



# **The Challenge to the Crown - Volume I: The Struggle for Influence in the Reign of Mary Queen of Scots 1542-1567**

*Robert Stedall*

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Mary Queen of Scots: Catholic martyr or manipulative femme fatale?

On 10 February 1567, conspirators bent on killing Henry, Lord Darnley, King-Consort of Mary Queen of Scots successfully razed his Edinburgh residence at Kirk o' Field in a huge explosion. Soon afterwards, Darnley's partially-clothed body was discovered in a nearby orchard, strangled to death by an unknown assailant.

Rumours of Mary's involvement in his murder quickly surfaced. Placards across Edinburgh implied that she had provoked the Earl of Bothwell into killing her husband in a crime of passion. This became more plausible when she tried to avoid having to prosecute him for the murder, and subsequently married him, encouraged by her most senior Protestant nobles.

While Mary's motives for the marriage might be explained by her need for his protection, those of the Nobility who had encourage it are confusing. Why would they want a union, which would inevitably place Bothwell, a man they hated, as head of government? Was their motif to associate her in the murder plot?

Mary's involvement in Darnley's murder has remained one of the great historical mysteries. Genealogist and author Robert Stedall has spent ten years researching the inter-marriages within Scottish peerage to provide an explanation for their motives in removing Mary from the throne. In this first volume, of his two volume history of Mary and James, he explains in vivid detail the switching allegiances of the nobility, and can reveal for the first time, the gripping true story of Mary's downfall and imprisonment.

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## **From Reader Review The Challenge to the Crown - Volume I: The Struggle for Influence in the Reign of Mary Queen of Scots 1542-1567 for online ebook**

**Kayt18 says**

Very detailed. Great for anyone interested in this time period. I received a copy from Goodreads for an honest review.

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**Tenley Erickson says**

Well done! I appreciate the detailed, well researched account of Mary's life and times. In various degrees, it seems we are all manipulated by individuals and groups with their own selfish agendas.

It is sad that it would take nearly 500 years for the entire truth to be known. Mary deserved more respect and empathy than she received.

I look forward, with much anticipation, to the next volume of this set!

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