Tudor Life

The Tudor Society Magazine

THE TUDOR SOCIETY

Members Only
№ 32
April 2017

Catherine Howard & Katherine Parr

The Burial of Katherine Parr

The Wanton and the Nurse

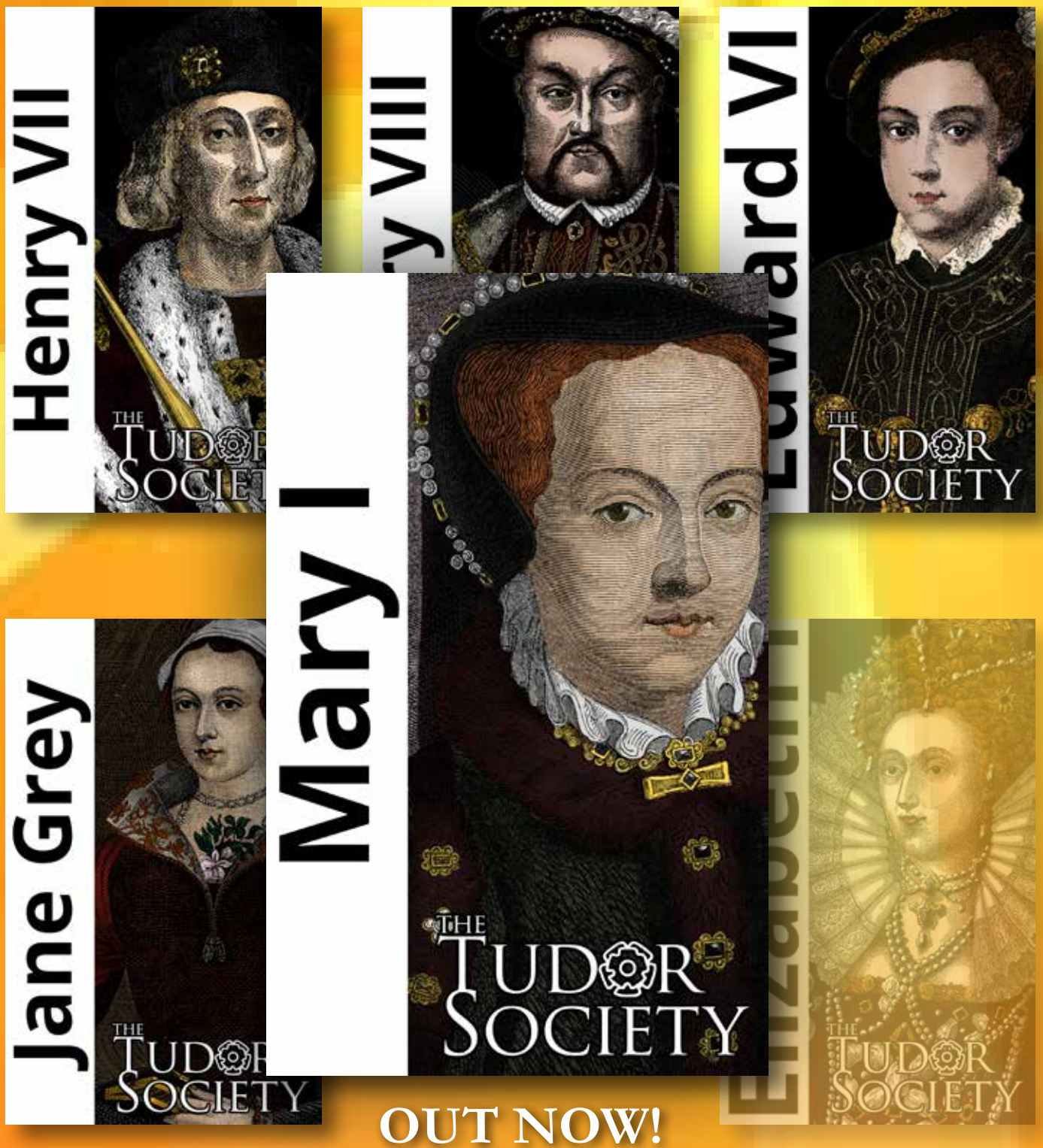
The Trevelyan Miscellanies

+ Mead!

Virginity in a Social Context

by Kyra Kramer

Exclusive Tudor Society Books



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WELCOME!

Firstly, let me begin by welcoming our new regular columnist, Emma Taylor, a dear friend and long-term colleague of mine. Emma, who works on TV costuming in Ireland, will be commenting on Tudor fashion, both in the sixteenth century and on the silver screen. This month, she is looking at how the hit show "The Tudors" costumed their final two leading ladies, Catherine Howard and Katherine Parr, who are this issue's theme. It seemed a little odd that we had not paid homage to the Catherines yet. One of our regular columnists, Conor Byrne, is the author of 2014's "Katherine Howard: A New History", published by MadeGlobal, a well-received study that sees Catherine as the victim of misogyny and abuse, in a world shaped and crushed by gender prejudices. Catherine Howard has certainly been on my mind, too. After five years with her, my biography "Young and Damned and Fair" is being released in the US this month and I am thrilled to be able to offer a copy as a giveaway to a reader of this magazine. David Starkey was correct when he said that Henry VIII's later marriages did not have the same political importance as his first two. However, while few women could measure up to the titanic self-belief and generation-dividing skills possessed by Katherine of Aragon and Anne Boleyn, Henry's later marriages were important and fascinating. I've loved being able to share the story of what it was like to study one of them in my article, "She Brought A Moment of Joy", and reading some of this issue's articles on the ways Catherine has been compared to her successor, the lovely Katherine Parr, reminds us - as if we needed reminding - of how "naughty and nice" are still two deeply unhelpful labels that we cannot easily escape in our Histories.

GARETH RUSSELL

Tudor Life

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Virginity in Social Context

On 13 February 1542 Henry VIII beheaded his fifth wife, Katheryn Howard, because she had not been a virgin when she married him. On July 12 1543 the king married the twice widowed Kateryn Parr, who had engaged in sex with double the men that the queen he had killed the year before had done. Surely the king could have found a virgin to wed if he had truly wanted to; was marrying a virgin important or not?

BY KYRA C. KRAMER

The problem with reconciling this preference/non-preference for virgins is that virginity has become once again wrongfully be equated with virtue. However, it was always *virtue*, rather than a hymen, that had been the most significant qualification for a wife.

People in the Tudor era were not missish about sex. Folk songs about the "bonny black hare" and the "cuckoo's nest" abounded, jokes regarding the manservant with the long, hard thing looking for a bushy thing to put it in (it was a broom handle; get your mind out of the gutter) were commonplace, and Shakespeare's plays were rife with sly puns about "country matters" and the beast with two backs. The Tudors had more euphemisms for sex and genitals than a 14 year old boy on Twitter, and were as constantly delighted to use them.

Moreover, sexual release was considered a medical necessity for both men AND women. The ancient Greek doctor, Galen, whose writing were beyond contestation for Tudor physicians, surmised that the reason women were not born as men was because their colder natures had

The Melton Constable or Hastings portrait of Queen Catherine Parr

prevented them from extruding their genitalia before their birth. This means that the vagina as an inverted, inside-out penis, that the ovaries were feminine testicles, and the uterus was a scrotal sack (Thompson, 199:34). Women were also thought to produce semen like men, but only internally. If women went too long without sex -- especially if they were accustomed to coitus and then had to go without it as in the case of widows -- it was believed that their feminine seed would buildup and spoil in their womb. This overload of rotting semen would fester in the uterus and cause it to break loose and start wandering around the female body, making women hysterical (Thompson, 1999:34-35). Only an orgasm, which would convulse the womb and cast out the excess semen, would prevent or cure hysteria.

Thus, both Galen and the oft-cited Islamic physician Avicenna recommended masturbation in order to prevent a buildup of "superfluities" within men and women. While men were thought to be naturally adept at this task, some women -- particularly virgins -- might require the assistance of a midwife who would stimulate them to orgasm as a method of preventing ill-health from sexual frustration (Bullough, 1996:58). Of course, this was in direct conflict with the Church's stance on masturbation as a sin. However, solitary masturbation was the least serious offence in the hierarchy of sexual misdeeds, so it probably didn't generate much punishment for the penitent Christian who confessed it to his or her priest (Brundage, 1990:174). Moreover, the cost of the sin had to be weighed against the cost that refraining from sin would have on one's health, which doubtlessly provided a reason to indulge in the minor spiritual infraction now and then. Oddly, it was not particularly sinful for young women to lend each other a hand (so to speak) in masturbation, but young men were not to help one another with this task. Luckily for men, they could have 'necessary' visits to brothels or willing mistresses without accruing much spiritual debt. A man needed to do who a man needed to do, after all.

This laissez-faire attitude toward human sexual needs is why Agnes Howard, the Dowager Duchess of Norfolk, was not particularly surprised or bent out of shape when she discovered Katheryn Howard and the other young women of the Maiden's Chamber had been "making good cheer" with their boyfriends at night. Like many of the couples, Katheryn and her boyfriend, Francis Dereham, had indulged in some "puffing and blowing". When informed "of their misrule", Agnes fussed at her young ladies-in-waiting, but she was much less concerned about possibility that they were having sex than she was that eating rich foods late at night would negatively affect the beauty of her charges (Starkey, 2004). After all, if they got pregnant then their beau had to marry them and almost half of Tudor brides went to the altar already up the pole; once a couple was formerly betrothed they could have sex and it was not an issue if the bride was increasing on her wedding day (Cressy,1997). Agnes Howard took further measures to keep the unmarried women out of bounds, but the idea that people in their teens and early 20s wanted to have sex with one another just wasn't that shocking.

Although women were expected to be virgins until they were married (or betrothed, which was as good as a ring in the Tudor mind), it was more to assure that the firstborn and heir was the product of his father's womb more than anything else. The higher-born the lady, and the more the offspring stood to inherit, the more her virginity was emphasized. For mid-ranking women like Katheryn Howard, a lack of maidenhead was far from insurmountable provided she wasn't pregnant with another man's child when she wed. The Tudors were somewhat lax in the stringent requirement for virginity in general. Imperial ambassador Eustace Chapuys, familiar with the attitudes and behaviors of the English court, seriously doubted if Henry's 3rd wife, Jane Seymour, was a virgin. Katheryn would have been as unconcerned with the lack of a hymen as most women of her time. She wouldn't have suspected King Henry VIII would be a suitor,

or that he would lose his mind when he found out she had been previously deflowered. She was careful not to actually have sex with her post-marital flirtation, Thomas Culpepper, so she thought she was safe. She was ignorant of the idea that "plotting" to have sex was treason when married to a king. No one had been aware that a lack of virginity was treason as well.

When the news of Katheryn's prior sexual relationship with Dereham was reported to Henry, the king wept and raged so violently that his ministers feared for his sanity -- which was already tenuous (Smith, 1982:198). The king was prostrated with grief that his young bride had not been a virgin. Henry grabbed a sword and waved it around, claiming the queen would never have "such delight in her lechery as she should have pain and torture in her death", but he also cried with such abandon it was considered "strange in [one of] his courage" (Smith, 1982:198). He plumbed the depths of self-pity, and bemoaned his luck at getting "such ill-conditioned wives" (Scarisbrick, 1970:432).

On 22 November 1541 Katheryn's title was stripped from her by the Privy Council and she was indicted for "having lead an abominable, base, carnal, voluptuous, and vicious life" before marriage and acting "like a common harlot with diverse persons" while falsely "maintaining however the outward appearance of chastity and honesty" (Farquhar, 2001). In sum, what put Henry into a killing rage was the fact that Katheryn had been a "slut" but hadn't *looked* like one. It put paid to the common myth that the King could tell a woman was a virgin at a glance by her innocent demeanor and firm breasts. A harlot had tricked the all-knowing Henry! She had made him look a fool, and he wanted her dead as a result.

Francis I of France, who was one of the most noted and notorious womanizers in the whole of Europe as well as a king, exclaimed without a hint of irony that the queen "hath done wondrous naughty" when told of Katheryn's transgressions. He wrote Henry a condolence letter about the "lewd and naughty behavior" of the queen and assuring his fellow king that the "lightness of women cannot bend the honor of men". It seems not to have occurred to either Henry or Francis that their 'honor' was much more tainted than Katheryn's could ever be. Their extramarital sex lives didn't count. They were men; QED they couldn't be disgraceful sluts. They would never have to pay for the so-called crime of having had illicit sex.

Henry was determined to never be made a mockery of again. Therefore a new law required that any woman who married the king must tell him if she was "a pure and clean maid", and if she was less than honest about her condition it would be considered high treason (Lindsey, 1995:181). If anyone else knew that her past was unsavory and didn't speak up, they would *also* be committing high treason. Since proving that something is unknown, beyond a shadow of a doubt, is impossible no one would be safe. It almost certainly made ambitious courtiers think twice about offering up their female relations as potential mates for Henry. The offered girl's chastity had to be beyond contestation or her family would lose everything.

