sup>. Joan Bocher (alias Butcher), "a great dispenser of

Tyndale's New Testament'' (to quote a witness at her trial), is remembered as Joan of Kent: her burning at the stake, by order of Mylord Chancellor Richard Rich<sup>16</sup>, took place on 2 May 1550. The best-known Bridgettine nun at Syon in the days when More would visit the monastery was Joan Sewell. The wife of Sir Anthony Denny, the Tudor courtier portrayed by Holbein, was *née* Joan Champernon. Lancelot Andrewes was born in 1555 to a London couple named Thomas and Joan. The family tree of More's colleague, Bishop John Veysey, shows no Jane, but three Joans, including his own mother.<sup>17</sup>

The Calendar of Saints illustrates the hegemony of *Joan*, tempered by some subtlety of usage. A French *Jeanne* normally yields an English *Joan*: Joan of Arc (d. 1431); Louis XI's daughter, Joan of France (d. 1505); Montaigne's niece, Joan de Lestonnac (d. 1640); a mother foundress, Joan Antida Thouret (d. 1826). Why, then, St Jane-Frances de Chantal (d. 1641)? By the time Jeanne-Françoise entered English literature, chiefly through her correspondence with Francis de Sales, *Jane* had gained enough currency to match *Joan*, and *Jane* must have sounded more appropriate for a saint who was also the widow of a baron. *The New Catholic Encyclopaedia* has no *Jane* in its survey of holy women, which, in addition to the above, includes Joan of Aza (St. Dominic's mother), and four beatified Joans--of Orvieto, of Portugal, of Santa Lucia, and of Signa. One exception is a tertiary who died at Tours on 28 March 1414 (an elder contemporary of Joan of Arc) and is entered as Jeanne-Marie de Maillé.

You write, Joanna, that you have thought of St. Joan "as a special patron": her canonization in 1920 put her in that role. Till then, the only *Sancta Ioanna* was Chantal, canonized in 1767. Before this date, no Joan was eligible as patron. "Jehanne de France", who died around the year when Joan Colt became Mrs. More, did not enter the calendar of saints until 1950. Her own patron, then, as that of every Jeannette, Joan, Juana and Giovanna in Christendom, was St. John, as St Joseph is still the patron of Josephines, and St. Thomas of Thomasines.

Although *The Contemporaries of Erasmus* feature Queen Juana la loca of Castile (sister of Catherine of Aragon) as *Joanna*, most historians call her *Joan the Mad*, as they use *Joan* also for the popess of medieval legend and Protestant satire. Writing from Angers, the birthplace of Cardinal Henry Beaufort<sup>18</sup>, I would like to show him surrounded with Joans: the daughter of his youth, born out of wedlock; a niece, who was the Muse of *The Kingis Quair*, then the queen of its author, James I (1425); Joan the Pucelle, burnt at Rouen (1431) during Beaufort's term

as governor of England on behalf of the child Henry VI<sup>19</sup>: there is both reparation and reconciliation in that her statue overlooks his tomb in Winchester Cathedral. Meanwhile Joan of Navarre, widow of Duke John IV of Brittany, had become the second wife of Henry IV, their wedding being celebrated by Bishop Beaufort.

Philip Hallett, whom we have chided for an unjustified *Jane* in the edition of Ro:Ba., had given evidence of his partiality to *Jane* as early as 1928, in his translation of Thomas Stapleton's *Mori Vita*. Quoting the reference to "Ioone Aleyn" in More's last letter (*English Works*, p. 1457), Stapleton says *Joannae Alanae* (1689 ed., p. 67). Though he had his hand on More's original, Hallett interpreted this as "Jane Aleyn"<sup>20</sup>. Revising Hallett toward a second edition<sup>21</sup> E.E. Reynolds retained *Jane*, repeated it in a footnote, even though in the meanwhile *The Correspondence of Sir Thomas More* by E.F. Rogers had appeared, adding *Ione* (p. 564) to the *Ioone* of the 1557 *English Works*.

