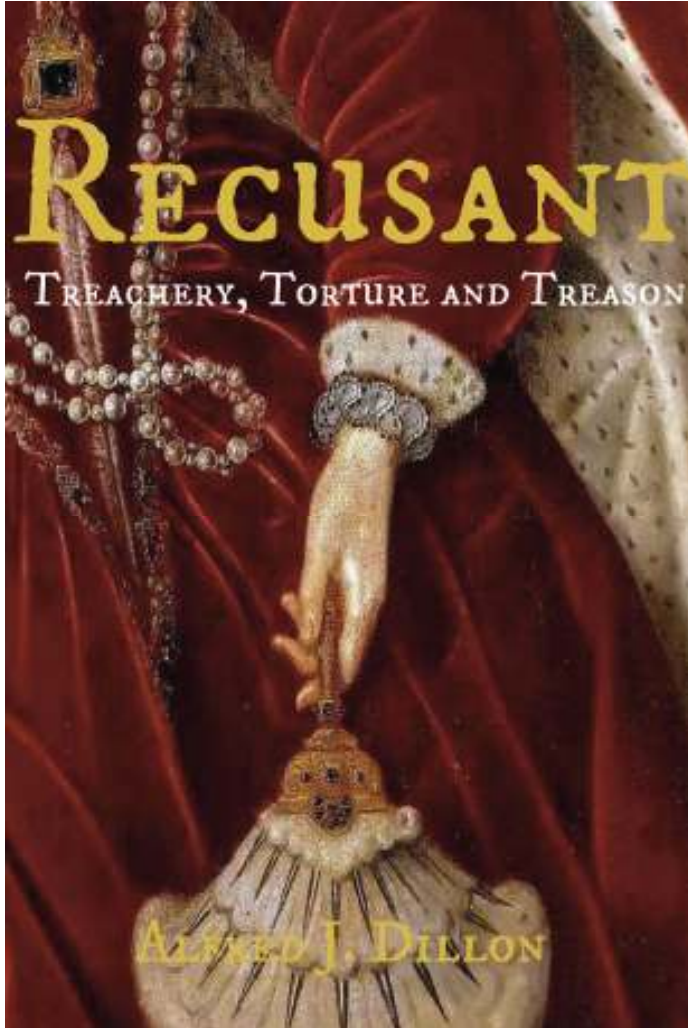


RECUSANT

TREACHERY, TORTURE AND TREASON

Alfred J. Dillon



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Recusant is the riches-to-rags story of a long-standing, loyal English family who lost their position as landed gentry and fell into obscurity. The violent, brutal separation of England from the Roman Catholic faith under King Henry VIII is well-documented. Much less well-known is how far Henry's daughter, Queen Elizabeth I, was willing to go to repress those who refused to attend services of the Church of England. Such individuals were known as recusants, for they refused to accept or obey the authority of Henry's newly established religion.

The Rookwoods were an ancient Saxon family with established estates and manor houses who had converted to Roman Catholicism and married well in East Anglia. During the Tudor and Stuart reigns, after a thousand years of prosperity and loyalty to the Crown, recusancy destroyed the Rookwoods and they fell into ruin. Edward Rookwood was imprisoned by Elizabeth I on charges of forbidden worship, his property confiscated by the Crown. His cousin Ambrose became involved in the Gunpowder Plot of 1605, and the family lost their status.

Many Catholic families had the misfortune of being caught up in this political warfare which led to the downfall of an entire class of individuals.

Alfred J. Dillon, born in New York City 1930. As a child on family trips to Newfoundland, Canada he came to understand the significance of Newfoundland to the Rookwood family, and from there, came to understand the significance of the Rookwood history. Under his command the USS Washtenaw County LST-1166 became one of the most highly decorated ships of the Vietnam War. He was later sent to Coronado, California to command Naval Beach Group One. Captain Dillon's life was one characterized by an unending quest for answers.

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