The King was also having trouble that needed Viagra centuries before Viagra was invented. Oysters could only do so much. How could he find a woman who was both virtuous, and wouldn't give away his delicate condition via a lack of pregnancy?

The pretty Kateryn Parr, Lady Latimer, was a godsend in this respect. Two marriages meant her virtue was unconnected to her long-gone virginity, and her lack of pregnancies in either marriage indicated that she was thought to be barren. Sure, she was desperately in love with Thomas Seymour, but it was easy for the king to ship Seymour off to be the ambassador to the Netherlands and pressure Kateryn to marry Henry instead.

Henry's proposal posed a dilemma for his future bride. She did not love him, but she was secretly an ardent Reformer and a marriage might give her the opportunity to coax the king further away from Catholicism. After much prayer and reflection, she felt that God

had moved her to "renounce utterly mine own will and to follow His most willingly" (Starkey, 2003:711). Since the new queen was sincerely devout she did everything she could to fulfill her wedding vows to be obedient to her husband, yet she also did everything in her power to encourage him to favor the Reformation. Kateryn performed the delicate balancing act of satisfying both her husband and God to the best of her abilities, while simultaneously endeavoring to keep her head attached to her neck. It was not an easy task.

The new queen was only 31, more than 20 years younger than her husband, but she was an emotionally mature and intellectual woman who had been widowed twice so the age disparity was not as jarring. Moreover, was known throughout the court to be a well-informed, wise, chaste, and respectable woman, in marked contrast from the happy-go-lucky Katheryn Howard.

Certainly Henry's eldest daughter was happy with her father's choice for a bride. Mary was now twenty-seven years of age. Kateryn did everything she could to encourage Mary's presence at court, in spite of their radically differing religious beliefs. The queen may have been a covert Reformist, and Mary a fierce defender of Catholicism, but there were still strong ties to connect them. Kateryn's mother had been close to Katherina of Aragon, so Henry's new wife had an inherited interest in the late queen's daughter. Moreover, Kateryn and Mary were very close in age and had similar interests and educations (Starkey, 2003:718). Yet it may have just been Kateryn's natural kindness that endeared Mary to her. The queen was always extremely kind to the ten-year-old Elizabeth as well, and fostered cordial relations between all the siblings. It is also extremely likely that Kateryn cajoled Henry into softening his stance against his daughters' right to the throne (Starkey, 2003:720). He wouldn't budge an inch on their legitimacy, but he could and did restore his 'bastard' daughters to the succession. If he or his son did not produce lawful offspring, his unlawful daughter Mary would get the throne. If his daughter Mary died without issue, then the crown would come to Elizabeth. Without the new queen's influence it would probably have been much harder for Mary to become the queen of England after her brother Edward died in 1553.

Although Parr would nearly be thrown in jail (or worse) for being smarter than the king at least once, she was clever enough to survive until Henry's death on 28 January 1547. After the king's death Kateryn was able to marry Thomas Seymour, which she did in secret at the end of May that same year. A marriage so soon after King Henry's death caused a scandal and ruined Kateryn's relationship with Princess Mary, but the former queen was no longer content to risk her happiness to chance by waiting. In that, she and Katheryn Howard may have finally had their one commonality.

KYRA C. KRAMER

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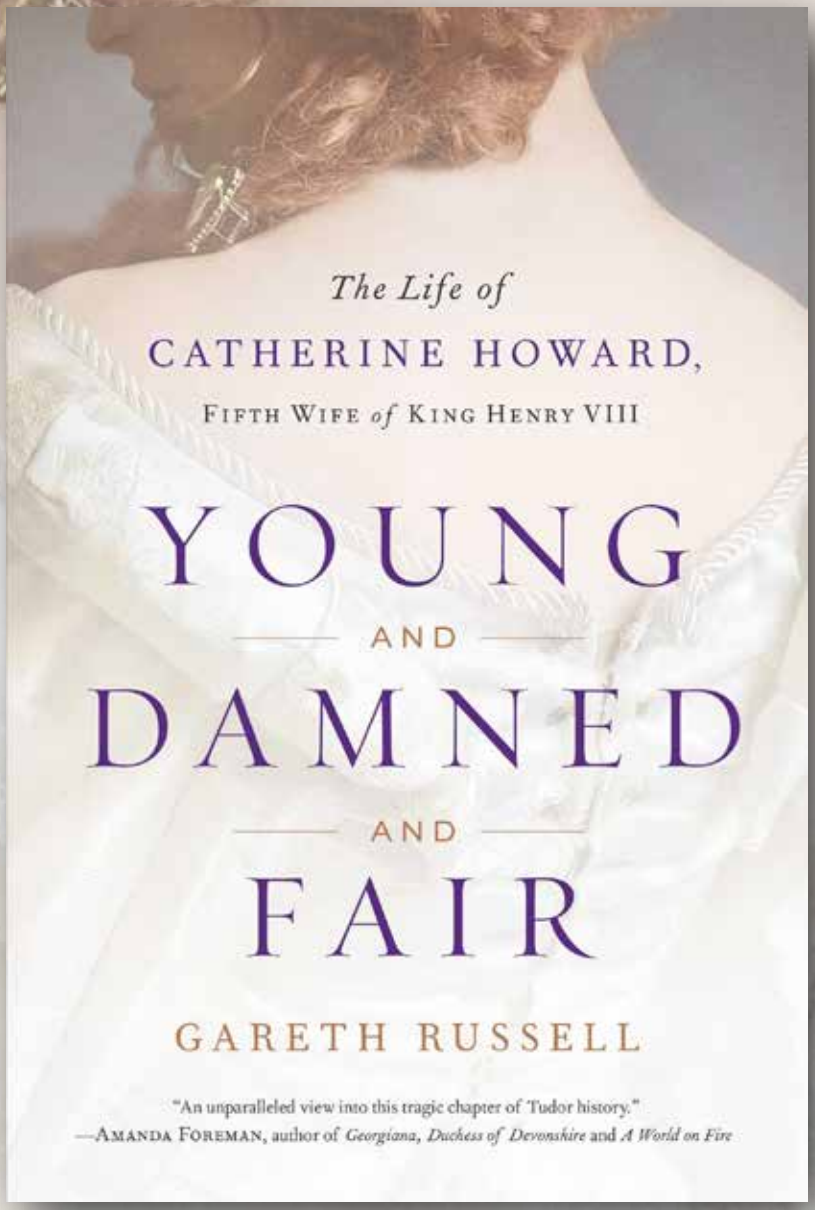
MEMBERS' GIVEAWAY



One member will win a copy of Gareth's book!
Simply comment below the magazine on the page on the Tudor Society website.
THE COMPETITION CLOSES AT MIDNIGHT 30 APRIL 2017.
A winner will be randomly drawn from the people who have commented under the magazine post.
GOOD LUCK!

She Brought A Moment of Joy: Five Years with Catherine Howard

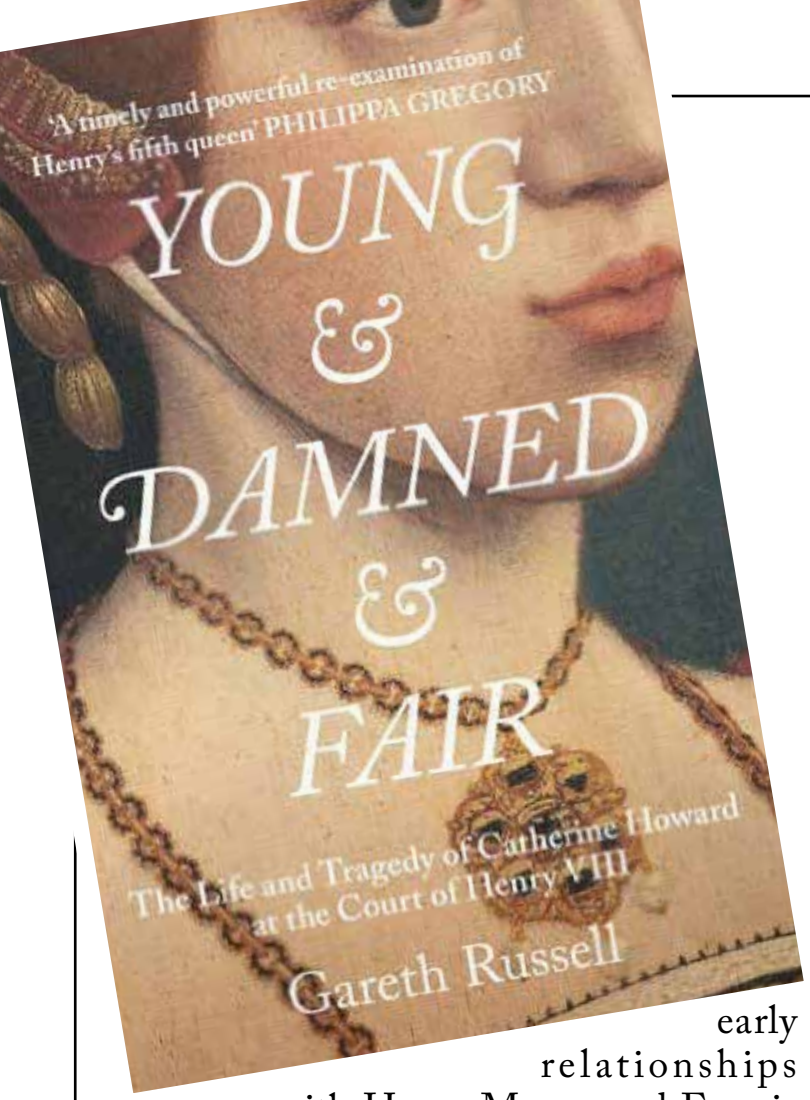
Gareth Russell

In 2011, I submitted my postgraduate dissertation on Catherine Howard's household to Queen's University, Belfast. Catherine and I had found one another by accident a year earlier, as it were. As an undergraduate at Oxford, I had written my final paper on Marie-Antoinette and when I began to specialise into medieval history, I had not initially intended to write about one specific queen again. However, my proposal to look at the queen's household in England from the time of Margaret of Anjou through to Katherine Parr was tempered by my wonderful supervisor, Dr James Davis, who suggested that picking one queen might provide me with a useful framing advice and the potential to go into greater detail on specific aspects of the royal institution.

I plumped for Catherine, because the horrible brevity of her career offered a chance to look at a household as it was formed, as it functioned – in the Thames Valley and on tour – and, crucially if grimly, what happened as it began to fall apart. I did not expect to find anything particularly unusual about Catherine herself. Indeed, she was not the focus of my attention, but as the research continued I could not shake the nagging suspicion that Catherine's rise, and fall, had very little in common with how it was traditionally presented. I was particularly questioning about the idea that her family had planted her deliberately in the King's attentions. Those suspicions solidified into certainties and, after I had graduated, a professor – who taught American history and has written a tremendous biography of Mary Todd Lincoln – told me, "I think there might be a biography in what you wrote."

In the five years since, I've written and published other books, but Catherine never fully left me. In 2014, I began to collate the research I had and set down to do more and to write "Young and Damned and Fair". There was a very great deal that needed to be researched for a biography that had, quite simply, not been relevant for a thesis. For instance, the issue of her

A portrait incorrectly identified as Catherine Howard in the early 20th century, once owned by the Cromwell family. (The Toledo Museum of Art, Ohio.)



early relationships with Henry Manox and Francis Dereham needed to be examined. Were they, as Agnes Strickland, Retha Warnicke, Joanna Denny, Conor Byrne, and Josephine Wilkinson argued, clear examples of abuse perpetrated against a near-helpless young woman? Or, as Lacey Baldwin Smith and Alison Plowden would have it, the foolish flings of a self-indulgent airhead? I would also need to examine the circumstances of Catherine's courtly début, her portraiture, her personality, and her extended family. What I discovered on the life of her aunt, the Countess of Bridgewater, kept me occupied and enthralled for weeks.

The whole process was thrillingly exhausting.

I became a man obsessed. Lever arch files full of potted biographies of everyone Catherine had come into contact with and her day-to-day movements from palace to castle to hunting lodge spread over my study's bookshelves. I formed an opinion on each of her alleged portraits. I still find it utterly incredible that the Toledo Holbein was ever identified as Queen Catherine, a view seemingly shared by the superb Toledo Museum, who do not label the portrait as Catherine. It has been suggested as a possible likeness of Elizabeth Cromwell, Jane Seymour's sister, and I also put forward the idea that it might show Lady Jane Grey's mother Frances, Duchess of Suffolk.

I went to the National Archives of the United Kingdom and poured over the original documents. Thomas Culpepper's death warrant brought a particular shiver. I stayed in the hotel now built on the site of what was once the Dowager Duchess of Norfolk's London home. I wandered for hours through Hampton Court and stood oddly bereft over the bowling green in the ruins of Pontefract Castle. During a sweltering, baking yet beautiful English summer, I re-traced the route of Catherine's journey through the north of England. I stayed only in sixteenth- or seventeenth-centuries inns and attended religious services at Lincoln and York cathedrals, where Catherine, as wife of God's anointed, had publicly worshipped in 1541.