### Consulting the New Testament

You mentioned Luke, Joanna, just after encountering your name in his gospel as read for the feast of St Mary Magdalen. Since English versions of Scripture have both reflected and influenced usage more than any other book, let us take a glance at early renderings of *Ioanna*. In the New Testament, this name designates a woman at Luke 8:3 and 24:10, a man (one of Christ's ancestors) at Luke 3:27. In Wyclif the woman is *Ione* and *Ioone*; in the Rheims translation she is *Ioan*. The Geneva Bible shifts from *Iohane* (8:3) to *Ioanna* (24:10), which is found also in Tyndale, Cranmer and the King James. Modern Bibles would be hard put to choose between *Joan* and *Jane*: anyway they feel no need to get away from the original Greek, which is *Iōanna*. For the man at Luke 3:27, early translators have *Joanna* (Cranmer, Geneva, King James) or *Johanna* (Wyclif, Tyndale, Rheims), while today's versions avoid a form which has developed feminine overtones; they tend to use the masculine-sounding Hebrew *Joanan*.

The wavering between *Ioanna* and *Iohanna* is attested in humanist Latin as well. In More's epitaph for his wife, the spellings vary from edition to edition: Yale uses the form *Iohanna* in the text, but lists several authorities for *Ioanna* in the apparatus (*CW3/II*, p. 270). The same variation occurs in the masculine *Ioannes/Iohannes*. The Hebrew original had an *h* (*Iohanán*), which the Vulgate retained for the ten or more persons of that name in the Old Testament. For the Johns of the Gos-

pels, however, the Greek original uses a Hellenized *Iôannes*, which has dropped the aspiration. It is a strange phenomenon that a non-biblical *h* has obtained in several vernaculars of Christendom: *Jehan* and *Jehanne* in early French, *Johan*, *Johane*, *Jhan* and *John* in English. In German and Dutch the *h* in *Johannes* and *Johanna* does denote a sound, strong enough to have produced *Hans*, *Hanna* and many derivatives beginning with that consonant. Here, as in all European languages, the stress on the second syllable of *Johannes* gave prominence to *a*. Conversely, and characteristically, English stressed the first syllable, hence the vowel in *John* and in *Jone*, which remained a long *o* even when the spelling changed to *Joan*. As for *Jane*, its *a* may owe something to the Northern pattern of *a* corresponding to Southern *o* (to the parallel pairs I listed above, add no/na, ghost/ghaist, whole/hale, comb/kaim, Tom/Tam, more/mair, etc.). It owes even more, I believe, to the French *Jeanne*. But no New Testament in the Celtic provinces of Britain uses *Jane*: W.L. Lorimer's Scots New Testament reads *Joanna* for Chuza's wife, as do the Welsh versions on my shelf, while Breton wavers between *Joanna* and *Janed*.

The rivalry between *Jane* and *Joan* has no doubt prompted translators to reach beyond them both to their common ancestor, *Joanna*. In French, *Jeanne*, having no competitor, has always designated Chuza's wife, as it still does in every one of the ten modern versions I have consulted--one reason, I would guess, why *Joanna* has not become current in France as a girl's name.

### Foreign influence

I have already referred to France as the greater neighbor, whose impact on the British Isles came through various channels: the Norman conquest, among its results, made *William* the favorite name in aristocratic circles for over a century, until *John* re-asserted its own dominance and, with the murder of Becket, *Thomas* became second only to *John*.

Even the Italy of your ancestors, *Joanna*, despite the distance, influenced the English language through place-names and baptismal names. Columbus' native Genoa, busiest of Italian harbors in Atlantic trade, stamped its name on Britain's vocabulary usually via the Latin *Janua* or the French *Gênes*. The jeans, which have acquired new importance in our lifetime, are made of a fustian first woven in Genoa, and featured in medieval spelling as *Geane*, *jeine*, *jeens*, and even *jeanet*. The *jane* was a coin minted at Genoa. The surname *Janaway* also comes from

Genoa, perhaps via the French *Génois*. Jacopo da Voragine, the Dominican compiler of the Golden Legend, became bishop of Genoa, hence Chaucer's Second Nun giving "Frater Jacobus Januensis in Legenda" as the source of her tale of St Cecilia.

