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LIVERY BUTTONS: MARY QUEEN OF SCOTS by Joy Journey



**Sketch of Mary
by Clouet**

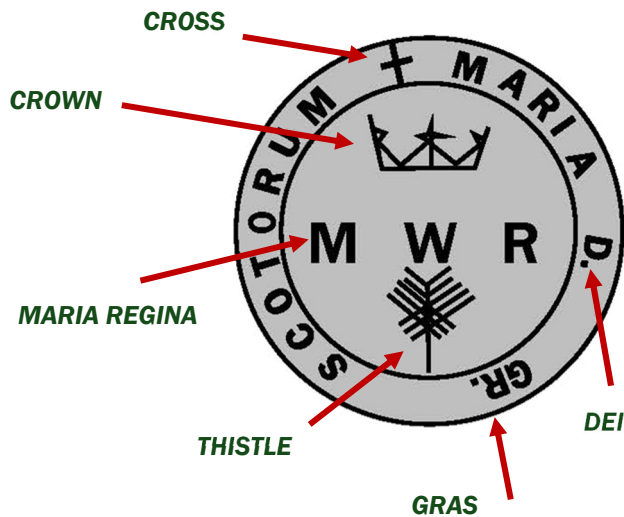
Jim Nolan and Judy Schwenk discovered a padded case with two livery buttons, and written notations indicating they were worn in the household of Mary, Queen of Scots. Mary Stuart was queen from December 1542 until July 1567, and at one time she was queen of Scotland, France, England and Ireland.

Mary was known for her kindness and beauty, but not for her political skills or marital success. In 1568 Mary fled to England, escaping cruelty at home and was hoping for protection from her cousin, Elizabeth. Elizabeth I never bothered to meet her cousin and, instead of offering protection, imprisoned her for 19 years until she was executed in 1587, and all of her possessions were burned.

The buttons are medium size and silver plate. One button has the rampant lion on its face—from the Scottish coat of arms. The other button depicts the crown and thistle. “An elderly Cornish man in Penryn, Cornwall, had these buttons which had been in his family for generations. He stated they had been worn on the livery costumes of the household of Mary, Queen of Scots. They had been preserved by his family (the Fox family), who lived in Cornwall and for many generations had a member of their family as a Member of Parliament.”

A notation on the mounting card references the buttons are from the royal household uniforms, 1553.

As a sinner I am truly conscious of having often offended my Creator and I beg him to forgive me, but as a Queen and Sovereign, I am aware of no fault or offence for which I have to render account to anyone here below.’ Mary, Queen of Scots to her jailer, Sir Amyas Paulet. October 1586.



Scottish Coat of Arms