My life had become entirely about Catherine and her world. I can never sufficiently thank the friends in Belfast who organised nights out to the pub or trips to the north coast, where I could relax. As I read Beth von Staats' article on Thomas Cranmer potentially suffering from Stockholm Syndrome, I joked to myself that I quite possibly had developed the same. But it is more than

"Cranmer Endeavouring to Obtain a Confession of Guilt from Catherine Howard", a 19th-century painting by William Lindsay Windus (Public Domain)

Hampton Court Palace
(Gareth Russell's collection)

possible in all the whirl of research to lose sight of the vulnerability of one's subject.

The truth is that I did not consider Catherine to have been the victim of childhood abuse. I not only do not believe she was born as late as 1525, I also think that her relationships started later and lasted for a shorter period of time. It would be entirely possible for me to conclude that she was therefore an author of her own tragedy or, at the very least, the deserving recipient of its finale. Most reviews of my biography of her described me as highly sympathetic to my subject, as indeed I am, but one or two suggested I was a misogynist because I had not interpreted the evidence as suggesting Catherine was groomed and molested.

One blissful evening, after Evensong at Lincoln's incomparable cathedral, I walked back towards the Bishop's Palace, a Victorian episcopal mansion now operated as an hotel by the Church of England. Its gardens connect through a ruined kitchen to the remnants of the medieval Bishop's Palace, where Catherine Howard stayed in 1541 and where she had one of her controversial meetings with Thomas Culpepper. As I passed through the shattered brickwork of the long-abandoned kitchen, I stared up to the cavernous pits where the Bishop of Lincoln's servants had cooked in the 1540s. It was the most bizarre, shattering moment of sadness. To see the gutted kitchens where Catherine's food had once been prepared left me feeling close and sorrowful to the woman I had spent years writing about it. There was such humanity – mundane humanity – in those kitchens, I cannot quite explain it, but I am so very glad I could experience it.

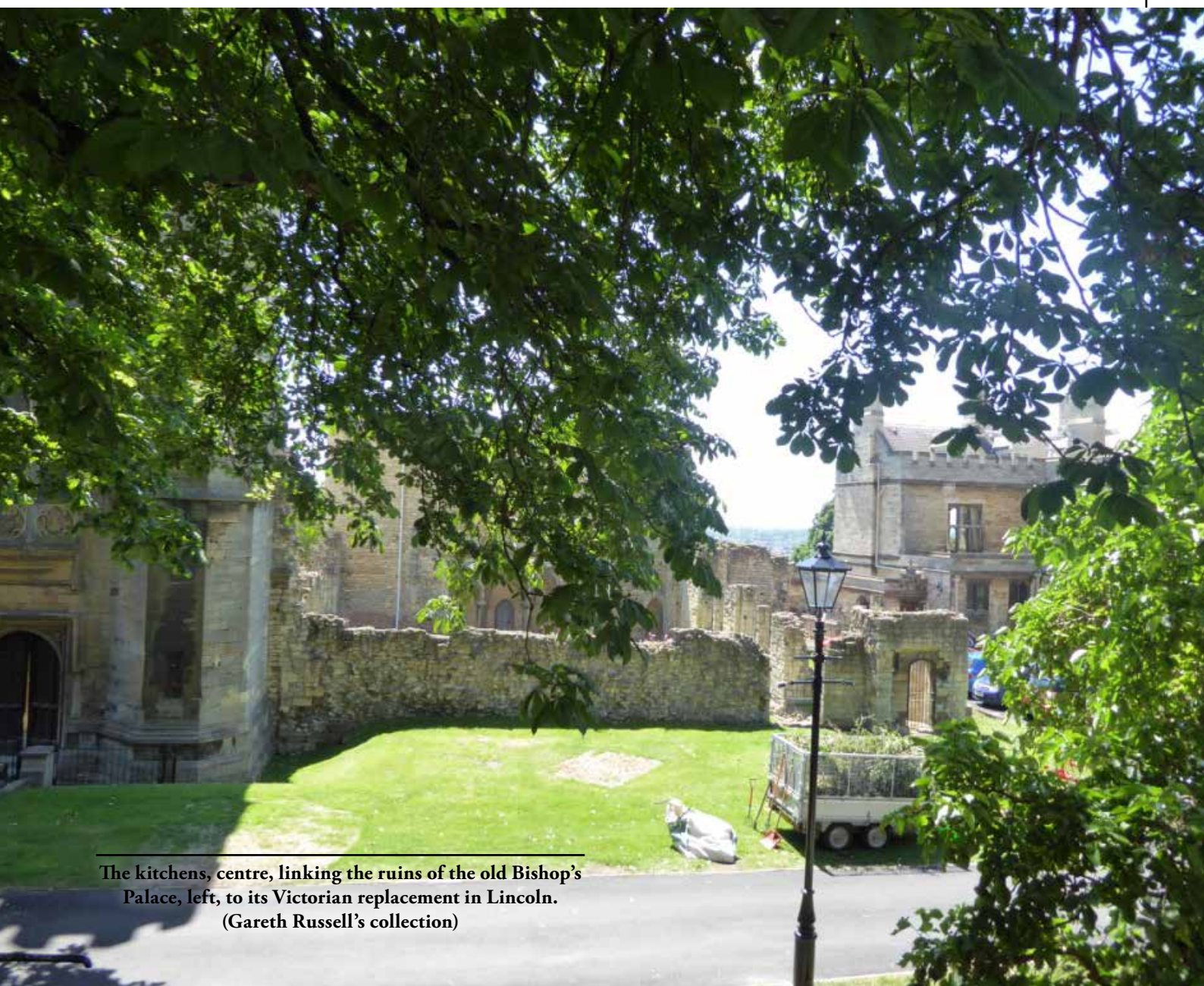
For me, Catherine Howard was a child of privilege and hierarchy. A girl of charm, grace, vivacity, determination and self-possession. Like her cousin Anne Boleyn, she was capable of tremendous dignity, particularly when the occasion called for it. If I did not see her as some of her other biographers saw her, I nonetheless came to like her very much.

A few months after my visit to Lincoln, I checked into the Merchant Hotel in Belfast to write my final paragraphs of the "Young and Damned and Fair" manuscript before I sent it to my publishers. Once I had finished, a loud silence buzzed around me and I picked up a copy of "Brideshead Revisited" by Evelyn Waugh, one of my favourite novels. As I clambered into bed with it, I read, unexpectedly, a paragraph about

the lead character's sister, Lady Julia Flyte, as she made her appearance as a debutante in London high society in the 1920s. In Waugh's words about Julia, I found a perfect paragraph expressing how I had come to feel about Catherine and the mesmerizingly improbable story of her life: -

"That night and the night after and the night after, wherever she went, always in her own little circle of intimates, she brought a moment of joy, such as strikes deep to the heart of the river's bank when the kingfisher suddenly flares across the water. This was the creature, neither child nor woman, that drove me through the dusk that summer evening, untroubled by love, taken aback by the power of her own beauty, hesitating on the cool edge of life; one who had suddenly found herself armed, unawares; the heroine of a fairy story turning over in her hands the magic ring; she had only to stroke it with her fingertips and whisper the charmed word, for the earth to open at her feet and belch forth her titanic servant, the fawning monster who would bring her whatever she asked, but bring it, in unwelcome shape."

GARETH RUSSELL



The kitchens, centre, linking the ruins of the old Bishop's Palace, left, to its Victorian replacement in Lincoln. (Gareth Russell's collection)

THE DEATH AND BURIAL OF KATHERINE PARR: A STORY OF LOSS AND REDISCOVERY

BY LAUREN BROWNE

KATHERINE PARR must have met the news that she was pregnant with surprise, given that she had been married three times before her controversial union with Thomas Seymour, and that she was in her 30s. The correspondence between the couple during the final months of her pregnancy illustrates the excitement the couple felt as they pondered over the child's sex:

> 'I gave your little knave your blessing, who like an honest man stirred apace after and before'

Due to the frequency with which Katherine felt her baby move within her, the couple were convinced it would be a boy, which delighted Thomas Seymour:

> 'the receiving of your letter revived my spirits… that I hear my little man doth shake his poll [head]…'

These letters were exchanged while Katherine was confined at Sudeley Castle in the Cotswolds. The castle had a long and somewhat chequered history. It was recorded in the Domesday Book, a survey of much of England and part of Wales conducted in 1086 which was instructed by William the Conqueror, and it shows that Sudeley belonged to Harold de Sudeley. It was then inherited by his son John, who married Grace de Tracy, whose ancestors took their mother's name. It was owned by William de Tracy, an ancestor of Grace de Tracy, who was one of the knights that murdered Thomas Becket in 1170. The castle also had royal owners, Richard III (whilst still the Duke of Gloucester) used it as his campaign headquarters before the battle of Tewkesbury and when he became king he added the banqueting hall and state rooms. When Henry VII succeeded the throne he gave Sudeley to his uncle, Jasper Tudor, and upon his death it reverted back to the crown.

Edward VI gifted the castle to his uncle Thomas Seymour, who attempted to renovate it in order for Katherine to give birth there. Seymour spent £1,000 on Sudeley in the months leading up to her confinement, but due to time pressures he was unable to make any structural changes to the castle. It appears that Katherine was comfortable at Sudeley with a large retinue of ladies-in-waiting, including Jane Grey, spending the last three months of her pregnancy there. While she waited the nursery was prepared for the eagerly anticipated boy. It was hung with fine tapestries, decorated in the colours of crimson and gold, 'the child was

Katherine Parr's beautiful grave at Sudeley. (Findagrave.com)

already provided with plate for a table service and fine furniture.'[1]

Katherine's wait was finally over when she was delivered of a baby girl on the 30th of August 1548, she was named Mary after Katherine's eldest step-daughter. If the couple were disappointed over the sex of the child, there is no evidence remaining and 'their delight was made plain when the proud father wrote to his brother… about his sweet little girl.'[2] It seemed that Katherine had come through the delivery well, as Someset states in his response to his brother's letter;

> 'We are right glad to understand
> by your letters that the Queen your
> bedfellow hath had a happy hour: and,
> escaping all danger, hath made you
> the father of so pretty a daughter.'

This happiness, however, was not set to last. Within a few days of giving birth Katherine had developed a fever and grew weaker instead of stronger. It was puerperal fever, a bacterial infection relatively common during this period and well into the 19th century due to a lack of understanding of antibiotics and the importance of hygiene during the delivery. It usually appears after the first 24 hours and within the first 10 days following the birth, which is why it first appeared Katherine had come through the delivery without danger. She would have suffered a high fever, bouts of delirium, chills and abdominal pain. Katherine resigned herself to the fact that she would probably die, despite reassurances from her friend Lady Elizabeth, Robert Tyrwhit's wife. On the 3rd of September she sent for Huicke,

1 Linda Porter, *Katherine the Queen: The remarkable life of Katherine Parr,* (Basingstoke, 2010) p. 319
2 *ibid.,* p. 320

her physician, and Parkhurst, her chaplain, and dictated her will as she was too weak to write it herself. She left everything to Thomas Seymour, it makes no mention of her baby and Katherine did not include a profession of her religious faith.

In the early hours of the morning on the 5th of September Katherine Parr succumbed to puerperal fever. She was buried in the castle's chapel, St Mary's, apparently in sight of the windows of Mary Seymour's nursery.[3] Jane Grey served as chief mourner during the short funeral service, none of Katherine's step-children were present. There is hardly a comparison to be made between Katherine Parr's funeral and that of Jane Seymour's or other queen-consorts or dowagers. It was over in a single morning, the choir sung psalms, three lessons were read in English and offerings were made in the alms box not for the dead but for the living. The ecclesiastical reformer Miles Coverdale, delivered the sermon, said a short prayer and then Katherine was buried as the choir sung the Te Deum in English. This simple funeral has been described by historians such as David Starkey and Linda Porter as the first royal Protestant funeral in England. However, the singing of the Te Deum, even in English, shows that the old traditions were still links to pre-Reformation rites. Thomas Seymour was utterly shocked at the death of wife, 'the possibility that she might not survive seems simply never to have crossed his mind.'[4] In a letter to Jane Grey's father, the marquess of Dorset, Seymour states

> 'with the Queen's Highness death, I was so amazed that I had small regard either to myself or to my doings.'