As for the Italian equivalents of *Joan* and *John*, you know them to be *Giovanna* and *Giovanni*, with no fewer variants than in the other countries, prompted by amalgams or a concern for brevity. *Giovanni Battista* yields *Giovanbattista*, then *Giambattista*. *Giangelo* pushes verbal economy one step further. In Venice and Lombardy, *Gianni* was pronounced *Zanni* (as *Giorgio* was *Zorzi*); so when Italian comedy reached England, *Zanni*, the conjurer's assistant on the clowning scaffold, became *zany*--did you realize that *Joanna* and *zany* derive from the same august Hebrew vocable?

Though there were enough Lombards in London to create a xenophobic reaction, brought to the fore by the riots of Evil May-Day 1517, Flemish presence was more pervasive, and institutionalized through the official *Intercursus*. Given the busy trade with the Lower Countries, the Rhineland and the Hanseatic League, *Hans* hardly sounded foreign in England; it even yielded an assortment of surnames--Hanson, Hancock, Hankins--as it did in France with Hanot, Hanotaux, etc. While *Hans* was an aphetic reduction of *Jo-hannes*, another popular form was *Jan*, pronounced Yann, and the Dutch equivalent of *John Thomas* was *Jan Kees* (John son of Cornelis), which led to settlers in America being nicknamed *Yankees* during the period when the future New York was still New Amsterdam.

### Conclusion

"Lo, instead of a letter have you almost a book", More wrote in a letter against John Frith (*CW7*, p. 256), which had included philological minutiae, like the exact weight of "this word *must*" and "this word *it behoveth*" and "this Latin word *oportet*". Years earlier he had made the same apology to Ruthall: *epistola fere iam librum superat* (*CW3/1*, p. 6), and to Dorp (*CW15*, p. 122f.)<sup>22</sup>. When Batmanson expresses a concern for brevity, More chides him (*CW15*, p. 244): you are, he says, evading the issues. Some of these look rather trifling to us, but, where a great work like the Gospels and a great scholar like Erasmus were involved, More reckoned nothing too small for attention. "Words, words, words", young Hamlet might taunt, and indeed less than words: a mere vowel-sound pits *Jane* against *Joanna*'s elder daughter *Joan*.

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In this copy of a recent envelope, will you, Joanna, recognize the demoiselle from Alabama who held the fort in Moreanum 7 years ago? The French version of her name, *Hélène*, is correct, it renders your *Helen*, *Elaine*, *Eileen*, *Aileen*, *Ellin* and another dozen forms or spellings, much as *Jeanne* is alone to confront *Joanna*, *Joan*, *Jane* and *Jean*.

A similar ratio obtains for most current names. Ellen Jones, now Mrs. Mark Green, has a daughter called Mary--"my favorite name", comments a friend, herself mother to a Mary and grandma to a Marian. In this case, too, three forms, Marie, Marion and Mariette, do duty for the merry jingle of your English-cum-Irish counterpart, with Molly and Polly, Maura and Maureen, Marietta and Marilyn, etc. Now, all these variants are a modern crop, since *Mary* was hardly used as a girl's name in More's England. A certain awe reserved it for the Mother of God, just as in most countries it reserves *Jesus* for the Son of God. *Mary* was a mild oath of asseveration. "Mary, uncle", Vincent says at the start of many answers in More's *Dialogue of Comfort* (CW12, p. 184, 209, 238 et passim), sometimes enlarging it to "by saint Mary" (e.g. p. 255) or "by our Lady" (p. 215, 265 etc.), and his uncle Antony does the same.

