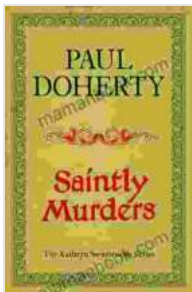# Murder and Intrigue in Medieval Canterbury: A Hidden History

Canterbury, a city steeped in history and renowned for its magnificent cathedral, holds a darker secret: a past riddled with murder and intrigue.

Saintly Murders (Kathryn Swinbrooke Mysteries, Book 5): Murder and intrigue in medieval Canterbury

by Jennifer L. Goeke

★★★★☆ 4.7 out of 5

Language	: English
File size	: 1189 KB
Text-to-Speech	: Enabled
Enhanced typesetting	: Enabled
Word Wise	: Enabled
Print length	: 227 pages
Screen Reader	: Supported

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The Murder of Archbishop Thomas Becket

The most infamous murder in Canterbury's history is that of Archbishop Thomas Becket in 1170. Becket, a close advisor to King Henry II, fell out of favor with the monarch over a dispute regarding the authority of the Church.

On December 29, 1170, a group of knights loyal to Henry stormed Canterbury Cathedral and assassinated Becket at the altar. The archbishop's death sent shockwaves throughout Europe and transformed Canterbury into a pilgrimage site, attracting thousands of devout Christians.

The Murder of William of Canterbury

Almost two centuries later, another archbishop met a violent death in Canterbury. William of Canterbury, appointed by Pope Urban VI during the Great Schism, was murdered in 1396.

The motive behind William's murder remains unclear, but some historians believe it was linked to political tensions between England and France. The

archbishop's body was found in a field outside Canterbury, bearing multiple wounds inflicted by swords and arrows.

The Murder of Simon of Sudbury

In 1381, the peasantry of southeastern England rose up in a violent revolt known as the Peasants' Revolt. During the uprising, Archbishop Simon of Sudbury was seized by rebels and dragged to Tower Hill in London.

There, Sudbury was subjected to a mock trial and then beheaded by a mob. His head was impaled on a pike and paraded through the streets of London, a gruesome reminder of the revolt's brutality.
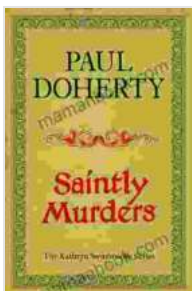
The Death of the Black Death

In the mid-14th century, the Black Death ravaged Europe, killing an estimated 30-60% of the population. Canterbury, a major port city, was particularly hard hit by the pandemic.

The death toll in Canterbury was staggering. By 1350, the city's population had plummeted by more than half. The streets were lined with bodies, and the city's economy collapsed. The Black Death left an enduring mark on Canterbury, shaping its social and economic landscape for centuries to come.

The hidden history of murder and intrigue in medieval Canterbury reveals a darker side to this iconic city. From the assassination of Archbishop Becket to the Peasants' Revolt and the devastation of the Black Death, Canterbury's past is a tapestry woven with violence, mystery, and intrigue.

As we delve into these forgotten tales, we gain a deeper appreciation for the complex and often brutal realities of life in medieval England.

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