Katherine lay in the chapel of St Mary's at Sudeley Castle while the world changed around her. Following Thomas Seymour's execution, the castle reverted back to the crown and, in the reign of Queen Mary, it was granted to Sir John Brydges who was created Lord Chandos. It remained in the family for the next century and several generations joined Katherine in the vault of St Mary's. In 1644, the castle was garrisoned by Parliamentary troops and the chapel was desecrated by a group of religious iconoclasts and politically motivated egalitarians. The roof was removed and Katherine Parr's tomb was destroyed along with the coffins in vault beneath the chapel. For the next two centuries the chapel surrounding Katherine's remains lay in ruins, and the exact location of her tomb was largely forgotten, apart from an over-looked manuscript in the Collage of Arms.

New interest in Katherine Parr's tomb was sparked by Samuel Rudder's *A New History of Gloucestershire* which was published in 1779. It contained a passage taken from the manuscript that had been over-looked for centuries:

> Item, on wenysday the 5 Septembre, between 2 or 3 of the clocke in the morning died the aforesaid Ladye, late Quene Dowager, at the Castle of Sudley in Gloucestershire 1548, and lyeth buried in the Chappell of the said castle.
>
> Item, she was cearid and chested in lead accordinglie, and so remained.

In May 1782, a number of ladies who were staying in the castle as guests had read this entry and decided to investigate the chapel themselves. 'Observing a large block of alabaster, fixed in the North wall of the chapel, they imagined it might be the back of a monument formerly placed there.'[5] They then began to 'open the ground' near the wall and found what has been described as a 'lead envelope', which they were able to open in two different places. Before doing so, they noted an inscription which convinced them 'it was

3 Linda Porter, *Katherine the Queen,* p. 323

4 *Ibid.,* p. 324

5 Rev. Tredway Nash, 'Observation on the time of the death and place of burial of Queen Katherine Parr, in The Society of Antiquaries London, *Archaeologia: Or Miscellaneous Tracts Relating to Antiquity, vol. ix,* (London, 1789) p. 2

Expectant parents: Deborah Kerr as Katherine Parr and Stewart Granger as Thomas Seymour in 1953's "Young Bess". (Public Domain.)

the body of Queen Katherine."[6] The group discovered the head and breast of a corpse neatly wrapped in cerecloth, a type of waxed cloth typically used as a burial shroud. According to their later accounts, the body was perfectly preserved. The ladies were understandably shocked by their discovery, as well as the smell, hastily left without recovering the body in the lead envelope.

For two years Katherine was left in peace again, until another group wanted to see her for themselves. Upon fining her body, they discovered that severe damage had been done to her face due to its exposure to the elements. They recovered Katherine and withdrew, not wanting to cause any more damage. On the 14th of October 1786 a group of antiquaries, Reverend Treadway Nash, the Hon. John Sommers Cocks and Mr John Skipp, gained permission from Lord Rivers, who owned the castle, to re-examine the corpse in more detail. This discovery is described by Reverend Nash himself, in *Archaeologia: Or Miscellaneous Tracts Relating to Antiquity, vol. ix.* He also cites the damage that had been done to Katherine's face following its uncovering in 1782;

> 'the bones only remaining; the teeth, which were found had fallen out of their

6 *ibid.,* p. 3

> sockets. The body, I believe, is perfect, as it has never been opened; we thought it indecent and indelicate to uncover it, but observing the left hand to lie at a small distance from the body, we took off the cerecloth, and found the hand and nails perfect, but of a brownish colour.'[7]

Nash observes that the Katherine must have been of a small stature, as the lead which enclosed her body measured five feet and four inches.

We are left with a dismal scene of where Katherine now rested, as Nash states 'the chapel where she now lies is used for the keeping of rabbits which make holes and scratch very indecently about her Royal corpse.'[8] Following their examination, the party recovered Katherine and she was left untouched for another seventy years.

The castle fell into even more disrepair and eventually the surrounding estate was bought, in 1830, by William and John Dent, two brothers who had inherited the glove manufacturing company Dent's, which had been established by their father. In 1837, they purchased the castle from Lord Rivers and became joint owners of the entire estate. William and John immediately began work on restoring the castle, they hired the great gothic-revival architect George Gilbert Scott to restore St Mary's chapel. Unfortunately, they never got to see the completed work and Sudeley was inherited by their nephew John Dent and his wife Emma (née Brocklehurst) who continued the restoration work. Katherine Parr's funeral effigy was constructed during this period by the sculptor John Birnie Philip, before it was finished and mounted in St Mary's the effigy was displayed at the Royal Academy for a short time. Katherine's marble effigy was housed under a canopy designed by George Gilbert Scott in the gothic-revival style he was so renowned for.

Katherine Parr remains in St Mary's today, the only English queen-consort to be buried on private property. The Sudeley estate has been opened to the public by its current owners and events marking the dates of Katherine's birth and death are held annually.

LAUREN BROWNE

7 *ibid*, p. 3
8 *ibid*, p. 4

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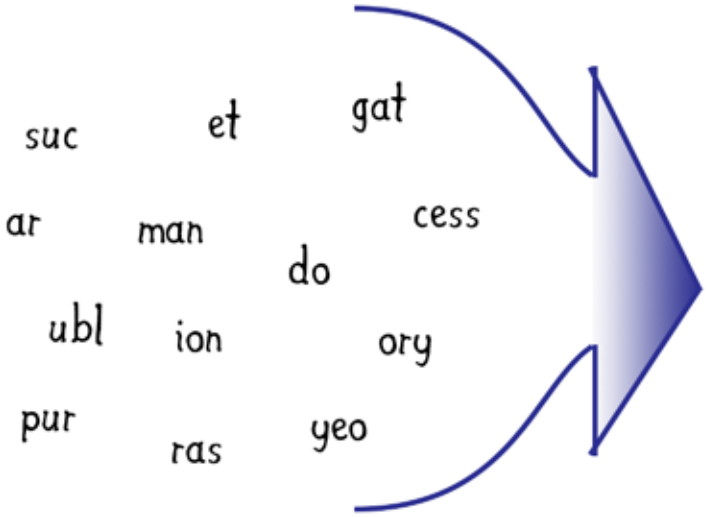
LAUREN BROWNE has completed an MA at Queen's University Belfast, studying the posthumous representation of Eleanor of Aquitaine. She has now begun a PhD at Queen's and is currently researching Tudor attitudes towards Medieval Queens as well as the writing of History in the Tudor period. Her main focus is the posthumous representation of queenship from the medieval period right through to the early modern.

TUDOR WORDS QUIZ

For each section, use the fragments on the left to make Tudor words on the right



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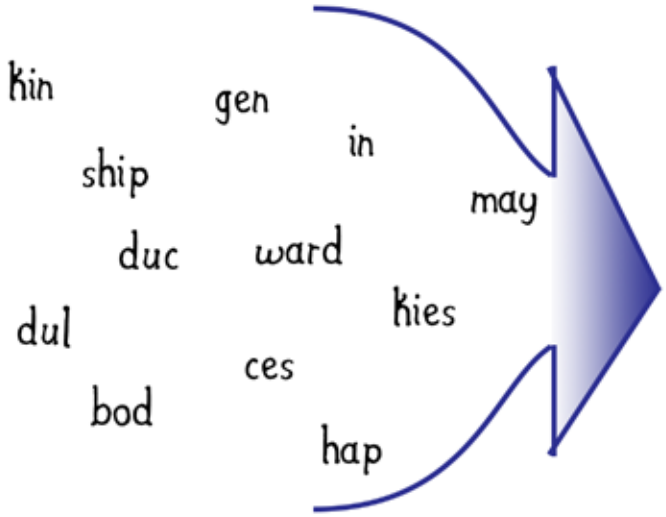

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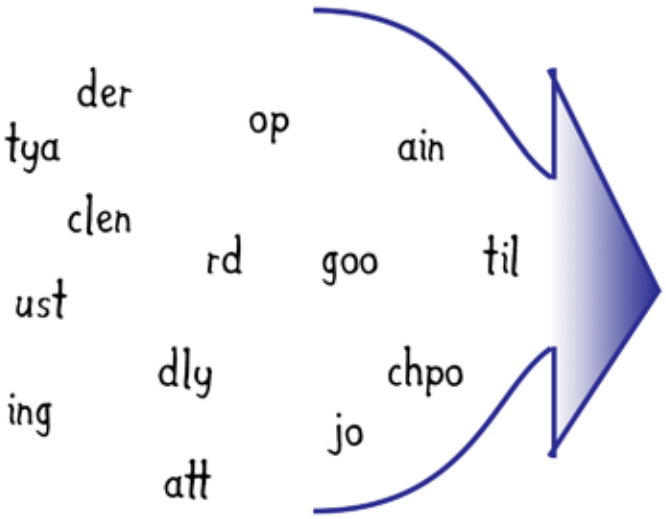

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The Wanton and the Nurse: Katherine Howard and Katherine Parr in Film

BY CONOR BYRNE

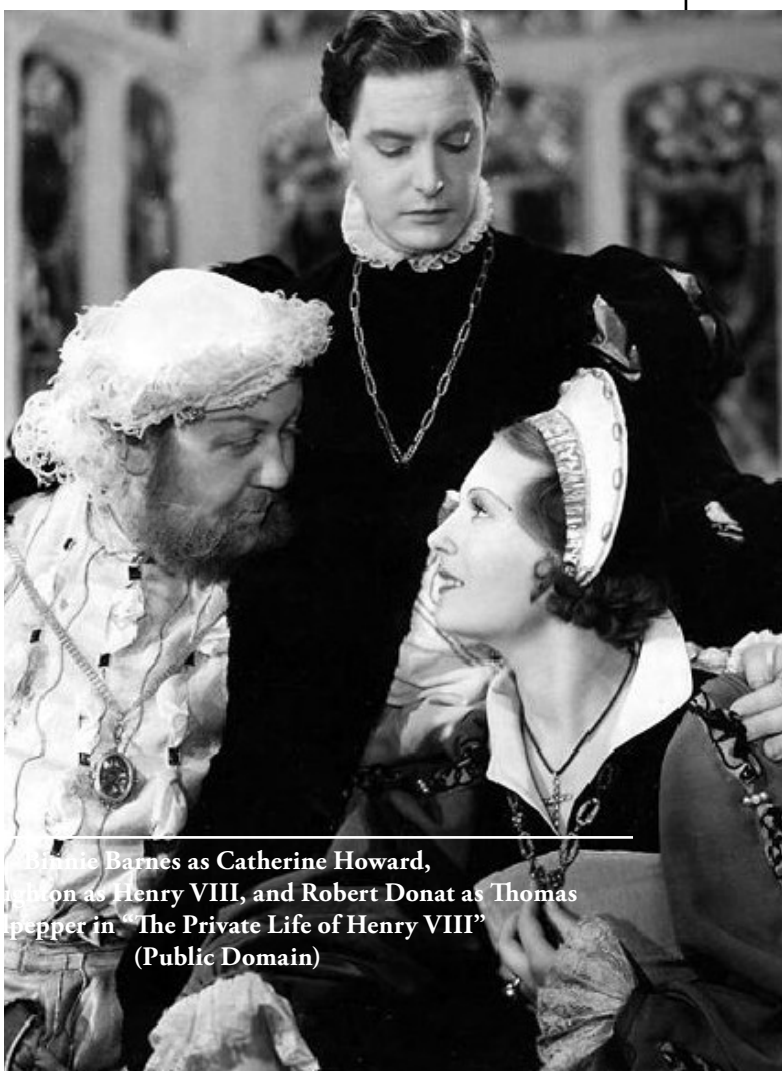
The life histories of Henry VIII's final consorts, Katherine Howard and Katherine Parr, are generally well-known. Although neither featured in the Reformation controversies that were associated with the king's annulment of his first marriage to Katherine of Aragon and subsequent marriage to Anne Boleyn, their lives were of interest to both Catholic and reformed authors, who either praised or criticised Henry for his marital choices, depending on their religious interests. Generally the religious perspective has been absent in screen adaptations of the king's final two marriages.

The first actress to portray Katherine Howard's life in detail was Binnie Barnes in the 1933 historical comedy, *The Private Life of Henry VIII*, which starred Charles Laughton as the Tudor monarch. Unlike in other television adaptations, the fifth marriage dominated the film. The thirty-year-old Barnes represented Katherine as a beautiful, ambitious and witty debutante. Adopting the ambitious role usually associated with Anne Boleyn – as in, for example, the two film adaptations of the novel *The Other Boleyn Girl* – Barnes' Katherine met her doom when she rashly began an affair with her husband's attendant, Thomas Culpeper. Their executions shortly followed the discovery of their illicit liaison.