More saw the dawning of *Mary* as a baptismal name. There had been a Marie de France among the writers of Arthurian lays, Marie d'Anjou as queen of Charles VII, Marie de Bourgogne as wife of the emperor Maximilian, and Mary Stuart would inherit the name of her French mother. In England, Henry VII's daughter Mary (1496-1533), the future queen of France, was the favorite sister of Henry VIII, who therefore wanted the name for his own daughter, the future Queen Mary Tudor (b. 1516): under the twin aegis of these beloved princesses, the name grew and multiplied, reaching the More circle with Margaret Roper's daughter Mary Basset.

What I wish to create or increase is a sobering awareness of history's tricks and fashion's whims. When we come across a Yorkshire descendant of More (a sister of Cresacre) by the name of Jane, her birthdate (1562) and her northern whereabouts would make it peevish to doubt that she *was* Jane. *Jane* was a fortiori a proper name for the noble Dormer scion, whose son, conceived in England, born in Belgium, brought up in Spain, died viceroy of Sicily (see p. 6 *supra*).

Have you noticed that in *Henry VI*, Pt. II (ii.i.4), Queen Margaret's hawk is named *Joan*? This goes even beyond our "greasy Joan" and the wife of Tom the tailor, because only the most familiar Christian names were extended to animals and things; *Tom* and *Jack* are record-beaters in that function, but *Joan* was also eligible because, in pre-Reformation England, "any Joan" really meant "any woman", and to this day *The Joneses* include any and every neighbour.

May one suggest that *Jones* owes its warmer undertones to its being a matronym? There are not many in the English language. *Allison* is another. Though *Alyson* is a variant of *Alys* in the case of Chaucer's Wife of Bath (a doublet similar to *Mary* and *Marion*), it can also designate the sons (and daughters) of Alice, as *Jones* designates Joan's offspring. Not until Massinger is *Jane of apes* recorded (1623) as a mate for *Jack of apes*, and it took three more centuries before, in American slang (recorded 1906), *jane* alone meant any girl.

Your sentence about "St. Joanna of Arc" reminded me of a train ride to Chinon. Behind me a French girl was preparing her American guest for a visit to the castle where in 1429 the Maid had recognized the Dauphin. Being innocent of both Shakespeare and Bernard Shaw, she said *Jane of Arc*, making up her own translation for the sake of a fellow-student who, like herself, knew Jane Austen and *Jane Eyre* better than *Saint Joan*, and in whose country *John Doe's* indissoluble mate is *Jane Doe*. A young New Zealander who has at least heard of the French Maid, judging from "Kiddies' Words" in the monthly *Marist Messenger* LXVII, 7 (1991), p. 21, writes that "Noah's wife was called Joan of Ark".

And thus, mine own good Joanna, may Thomas More and your teenage patron from Lorraine shower blessings on you as uxorcula and mamma (and grandma!). "And thus as heartily fare you well with all your own as ye can wish, by the hand of your assured bedesman"

Germain.

