



Maria Stuart

FRIEDRICH SCHILLER

TRANSLATED BY FLORA KIMMICH

INTRODUCTION BY ROGER PAULIN



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Translation and Notes to the text Flora Kimmich © 2020

Introduction Roger Paulin © 2020



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Friedrich Schiller, *Maria Stuart*. Cambridge, UK: Open Book Publishers, 2020, <https://doi.org/10.11647/OBP.0217>

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Open Book Classics Series, vol. 12 | ISSN: 2054-216X (Print); 2054-2178 (Online)

ISBN Paperback: 9781783749812

ISBN Hardback: 9781783749829

ISBN Digital (PDF): 9781783749836

ISBN Digital ebook (epub): 9781783749843

ISBN Digital ebook (mobi): 9781783749850

ISBN XML: 9781783749867

DOI: 10.11647/OBP.0217

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Cover design: Anna Gatti.

Translator's Note

Maria Stuart is the fifth and final volume of a series of translations of Friedrich Schiller's major plays made freely available by Open Book Publishers. This translation, like the others, is intended for students at college level and for the general reader. It is accompanied by an introduction that gives context, by a 'Short Life of Mary Stuart', and by Notes that make an old text less obscure.

Schiller's *Maria Stuart* is loved and esteemed for its finely balanced dramatic economy, for its descending action, for the pathos of its plot, and for its spectacle of two famous queens in contest for a great throne at a celebrated moment in British history. The play is precious, too, for its presentation of a question argued and reargued by competing factions in sallies of high rhetoric sustained over five acts: a brilliant moment in a rhetorical tradition that reaches back to the Ancients.

A great surprise, therefore, to sit down to translate this text and find that it reads in long passages more like work in progress than like copy ready for print. The task presented to the startled translator is to condense great billows of words without notable loss and lodge them in five-beat lines roomy enough to preserve their sense and regular enough to be read as iambic.

Roger Paulin has contributed to this effort by restraining my extravagances, by supplying words and whole lines that I preferred to my own, and by his very presence, which kept me working and reworking at a task that knows no end. He has been present in the translation project throughout and the series bears his mark.

The endnotes and the "Short Life of Mary Stuart" rely on the commentary by Matthias Luserke-Jaqui, editor of the edition *Deutsche Klassiker* (Frankfurt, 1996), the text on which the translation is based. The Notes and the "Short Life" also draw upon an exceptionally complete and beautifully illustrated article, "Mary, Queen of Scots," posted on Wikipedia.

Alessandra Tosi presided over it all—both this volume and the five-volume series—with patience, persistence, resourcefulness, and forbearance. The editors at Open Book Publishers have lent their considerable talents to the production of five handsome volumes. Andrey Gerasenkov, beyond the call of duty, twice gave half a morning to teaching a device intended for legal briefs to count measured verse instead. And Christoph Kimmich has provided everything I required.