The BBC adaptation, *The Six Wives of Henry VIII*, aired in 1970 and featured the late Keith Michell as Henry VIII; Michell subsequently reprised the role in the film *Henry VIII and His Six Wives* (1972). Like Barnes, a mature actress was elected to play Katherine Howard, but in contrast to the vivacious and witty Katherine of *The Private Life of Henry VIII,* Angela Pleasence portrayed the fifth wife as scheming, manipulative and devoid of charm. Henry's attraction to her seems to have been based largely on her youth and seeming ability to sympathise with his physical ills. In one respect, the adaptation was accurate: contemporary observers at court reported the king's desire to fondle his consort as frequently as possible, which was represented in the television series. Pleasence's Katherine was aware of the dangers that could ensue if her king discovered her past, but nonetheless commenced an affair with Culpeper in the aftermath of a disastrous wedding night, when she experienced shock at realising that Henry was not the virile man she had expected. She threatened to have Francis Dereham, her childhood lover, killed off if he did not keep silent about their affair. Her motives for seeking Culpeper's company were ambiguous, but possibly she hoped to fall pregnant by him. When Katherine's uncle discovered his niece's illicit past, he elected to inform the king, thus sacrificing both Katherine and Lady Rochford, who had assisted her with the Culpeper liaison, to the enemies of the Howards. The devastated king berated the duke for humiliating him, while the unfortunate Katherine prepared for her execution while imprisoned in the Tower of London.

Pleasence's portrayal may have been influenced by Lacey Baldwin Smith's biography of Katherine, which had been published the previous decade. Baldwin Smith characterised the fifth queen as a materialistic, insubstantial and foolish adolescent with an inability to inspire loyalty in her adherents. He also asserted that she and Culpeper committed adultery after her marriage to Henry. Pleasence's Katherine conformed closely to Baldwin Smith's image of Katherine, a conformity that extended to choices of costume.

Two years after the BBC adaptation, the film *Henry VIII and His Six Wives* was aired. Unlike the previous two adaptations, the film's characterisation of Katherine Howard probably corresponded more closely to historical reality. Lynne Frederick, who was eighteen years old at the time, was chosen to represent Katherine, having previously played another doomed royal, Grand Duchess Tatiana in *Nicholas and Alexandra*. She portrayed the queen as a kind-hearted if ineffectual courtier that captivated the ageing king with her beauty, charm and seeming innocence. In this regard, it is significant that, in the wake of the historical Katherine's downfall, she was charged with misleading the king as to her virginity, by adopting gestures and behaviour associated with virtuous maidens. Unlike the BBC adaptation, Dereham did not feature in the 1972 film, while Culpeper's association with the queen was presented more ambiguously. When Henry discovered his wife's unchaste childhood, he wept, while the distraught Katherine experienced a nervous breakdown when interrogated by the archbishop of Canterbury. Her youth and innocence were emphasised in the scaffold scene, which again, did not feature her accomplice Lady Rochford.



Binnie Barnes as Catherine Howard, Laughton as Henry VIII, and Robert Donat as Thomas Culpepper in "The Private Life of Henry VIII" (Public Domain)

Ang[illegible] and [illegible] Six Wives of He[illegible] (BBC)

The next full-feature adaption of Katherine's marriage to Henry occurred in the 2003 television film *Henry VIII*, starring Ray Winstone as the king. Emily Blunt featured as the fifth queen. She lacked the ruthlessness and vindictiveness of Pleasence's performance, while the innocence and sweet nature of Frederick's portrayal were also largely absent. Instead, the film placed emphasis on the hedonist Katherine's recklessness, while highlighting her beauty and sex appeal. As in the 1970 adaptation, the guileless Katherine was placed by her relatives at court with a view to securing Henry VIII's attention; the ageing monarch subsequently proclaimed his love for her and offered her marriage. Modern historians are sceptical of this traditional factional interpretation; court gossip circulated that the king himself chose to wed Katherine because he had fallen in love with her. In the 2003 film, Katherine sought to seduce her husband's handsome attendant Culpeper and invited him with sexual intimacies. In this regard, Blunt's performance more closely corresponded with Pleasence's scheming seductress than it did with Frederick's naïve teenager. When Henry discovered his wife's affair, he physically manhandled her and threatened to kill her, before ordering the execution of Culpeper, which was observed by the queen. Later, she followed to the scaffold and a dramatic scene took place, whereby she wept and pleaded for her life before being decapitated. Blunt's performance, in almost every respect, departed from historical accuracy.

Several years later, the third and fourth seasons of the successful Showtime series *The Tudors* included Tamzin Merchant as Katherine. In an entirely fictional scene, Katherine was introduced to Charles Brandon, duke of Suffolk, and Sir Francis Bryan as a sexually active, knowing woman that had grown up in a household closely resembling a brothel. Later, she was introduced at court and captivated the restless Henry with her free spirit and sexual experience, which runs counter to the historical Henry's belief that his fifth wife was virginal and sexually inexperienced. The unpopular Katherine was duly proclaimed queen at court, but irritated her husband's courtiers and displeased his eldest daughter Mary, whom she regularly quarrelled with. This idea may have been influenced by the imperial ambassador's report that Katherine had expelled several of her stepdaughter's maids as punishment for Mary's rude behaviour, but he duly noted that the two behaved cordially towards one another thereafter. Continuing the brothel atmosphere that characterised the dowager duchess of Norfolk's household, the court was featured as a sexual hothouse in which the king's grooms looked lustily upon the vivacious Katherine, but her eye soon fell on the handsome, if cruel, Thomas Culpeper, who had earlier raped a park keeper's wife. As in the 1970 adaptation, Katherine's friends were shown to be a danger to the queen because of their knowledge of her premarital activities. The embittered Lady Rochford assisted Katherine's affair with Culpeper, while sleeping with him herself. Eventually, the liaison was discovered. Although Katherine ran

screaming through the court in a bid to secure her husband's mercy, she was subsequently imprisoned and executed alongside Lady Rochford. Anne Boleyn's ghost, in the closing episode of the series, voiced sympathy for her tragic cousin, but the lasting impression of Merchant's Katherine is a spoiled, hedonistic and unintelligent woman, unable to inspire loyalty or affection in her friends or attendants. In this respect, Merchant's portrayal fit Baldwin Smith's characterisation of the queen, and was not informed by modern historical research that took a more sympathetic view of Katherine.

None of the television portrayals of Katherine Howard considered the idea that her illicit liaisons were involuntary, nor did they factor into their interpretations Katherine's age and inexperience when involved with Manox (who did not feature in any of the adaptations) or Dereham. Moreover, the relationship with Culpeper was characterised either as a love affair or as a sexual relationship facilitated by Lady Rochford, rather than as blackmail, as has been argued by many modern historians. *The Tudors* followed the traditional notion that the queen had a poor relationship with her stepdaughter, while *The Six Wives of Henry VIII* and *Henry VIII and His Six Wives* both featured the discredited notion that Katherine was manipulated by her relatives and a political faction at court into seducing the king. The historical Katherine's activities as a patron and intercessor were, predictably, ignored in favour of focusing on her as a seductress and adulteress.

The first actress to portray Katherine Parr in a feature-length film was the thirty-year-old Everley Gregg. In contrast to Barnes' coquette, Gregg depicted the sixth wife as a nagging shrew, able to dominate her weary husband. In truth, the historical Katherine is said to have lectured Henry on the religious issues of the day, but her husband was undoubtedly the dominant partner in their relationship, as manifested in his approval of a warrant for Katherine's arrest, which was subsequently withdrawn.

In *The Six Wives of Henry VIII*, the fifty-year-old Rosalie Crutchley portrayed a pious, diligent and cautious Katherine Parr, who in actuality was thirty-one years of age when Henry VIII selected her to be his consort. Initially, Crutchley's Katherine rejected the king's offer of marriage, an idea perhaps influenced by the report that the sixth queen acknowledged that it would be safer to be Henry's mistress than his wife. Katherine, who harboured an attraction to Thomas Seymour, was persuaded by him to marry the king, an idea that recurred in *The Tudors*. The television adaptation followed John Foxe's story of the court plot against Katherine masterminded by Bishop Gardiner and the preparation of her arrest warrant, which was approved by the resentful Henry. When advised by the archbishop of Canterbury to seek the king's forgiveness, Katherine was restored to favour, but her ageing husband died shortly after. Her marriage to Seymour followed. This portrayal fit the traditional notion of Katherine as an older, dowdy and motherly figure, with no consideration of her artistic and cultural pursuits, although it did pay tribute to her religious activities.

This interpretation of Katherine followed in *Henry VIII and His Six Wives*, but she did not feature as a major historical character, given the film's focus largely on the marriages to Anne Boleyn and Katherine Howard. Barbara Leigh-Hunt's Katherine was also a mature widow that attempted to turn down Henry's proposal of marriage; her role was that of a companion and stepmother to his children. Unlike the television adaptation, the film did not portray the conservative plot against the queen, but it also ignored her activities as a regent during Henry's wars with France, likewise focusing on her perceived role as a nurse rather than as a political figure.

Usually, little attention is given to Katherine Parr in film and television. These adaptations tend to provide greater coverage of the king's scandal-ridden marriages to Anne Boleyn and Katherine

One of the great beauties of the 1970s, Lynne Frederick played Grand Duchess Tatiana of Russia in "Nicholas and Alexandra" (pictured), before giving a haunting portrayal of Catherine Howard a year later, opposite Keith Michell. (Public Domain)

Golden Globe-winning actress Emily Blunt's breakthrough performance as Catherine Howard in 2003. (ITV)

Howard, alongside the lengthy annulment crisis associated with Katherine of Aragon. Thus, in the 2003 film *Henry VIII,* Clare Holman's Katherine Parr comprised only a minor role, although her portrayal was mostly positive in presenting the queen as a loyal wife and caring stepmother.

Joely Richardson depicted a beautiful, sensual and intelligent Katherine Parr in *The Tudors*, and was a highly popular figure at court, in contrast to her predecessor. The adaptation emphasised Katherine's warm relationships with her stepchildren, an idea supported by modern historical research. However, the series resurrected the Victorian historian Agnes Strickland's discredited view of Katherine as a nurse to her ageing husband, an idea that David Starkey dismissed as absurd. Attracting the enmity of Bishop Gardiner, the evangelical Katherine was investigated for heresy. However, the king ordered the men away when they arrived to arrest his consort. The relationship between Henry and Katherine was presented as one of genuine affection, perhaps love; when the king died, Katherine wept. Their union contrasted with the king's short-lived lust for Katherine Howard and his tempestuous relationship with Anne Boleyn.

A sedate and matronly Catherine Parr, played by Rosalie Crutchley in "The Six Wives of Henry VIII" and its sequel, "Elizabeth R". (BBC)

In film and television, Katherine Howard and Katherine Parr have usually featured as the wanton and the nurse. Occasionally, both are presented more sympathetically as complex figures, as in *Henry VIII and His Six Wives* (Katherine Howard) and in *The Tudors* (Katherine Parr). By and large, however, these interpretations have not been as polarised as those concerning Anne Boleyn. Both wives shared the honour of being wed to an erratic and unpredictable king in his twilight years, as his court was undermined by factional intrigue and political rivalries. One fell victim to these intrigues and was executed, while the other was able to discreetly navigate them and ultimately survive.

CONOR BYRNE

Joely Richardson as Katherine Parr in the final season of "The Tudors". (Showtime)

What the Reformation meant to Ordinary Folk, part 2.

The Poor turn to Crime.

Last time, we considered the religious shock caused to the lives of ordinary people by Henry VIII's dissolution of the monasteries. This time, we'll look at the more practical aspects.

Tanning leather

In medieval times, almost 75% of crimes committed were thefts but in the Tudor period this crime soared. One reason was growing unemployment. In the last decade of the fifteenth century and for centuries to come, landowners found a great way of not only reducing their overheads but of making a mint of money: sheep. Whereas, throughout medieval times, a lord lived on the produce of his own estates, taking what his household needed and selling the surplus for profit, the Tudors were moving towards a consumer society. The change had begun during the fourteenth century, when the Black Death severely reduced the work force. Landlords had fewer tenants to pay rents and not enough labourers to tend the crops and one answer lay in turning the estate over to sheep farming. A couple of shepherds and their dogs could care for the flock with extra hands needed only at lambing and shearing time.

But sheep required extensive pastures so landlords grubbed out the small areas of strip farming, where their tenants grew wheat and barley, peas and cabbages, and let them return to grass, surrounding them with hedges to keep in the sheep and keep out the common folk. The lord now made vast profits from the sale of wool – more than enough to buy in the food he needed and pay a few shepherds. It didn't even matter that his tenants couldn't grow food nor have a means of earning money to buy it and pay their rents to him. He just turned them out to beg their bread and took the chance to knock down their empty hovels to make room for yet more sheep. These were the infamous 'enclosures' – sheep versus people.

In an emergency, medieval folk could turn to the monasteries for help but the Church couldn't deal with the great numbers of the needy, neither could it provide any long-term solution. Inevitably, many of the unemployed and homeless became vagrants and beggars in an attempt to feed their families but it was all too easy to slip into a life of crime. The disabled and elderly who begged their bread were seen as genuinely deserving of Christian charity, so they were granted licences to beg by the authorities. But there had always been suspicions about what were called 'sturdy' beggars; those quite capable of working for a living, if they could get a job. They were either regarded as too lazy to do a hand's turn or else they were up to no good, threatening honest citizens, so no licences were granted to them. For those who had no skills to earn a living and no licence to plead for alms, there was only one alternative to starvation: theft.

