Grainne Ni Mhaille
(County Mayo)

When Grace O'Malley, pirate sea-queen and castle builder, much captured and escaped found her seaway up the Thames to Elizabeth's Presence, she was put questions about loyalty and liegeman's aims.

A translator made the two acquainted, Grace sixty-three claiming still and yet she could sail a galley, rule a crew, would but Her Royal Highness license the fire and the sword to guard Ireland's western coast.

I get the fey picture of two queens, one jewelled and most golden in velvet and lace — powder pale — and the other more leather than lavender, beyond concern for her face, all stance, stride, all seaworthy.

Can't you hear some old courtier jealous of his young missy page her from Grace's straight side asking then "Who was that knight I seen you with last, Wife?" getting for reply "That was no knight, that was a Lady."

WILLIAM McLAUGHLIN.