## NOTES

1. *La Pucelle d'Orléans* is in fact a posthumous designation. It first appears in François de Billon's *Le Fort inexpugnable de l'honneur du sexe féminin* (Paris, 1555).
2. Fol. E4v of the editio princeps; p. 373 in the transcript of Albert J. Geritz, "*The Pastyme of People and A New Boke of Purgatory*" (New York & London: Garland, 1985), which is reviewed at some length below.
3. The letter is dated from Moulins, 9 November 1429. The other two which survive, of 16 and 28 March 1430, show a firmer hand. Joan possessed no seal.
4. In the Orleans manuscript recording of Joan's interrogatories, the scribe always writes *Jhenne*, no doubt sounded *Jeanne* (as *femme* in modern French is pronounced *famme*). Henry VI's letter of 28 June 1431 gives public notice of the execution of "ladicte *Jhenne*". For the spelling *Jhenne* see Paul Doncoeur, *La Minute française des interrogatoires de Jeanne la Pucelle* (Melun 1952), passim. In French, *Jehan* and *Jehanne* are still used to create a feel of the past, as in Carl Dreyer's *Passion de Jehanne D'Arc*, or in editions of medieval works such as *Jehan le Teinturier* or *Jehan Maillart*. The frontispiece of Régine Pernoud's *Jeanne d'Arc* (Paris, 1959) reproduces a Peruvian painting captioned *Jhoana D'Arco*.
5. *Jhesu* (with no *s*) was a current form also in the English of 1450-1530. The *h* is of course unsoundable. Among its origins is the letter E in the Greek name of Jesus, which as a majuscule resembles Latin H. In More's day Johann Reuchlin further enhanced the H of *JHESUS* by relating it to the double H in God's Hebrew name YAHWEH. One result of this token presence was to make *h* come and go almost at whim: *Moreana* 101-2, p. 134-5 shows various instances such as 'Spayre hus' for 'Spare us' and 'owr' for 'hour'. Hence, too, the *h* spliced into *Anthony* and *Nicholas*: in *Bulletin Thomas More* of Spring 1989, the signature of Nicolas Barker is followed by his printed name as *Nicholas*.
6. Walter Scott's *Jeanie Deans* represents a further 'fronting' of the vowel. Had she stemmed from the London to which she walked, *Jeanie* might well have been *Joanie*.
7. *Janet* echoes the French *Jeannette*, which had long been current: "In my country they used to call me *Jeannette*", says Joan of Arc, "and after I came to France, I began to be called *Jeanne*".
8. See Richard L. DeMolen, "The Birth of Edward VI and the Death of Queen Jane", *Renaissance Studies* 4, 4 (1990), 359f. The first name of the Hungarian humanist Janus Pannonius (d. 27 March 1472) constituted a masculine precedent for *Jana*; among Netherlanders it was common to latinize *Jan* into *Janus*, as did Janus Secundus (1511-36), author of 3 poems on More's death.
9. In *Blessed Thomas More*, 2nd edition (London, 1892), p. 442.
10. Letter of 15 March 1992. In his next paragraph, Dick wonders whether the appearance of *h* in an epigram is there for the sake of scansion: let our classical scholars

answer. In the original Greek, both *Jōannes* and *Jōanna* contain an omega, but did that vowel remain long in Latin?

11. Punning in Latin verse on the Greek *Nicolaus/Nicoleus*, More says that names "are acquired in no haphazard way but with some reason" (*CW3/II*, p. 157). Some of the reasons for their being attributed or altered belong to that affective category "que la raison ne connaît pas", as Pascal would say.
12. I borrowed it from a publisher's catalogue (I forget which) at a time when I did not envisage this article. Can any reader identify the source?
13. French usage bears out this lowly undertone. The line has been translated as "Je puis faire une dame d'une Jeanneton". Two lines further, the Bastard implies that *Peter* is socially inferior to *George*. In a letter of 29 Feb. 1992, Patricia Jane Fairhead added the line "Some men must love my lady and some Joan," from *Love's Labour's Lost* (III.i.207), plus the Oxford English Dictionary definition for Joan as "a generic name for a female rustic".
14. John and Joan Heywood, who died in exile for religion, were the parents of two Jesuits--Jasper, translator of Senecan tragedy, and Ellis, author of *Il Moro* (1556)--and the grand-parents of John Donne, Anglican dean and poet.
15. More knew their son Thomas Winter (b. 1513), who studied abroad and received fat prebends, including from Cromwell's hands after Wolsey's death. Their daughter Dorothy (b. 1512) became a nun.
16. Rich--the false witness at More's trial--was only the "secular arm" executing a sentence passed by Archbishop Cranmer.
17. The document about Veysey, sent us by Patricia Jane Fairhead, includes a pedigree of the Harman family, to which the bishop belonged. Mrs. Fairhead also sent excerpts from Thomas Wright, *The History and Topography of the County of Essex* (London 1832). A footnote on p. 300 concerns one Thomas Colt, servant to Edward IV: his wife was Joan; his son and heir John married Joan, daughter of Sir John Elrington, of Hackney, Middlesex. We recognize here two *Joans* who elsewhere are called *Jane*.
18. Being a royal bastard, half-brother of Henry V, Beaufort adopted the name of the Angevin château where he was born.
19. The English possessions in France were ruled by the Duke of Bedford, and he it was who put Bishop Cauchon in charge of Joan's trial. Yet, at one of the sittings, in the "cimetière St. Ouen", they erected three *estrades* ('scaffolds', More would say), on one of which "estoit le cardinal d'Angleterre", that is Beaufort.
20. *The Life and Illustrious Martyrdom of Sir Thomas More* (London, 1928).
21. *The Life of Sir Thomas More* (London, 1966), p. 183.