In 1495, during Henry VII's reign, before the enclosing of lands affected too many, a new statute against vagabonds ordained that offenders were set in the stocks for three days without food and, for a second offence, six days. If they were caught begging a third time, they were sent back to the place of their birth and cease troubling other communities. This suggests the authorities believed most vagrants were outsiders and that their home community would be able to give them work or support them somehow. Clearly, this wasn't

A shilling from Henry VIII's reign

The punishment of theives in Tudor times

always going to be the case – they must have left in the first place for some reason, perhaps in search of work – and as the number of unemployed increased with continued land enclosures, local communities couldn't cope.

Henry VIII introduced more stringent punishments: death for stealing the most trivial items. Thomas More was less than impressed:

> *This punishment of thieves passes the limits of Justice ... it is too extreme and cruel a punishment for theft and yet not sufficient to refrain and withhold men from theft. For simple theft is not so great an offence that it ought to be punished with death. Neither is there any punishment so horrible that it can keep them from stealing which have no other craft whereby to get their living ... no man should be driven to this extreme necessity, first to steal and then to die.*

Here, Thomas hints at the root of the problem: mass unemployment.

By 1531, the government decided harsher punishments were necessary to deter 'able-bodied vagabonds and idle persons'. With no consideration of the reasons why such people had to beg, they were tied to a cart, naked, and whipped through the streets until their blood ran, then thrown out of town without delay, to return to where they were born, or else to where they had lived for the last three years, and there to 'labour as true men ought to do'. As you can imagine, the new law made no difference in a time of mass unemployment and things were about to get worse.

In the late 1530s, Henry VIII dissolved the monasteries. Some institutions were massively wealthy but others were virtually destitute with only a handful of brethren. One thing they had in common: they were England's makeshift welfare system. Closing them not only denied the poor and hungry a place to seek food, shelter and health care, but the now-homeless monks, nuns and lay servants increased the number of unemployed. Some of the better educated monks were taken on as tutors to the children of the wealthy but, at the other extreme, some poor nuns turned to prostitution to avoid starvation. For many of those in between, a life of petty crime was the only answer but the penalty for stealing an egg – which had been a 1s fine (steep enough when you were penniless) – was now death! You have been warned.

TONI MOUNT

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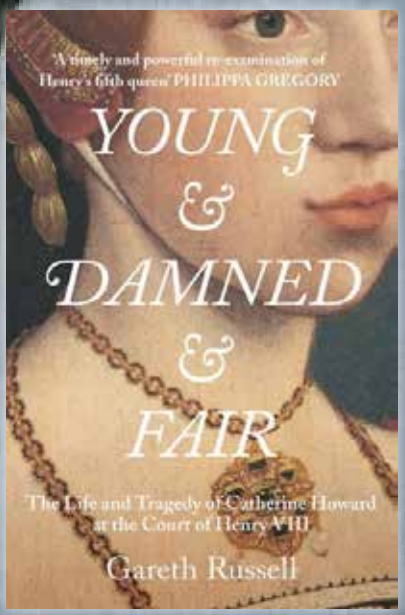
Fair"



The Flirt and the Nursemaid

Catherine Howard and Katherine Parr in *The Tudors*

BY EMMA TAYLOR

An improbably slender Henry VIII, played by Jonathan Rhys-Meyers. (Showtime.)

Showtime's historical drama series, *The Tudors,* garnered much attention during its 4 year run. Coming to an end in 2010, the series covered a large portion of the reign of King Henry VIII, often considered one of England's most infamous Kings: a tyrant with a penchant for divorce and execution. On the surface, Henry's tempestuous reign provides the perfect mixture of drama, romance and intrigue needed for any successful drama. *The Tudors* realises this in the most glamorous and bloodthirsty way possible; with lavish sets, beautiful costumes, and gut-wrenchingly realistic beheadings and hangings. While undoubtedly one of the most popular pieces of Tudor popular culture around, *The Tudors* was widely criticised for its embellishment, and at times, total erasure of historical fact. Tim Dowling, writing for *The Guardian,* states that 'Almost everyone in the Tudors is young, thin and beautiful'; a point which I would tend to agree with. Johnathan Rhys Meyers plays a brooding, pouty, darkly handsome King Henry – a far cry from the popular image of the red-headed, obese King played by so many others. Costumes were another point on which the accuracy remains dubious. This is because the large numbers of costumes required for each episode and the large amount of extras necessitated a large amount of rental costumes, which undoubtedly came from different eras; with gowns of Elizabethan and even Georgian styles making occasional appearances. However, if one is able to suspend their disbelief in terms of timelines and appearances, *The Tudors* offers up interesting interpretations on the parts of the oft-neglected wives of Henry VIII, particularly Anne of Cleves, Catherine Howard and Katherine Parr, who were the last of Henry's six wives.

One interesting comparison I kept returning to lay within the representations of Catherine Howard and Katherine Parr, played by Tamzin Merchant and Joley Richardson respectively. *The Tudors* does not adhere to subtle presentations of character at times, but the contrast between Henry's last two wives stands out as particularly notable. In the show, Catherine is little more than a beautiful young farm girl, with a penchant for pretty clothes, jewellery and giggling excessively. Katherine Parr, on the other hand, is a widowed, mature lady, who is tending to her elderly, ailing husband. These two women, who share the same position, in the same season, are presented as completely opposite, and

Rose without a thorn?: One of Tamzin Merchant's scenes as Catherine Howard. (Showtime.)

many of the interesting parts of their characters are made evident through this contrast.

Catherine Howard is first presented to the King as a distraction from his unhappy, unconsummated marriage to the innocent, foreign Ann of Cleves. From the very first moment we see Catherine, she is framed as an object of sexual desire. She reclines on a bed, her hair loose around her face, wearing stays (a corset), a kirtle, and stockings; which, to a Tudor lady, would have been tantamount to her underwear. She is presented to the Privy Council in this get-up, in a slow, pan-up camera shot from her feet, in dainty little heels, to her bosom. Catherine giggles, plays with her hair, bites her lip: she is the very image of girlish coquettishness and flirtation. After the King begins to court her, she asks to see his ring, and almost immediately uses this ring to trace along her legs, and draw attention to every part of her body. Although she is presented in an angelic white and pearl-embroidered dress in this scene, she is inherently a sexualised character – so much so, that one could consider nakedness as a key part of her character's costume. She is naked in every episode she appears in, and at one stage, lies naked on her bed, covered in rose petals, waiting on Henry to arrive. Catherine is talked about by the men of the show in parts; rarely as a full, actualised person. Culpepper, her eventual lover, describes her breasts, her buttocks; but we rarely see her spoken about in non-sexualised terms, except by Henry, who calls her his 'rose without a thorn'. She is often shown in bed, either alone or with a lover, but almost always naked, or in diaphanous shifts that do

Tamzin Merchant in vibrant reds as the young Queen, with Jonathan Rhys-Meyers. (Fanpop.)

little to conceal her nakedness. However, while her nakedness is symbolic of her sexuality, it also speaks of her free spirit and impulsiveness. She runs outside, dressed only in her shift, to dance in the rain. There is a contrast between Catherine's natural state; her nakedness, and the artifice of her courtly gown. The ostentatious nature of Catherine's costumes contrasts the colours of her rooms, and clash with the pale lemon dresses of her ladies' maids. She looks beautiful, but out of place in the world of the court. It is a reflection on her unsuitability in the role of Queen; at least within *The Tudors* representation of the character.

Catherine, when clothed, spends much of her time in the show dressed in deep, luscious reds, embroidered with golden threads, velvets and silks. The deep red is obviously symbolic of the abundant sexuality displayed by Catherine, and the romantic, excessive nature of her character that will eventually be her downfall. However, we do see her character fluctuate between this colour, and dresses of pale blues and whites, adorned with silvers and creams. Although Catherine's character is sexualised, and at times frivolous, the lighter colours and Tamzin Merchant's youthful portrayal of the character serve to remind the audience that she is a young girl, and while perhaps, she tends towards silliness and promiscuity, she is little more than a child. In anticipation of her eventual downfall, Catherine's colours become decidedly more sombre, and her carefully curated looks begin to disintegrate. Her hair tumbles around her face, she loses her ornate hairpieces and jewellery, and rarely changes gown. In one dreamlike sequence, Catherine dances in her white stays and sift while her lovers, Culpepper and Dereham are executed; in a scene that seems to pardon Catherine for her promiscuity while displaying the gruesome end of her lovers. Catherine meets her inevitable end in a sombre black gown, barefoot. It is a sombre, sad end for a character that, while flawed, was loveable in her naiveté.

Katherine Parr, however, could not be more different. We first meet her in the apartments of her then-husband, Lord Latimer, where she is tending to

Richardson's Katherine Parr, reassuringly elegant in neutral tones. (TV-Overmind.)

Joely Richardson's debut as Katherine Parr, Baroness Latimer. (Fanpop.)

him in the final days of his illness. She is beautifully garbed in a dark purple gown; mature and statuesque, she is a picture of elegance. She assumes the submissive wifely role well; playing nursemaid to her terminally ill husband. We discover soon after that she is in love with Thomas Seymour, but this is presented through nothing more than a chaste kiss and a brief discussion of feelings. King Henry, upon meeting her, is intrigued, and after a brief introduction sends her gifts of fine cloth to make dresses from. Katherine wants to refuse them, but her husband tells her she cannot, seemingly realising the position in which Katherine may soon find herself. The clothes from Henry serve almost as a statement of intent; an unspoken beginning to the courtship of his sixth and final wife.

Katherine is costumed in soft, neutral tones; moving between warm, earthy browns and pale pastel blues with ease. There is little artifice in her costume, with the designer favouring natural colours rather than harsh reds favoured by the previous Catherine. Her costumes also favour prints and decorations of natural scenery; she is frequently dressed in soft, delicate florals and silks; a far cry from the nakedness and harsh jewel tones of the younger Catherine Howard. Katherine's jewellery is slightly simpler and less ornate than many of Henry's other wives, and even when she becomes Queen, her tiaras and crowns remain simple and delicate.

Katherine's dresses also tend to favour a more classical Tudor shape and style, which is rarely closely adhered to in this show. She is Henry's wife at the late stages of his life, when he is plagued by illness, paranoia and issues over the succession; and Katherine's introduction presents her as the perfect nursemaid wife for the ailing King.

The two Catherines, although sharing the same name, could not be more different. The young, coquettish woman-child, drawn into a luxurious opulent world and swallowed up by it, and the mature, sensible and reluctant nurse-wife, who ended up as perhaps the luckiest of Henry's Queens, outliving him by a year and a half.

The Tudors does have its own unique place within the pantheon of Tudor popular culture. Yes; it is popular entertainment, and, as such, favours elements of the Tudor's lives that were perhaps more scandalous and ostentatious than necessarily factual. After all, sex sells, and the R-rated nature of the show no doubt pulled in viewers who would otherwise not engage with historical dramas. However, entertainment such as *The Tudors* offers actors and artists the chance to engage with history on a very visceral level, and the representations offered therein can occasionally provoke thought and discussion around the real women who surrounded Henry VIII, and the countless vivid stories that the Tudor court continues to offer us to this day.

EMMA TAYLOR

Emma Taylor is based in Belfast, Northern Ireland, where she is currently researching on the impact of post-colonialism, history, and cultural identity in theatre. As an actress, she appeared as Imogen Dawson in all the theatre adaptations of MadeGlobal's "Popular" novels. She has styled costumes for productions of "Les Misérables", "Little Shop of Horrors" and producing the costumes for "The Gate of the Year", set in the court of Marie-Antoinette.

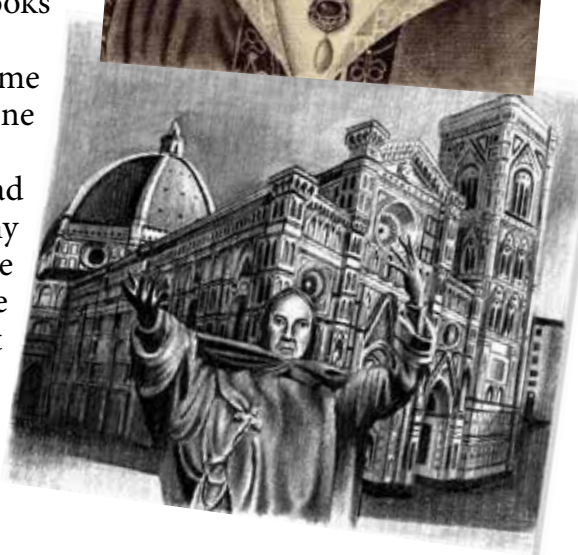
Member Spotlight: Anthony Hillman

I live in Birmingham, England, and have loved drawing ever since I was a child. Until last year, I found another new hobby, the Tudor Dynasty! I already knew the story from primary school but I wanted to read a few good books to learn more.

I have sketched a few portraits of some of the Tudor queens including Anne of Cleves, who is my favourite!

In my spare time, I like to read and visit historical places with my partner. I absolutely adore the Tudor period and it was a privilege to illustrate this month's front cover, I hope to develop this new subject matter further!

Thank you, The Tudor Society!



Charlie Bloud Books

GAME OF QUEENS

by Sarah Gristwood

There were many powerful queens in Europe during the sixteenth century, so many in fact that it is easy to become overwhelmed with the many different Margarets, Marys etc. Sarah Gristwood solves this problem by releasing a book that covers these fascinating queens in an accessible yet still detailed way. This book is similar to one of her previous works, *Blood Sisters: The Women Behind the Wars of the Roses*, and follows that well-received format to great success.

One small thing I like about this book is the who's who section at the beginning. In a book covering as many countries and people as this one does, it is a very helpful addition. The notable royal people are divided according to their location (Spain, England, Scotland etc.) as well as there being an additional section for reformers. Family trees are helpful additions that I feel should be in every book that covers a long period of time. Each chapter also starts with a location and a date, which helps with navigating and looking up who's who in the guide.

Gristwood starts with Anne Boleyn's arrival at the court of Margaret of Austria, a time which is not often explored, with most focusing instead on Anne's later years in England. She uses this moment to explore the relations between the Empire and England through the personal relationship of Thomas Boleyn and Margaret:

> *'In 1512 Thomas was sent on his first diplomatic mission, to the court of Margaret of Austria. Anne Boleyn's appointment there was proof of how well, in the course of a ten-month stay, the two had got on... In her letter to Thomas about Anne's progress Margaret told him that if the young girl went on as well as she was doing, then 'on your return the two of us will need no intermediary other than she'.'*

Using the example of Thomas Boleyn as a foreign diplomat is a good way to start the book as it shows the connections between the kingdoms and Gristwood establishes these links well. She keeps stressing these links throughout, never completely focusing on one country as a separate entity. This is a refreshing change from other books that just focus on England or France and sometimes imply that they weren't greatly affected by their neighbours. One of the greatest examples of the countries affecting each other is the events of the 1520s:

> *'it quickly transpired that the new adjustment of power in Europe, with the Habsburg Charles so clearly in the ascendant over a humiliated France, meant that Henry had lost his precious, precarious position as the keeper of the balance. Charles no longer needed him (and was aware, moreover, that Henry had contributed neither men nor money to the victory from which he hoped such gains).'*

Gristwood has an engaging and, at points, amusing narrative voice, making the nearly 400

page long book a fairly enjoyable read. She points out the irony of Henry VIII's attitude towards his sister Margaret taking another husband:

> *'On 3 March that year Margaret had married her young lover, Henry Stewart, whom James created Lord Methven 'for the great love that he bore to his dearest mother'. (Margaret's brother Henry VIII, by contrast, would continue - with sublime disregard for the proverb about pots and kettles - to call Margaret 'a shame and disgrace to all her family'.)'*

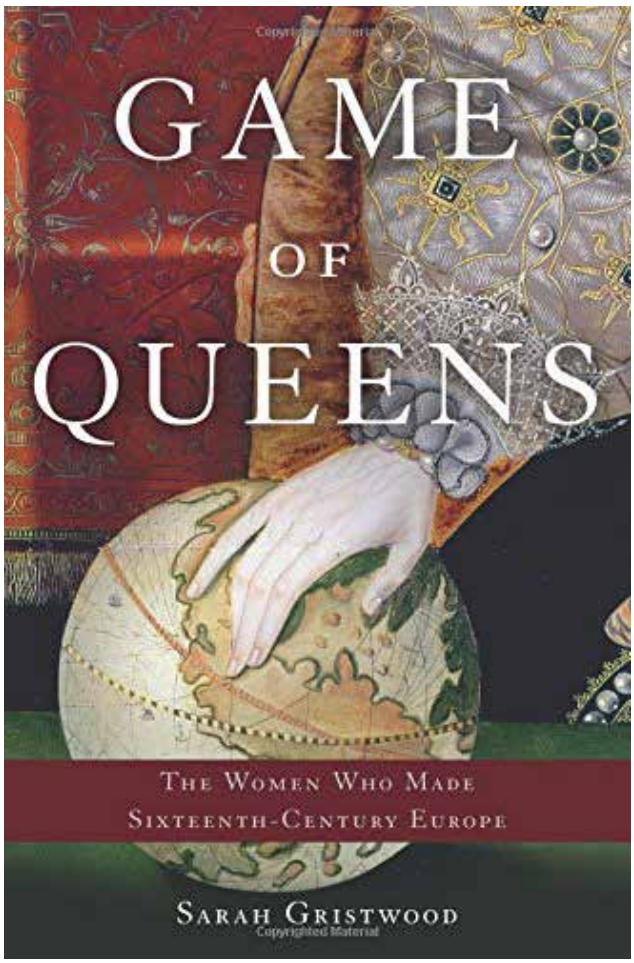
Of course we have our modern viewpoint on family relationships and cannot possibly know what was going on in Henry's head, however humour does make these particular episodes memorable, which would help any students studying the subject.

One problem with *Game of Queens* is that it can be a little overwhelming at times. Despite the fact that Gristwood does her best to keep it from being too complicated, the vast amount of information can make it difficult for the reader to retain it first time round. It will probably at least take a second reading if not more for it to truly sink in, but luckily this is an enjoyable book that I think many readers interested in the topic could return to either for research or just to read for pleasure.

Gristwood also does tend to repeat herself, making what was once a good point a tiresome one. One particular example of this is her chess analogy; she discusses how the kingdoms were like chess boards in great detail in one chapter, but then goes on to repeat this frequently throughout the rest of the book:

> *'The rules of the new chess declared that a lowly pawn, winning through to the enemy's back row, might itself became a queen, with all the powers that implied. But half a century earlier, a Catalan poem, 'Scachs d'Amor' (Chess Game of Love), had made a stipulation. No pawn could be 'queened' until the queen of its colour had been taken: there could not be two white, or two black, queens at one time.'*

This is the first time she uses the chess analogy and it works well when she uses it to discuss Anne Boleyn's rise to become queen, however it loses its effectiveness after she has repeated it two or three times. This can make the reader wonder whether she is just relying on this to support her theories, instead of proposing new ideas.



I like the way she has approached this potentially complicated subject. It's not easy to talk about several queens across Europe without confusing the reader, but with her constantly making comparisons between them and the guide to the major dynasties and political figures at the beginning, I feel like she's written a book that is very accessible, but not dumbed down. I would recommend this book to anyone interested in sixteenth century queens, anyone who enjoyed her book on the women of the Wars of the Roses (*Blood Sisters)* or anyone who wants to learn more about how the different countries were connected through their queens. It can be a bit of a daunting read at times, but well worth it.

CHARLIE FENTON

The Trevelyan Miscellanies – An Elizabethan's treasure trove

by Jane Moulder

Bound in 1608, the Trevelyan Miscellany is one of the treasures of the Folger Shakespeare Library, which is based in Washington DC in the United States. It is one of three volumes compiled by Thomas Trevelyon and the 1608 Miscellany holds the status of being the only book to have had an entire exhibition dedicated solely to it. The book gives us a rare and fascinating insight into the lives and thoughts of everyday Elizabethans and its 600 pages are full of brightly coloured illustrations, woodcuts and engravings. The book is a true miscellany of information and it was gathered together by Trevelyon for the entertainment and edification of himself and his friends and family. *"It is a mescelane and noe otherwise to be respected, not learned and therefore the easyer to be pardoned. All I hope that see it are my frynds and accept it frendlye .... So willying your frendlye favour, I leave it to your viewing". "I tooke this laboure in hande to accomplish my minde, to pleasure my fryndes. For what I have done hath bin of my selfe without mans teaching."* The subjects covered are wide and eclectic in range and includes old Testament stories and parables, historical political events, accounts of the rulers of England from Brutus through to James I and these are all combined with household proverbs, astronomical information, details on local fairs and festivals together with decorative alphabets and embroidery patterns. A true miscellany indeed.

Not much is known about Thomas Trevelyan except that when he compiled his "Great Book", some 8 years after the 1608 version, he was 68 years old and he was therefore born in 1548. From his undoubted knowledge of some of the content, it can be supposed that he may have been an embroidery pattern drawer. He frequently spelt his name 'Trevelian' suggesting that he may have come from the West Country, (Devon or Cornwall) and despite the local Trevelians being known as Catholic supporters, the contents of the miscellany suggest that Thomas was clearly a Protestant.

In order to copy and depict the wide range of illustrations contained in the book, it

marie queene of scotes

marie succeaded hir father James the fift in the yeare of the world 3513
in the yeare of christ 1543 a princesse verteouse inclined, shee maried
first frances 2 dolphin, and after kyng of france, then after his death
returning home to scotland, shee maried henrye steuarde duke of al-
banye, and lord darly sonne to mathew Earle of lennox, a comelye prince
wroneynay to henrye the 7 kyng of England, to whome shee here James
the 6 shee was put to death in england the 8 of februari 1586 after
18 yeares captiuitie oooooooooooooooooooooooooo

has been supposed that Trevelyon lived and worked in London as that is the only place where he would have had access to the vast number of images via the cheap single sheet woodcut images which were sold throughout the city. It is the profusion of ornate alphabets, detailed embroidery patterns, marquetry and other designs that have led experts to the suggestion that he was in the decorative arts trade.

The 1608 miscellany was one of three such volumes compiled by Trevelyon. Until recently, there was only the 1608 version and another, much larger volume, called "the Great Book" which came in at originally over 1000 pages long (less than half the pages survive today). However, a third, earlier volume was discovered in 2012 which has been dated to 1603, making it his first version of such a book . The date has been attributed due to the fact that whilst Elizabeth's death and James's accession are recorded there are blank spaces where the place of her burial and the years of her reign should be written.

1608 was set to be a year of turmoil with predictions of snow, tempests, floods, shipwrecks, earthquakes, destruction of crops as well as an eclipse on 1st August when there was going to be the death of "some greate personage". However, I can't find any evidence that these dire events ever came to pass! The first surviving pages of the miscellany lists a chronology of events, starting with the creation of the world right through to the accession of James VI of Scotland to the English throne. In between, significant events such as the exodus from Egypt, the building of Rome, the arrival of William the Conqueror, the invention of the printing press, the camp at Tilbury, outbreaks of plague and sweating sickness and an earthquake are all noted and dated. Trevelyon must have seen the newly forged link between Scotland and England in the same way as the combining of the houses of York and Lancaster as he described James as *"the next inheritor to henrye the seventh and Elyzabeth his queene"*.

The Miscellany is a remarkable resource for modern day historians as it gathers together in one place much of the religious and allegorical thought of the period together with commonplace proverbial wisdom, ideas and illustrations. Trevelyon depicts in his own hand, images from a wide range of contemporary sources, such as the Geneva Bible, almanacs, chronicles, broadside ballads and pattern books. This meant that the book was not just there to be read but would have been dipped into for sources for embroidery, designs, education or simply for pleasure. Most of these images were, in themselves, sourced from other collections.

The book is broken down into five main sections. The first contains historical and practical information. As well as the timeline mentioned above, there are illustrated calendars, astronomical diagrams, distances from London to towns and cities, not only through England but around the world, a list of fairs, geographical accounts of Britain and a list of shires, cities and boroughs of England. The second section covers the Five Alls, the Ten Commandments, the Nine Worthies, the Nine Muses, the Seven Deadly Sins, the Seven Virtues and the Twelve Apostles as well as figures important to Protestant history. The third section has various tales, parables and proverbs which are accompanied by secular and sacred verses. In fact, proverbs or short sayings are scattered

A page of embroidery designs

Men carrying grapes in The Shepardes Kalender and the same figure as depicted by Trevelyan.

throughout the book. Some are related to common observations and beliefs related to aging and household responsibilities, others are religious in nature. To make it easy for the reader, Trevelyon groups the proverbs together under headings such as "usury" or "malice". Many of the proverbs and sayings came directly from Thomas Tusser's "Five Hundred Points of Good Husbandry" which was first been printed in 1573. The fourth section changes dramatically, displaying over 200 pages of designs for lettering, patterns, plasterwork, woodwork, garden design and other decorative arts. Curiously, the volume concludes with a list of sheriffs and mayors of London from 1190 through to 1601.

In order to compile his book, Trevelyon must have scoured hundreds of sources, ranging from small almanacs to large chronicles through to individual woodcuts, which he then copied them in his own, somewhat primitive style. He lists thirty three sources for his material but even this list was copied from John Stow's '*A Summarie of Englyshe Chronicles*", printed in London in 1565. However, the list is clearly inaccurate and bears little relation to his actual sources!