22. *Thomas Morus Martino Dorpio* is the longest of More's epistles, and his apology for its length is itself quite lengthy (I 'normalise' both spelling and punctuation):

Haec scribenti mihi superuenerunt litterae quibus ad se meus me princeps reuocat. Hae me adhuc scripturientem coegerunt ut sisterem aliquando, atque istam finirem uel inuitus epistolam; quae quum tam longa sit ut breuior fortasse fuerit "scriptus et in tergo necdum finitus Orestes," nescio tamen quo tecum colloquendi studio adhuc cupiebat increscere. Verum ut non ingrata est haec epistolae complicandae necessitas, quod uereor ne qua nunc est longitudine, tibi possit esse molestiae, ita non laetor ademptam mihi facultatem, qua haec eadem liceat sub incudem reuocare, atque hunc rudem et informem foetum meum saepius lambendo refingere.

Since I want these lines to convey my own apology for prolixity and for lack of polish, let me give Daniel Kinney's translation in *CW15 (In Defense of Humanism)* p. 123-25:

"As I was writing these last words a letter arrived from my prince summoning me to return to him. His letter has forced me to stop writing at last, though I do not want to stop, and makes me finish this letter, however unwillingly; even though it is already so long that "an interminable *Orestes*, spilling off the page," might well be shorter, I was somehow so eager to speak with you that it wanted to keep right on growing. But though I do not find it unpleasant to have to fold up my letter at this point, since I am afraid it is already so long that you may find it tedious, even so it does not make me happy that I will not have any chance to refine it or to lick this ungainly and amorphous offspring of mine into shape by degrees."

### Précis

More's epitaph for his first wife calls her *Ioanna*, which, in his *English Works* (1557), is Englished as *Ione*, i.e. Joan. It remains *Joan* in Ro:Ba's Elizabethan *Life of More*. The rival *Jane* appears in a 17th century biography, becomes dominant in the 19th, and is practically taken for granted in the 20th. To explain this shift, we use the precedent of Edward IV's mistress: she is *Mrs Shore*, or *Shore's wife*, in the *Richard III* of both More and Shakespeare, who give her no Christian name. Though she was *née* Elizabeth, legend and myth, ballad and play have made her *Jane*; this name had an urban and even courtly ring, due above all to the glamor of Jane Seymour and the Lady Jane Grey. *Joan*, the by-name for a female rustic, being felt to be improper for "the little wife" of Thomas More, *Jane* has taken over.

### Résumé

Dans l'épître latine de sa première épouse, More l'appelle *Ioanna*, ce qui est rendu par *Joan* dans la première version publiée (1557). Le premier biographe de More à nommer sa femme (vers 1599) dit également *Joan*. Au 17<sup>e</sup> siècle on se met à lui attribuer le nom de *Jane*, qui à partir du 19<sup>e</sup> devient si dominant qu'au 20<sup>e</sup> il a pratiquement évincé *Joan*. Ce phénomène s'éclaire par le précédent de Mrs. Shore; dans le *Richard III* de More et de Shakespeare elle n'a pas de prénom, mais très vite ballades et tragédies l'ont appelée *Jane*. L'aura de ce nom porté par deux reines (une femme de Henry VIII, et la rivale de Mary Tudor) a paru mieux convenir à l'*uxorcula* de More que *Joan*, qui, comme notre *Jeanneton*, a une connotation de rustique banalité.