The Trevelyan miscellanies are unlike any other manuscript or printed book from this period and whilst it is densely packed with a

The original image by Hans Sebald Beham

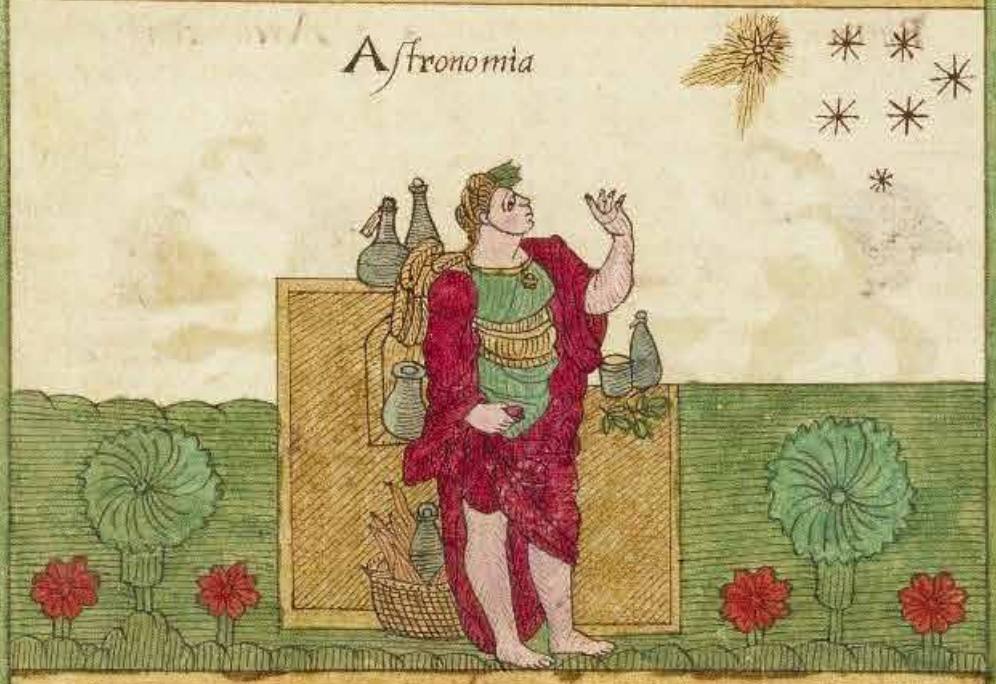
Musicke teacheth men to sing and to make difference of tymes, as well by voice as instrument, therefore he ye doth not make musick by art, according to art, is not a musition but a crowder

Musicke

Geometry teacheth men to measure the length, breadth, higth, or depth, of grounds, towers, vallyes, or such like, and it is very necessarye to them ye will profes the skill of architectur or building

Geometry

Astronomia



Astronomy teacheth men the course of the starrs and the motion of the planets, the Eclipse, of the Sune and Moone, the opposition of the houses, order of the Zodiace, the Eclipticke lynes, the tropices of Cancer, and capricorne, the Colners and the whole course of heauen;

Euterpe

4

Euterpe, She is the Muſe that with ſwett Sounds and Mellodye deliteth men, and hath her name of Euterpe, Vohich ſignifyeth to delyte:

The original engraving by Maarten de Vos

EVTERPE.

Therpsichore

5

Therpsichore, She is the Muse that moveth affections, ruleth affections, and recreateth with Musick, and also is delited with the same:

And David spake the words of this song vnto the Lord. vohat time the Lord had deliuered him out of the handes of all his enimies, and out of the hande of Saul: 2: Samuel: 22: 1: Speakieng vnto your selues in spsalmes, and spiritual songs, singing and making melodie to the Lorde in your hearts: Ephe 5: 19: Sing yee vnto the Lorde anew song: let his prayse be heard in the Congregation of Saints: Let Israel reioyce in him that made him, and let the children of Zion reioyce in their Kyng: Let them prayse his Name with the flute: let them sing prayses vnto him with the tembrell and harpe: For the Lorde hath pleasure in his people: hee wyll make the meeke glorious by deliuerance: Let the Saints bee ioyfull with glory: let them sing loude vpon theire beds: Psalmes: 149: 1: to 6: Prayse yee God in the sounde of the trumpet: prayse yee him vpon the Viole and the harpe: Prayse yee him with soun cimbals: Prayse yee him with high sounding cimbals: Prayse yee hi and flute: prayse yee him with Virginalles and organs: Psalmes: 1 Then sang Deborah, and Barak, the sonne of Abinoam. the same d Prayse yee the Lorde for the auenging of Israel, and for the pe them selues willingly: Judges: 5: 1: 2: Then sang Moses and Israel this song vnto the Lorde, and sayd, I will sing vnto hee hath triumphed gloriously: the horse and him that rode v ouer throwen in the Sea: Exodus: 15: 1: Lord. now lettest thou th peace, according to thy worde: For mine eyes haue seene thy salvati

vast range of subjects which jump from the practical to the mythical, they are united by a cohesive design employing page borders and decorative space fillers. The true glory of the book is really appreciated when the pages are seen together rather than individually. Many of the original sources have been traced and therefore Trevelyon's interpretation can be compared with the original but some are only known through the Miscellany. The fact that there are so many unique images in the book, especially popular and secular ones, adds further importance to it. For example, there are ballads which only exist in this volume and there are extracts from known lost texts which give a tempting taste of their missing originals.

The Folger Shakespeare Library have generously digitised the complete Miscellany and so it is available for everyone to study. I have, of course, scoured its pages for any musical representations and I found a number depicting musicians and instruments.

On folio 158v, Trevelyon depicts the Seven Liberal Sciences of *musica, geometry, astronima* and on the reverse is *grammatical, dialectica, rhetorica and arithmetica*. The engravings by Hans Sebeld Beham (1500-1550) were used as a basis for the designs. Musica depicts an angel playing a portative organ, against which is leaning a viol. However, the image could be construed as contradicting the text which extols learning over mere practice "*Musicke teacheth men to sing and to make difference of tymes as well by voice as instrument, therefore he that doth not make musick by art, according to art, is not a musition but a crowder"* A "crowder" is a fiddler.

Folio 148r comes from the series of nine muses and shows Euterpe as the muse of music. *"She is the Muse that with swett sounds and Mellodye deliteth men, and hath her name of Euterpo, which signifyeth to delyte."* For this image, Trevelyon copied an engraving from the workshop of Philips Galle, after Maarten de Vos (1532 – 1603). She is holding a horn and recorder and at her feet are a bagpipe, crumhorn, a case of flutes, flute, cornett and trumpet.

Singers are also depicted on 189r. This was included to illustrate biblical verses about music including *"Speakieng unto your selves in spaslmes and spitual songs, singing and making melodie to the Lorde in your hearts"*. The figure on the left is a stock character which appears several times throughout the Miscellany . The four books represent the four parts, M (medius), CT (contratenor), T (tenor) and B (bass). Appropriately for the Protestant Trevelyon, the music is a psalm setting and is, apparently, only found in this source.

So, if you ever find yourself with half an hour to spare with a cup of coffee, I urge you to explore the online version of the Miscellany http://bit.ly/2lYPDiM. There is plenty to discover and it will help you inhabit the world of an "ordinary" Elizabethan mind.

JANE MOULDER,

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Photo Jeff Buck (geograph)

LITTLE MORETON HALL "HOW WE USED TO SLEEP"

Discover a collaborative project between the University of Manchester and Little Moreton Hall – funded by the Arts and Humanities Research Council. The project will run throughout 2017 and will offer a unique insight into sleep's fascinating and complex history. Aside from recreating the cultural and material world of early modern sleeping practices in the iconic Tudor surroundings of Little Moreton Hall, the project will also reflect on what we in the 21st century can learn from historical approaches to sleep's management and sleep's relationship to health and well-being. The project aims to raise awareness of how changing perceptions of sleep's importance, can have a powerful effect on its daily practice. This focus should be particularly valuable today since we are seemingly in the grip of a sleep deprivation 'crisis'. By exploring sleep's rich history at Little Moreton Hall, 'How we used to sleep' aims to recalibrate the balance between sleep's biological drivers, which lie at the heart of modern medical and scientific analyses, and its cultural and environmental dimensions. As we shall see over the coming year, the ways in which people think about sleep, and how they manage it, has a critical effect on sleep quality, an idea that is as true today as it was for the men, women, and children of the early modern period.

NOTE: Tudor Life contributor Jane Moulder works at Little Moreton Hall ... you may just find her sleeping on the job!

(Content taken from https://historiesofsleep.com/)

THE TUDOR SOCIETY

Members' Bulletin

Don't you just LOVE to find out more about Tudor personalities? This magazine has been a delight to be involved in, and we would like to offer our sincere thanks to everyone who has contributed or has been involved in its preparation.

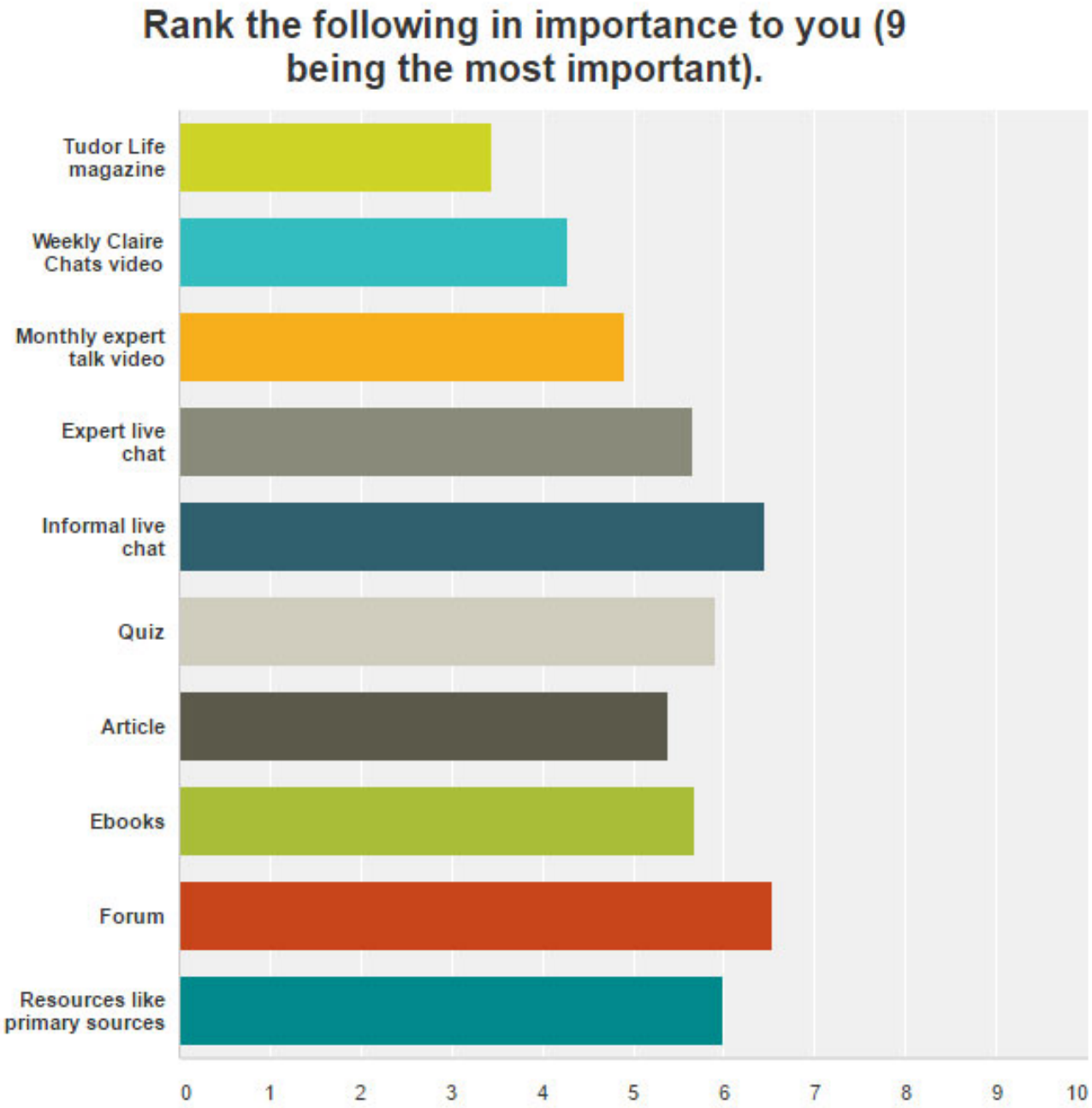
Thank you also to all those who responded to our members' survey last month ... it's really heart-warming to see that so many of our members are happy with what we are doing. (see over!)

One thing that came from the survey, and from other discussions we've had during the lifetime of the Tudor Society, is that you REALLY want to have the opportunity to have a physical copy of the magazine. FINALLY we are able to provide that for you. We'll be putting together the articles from the last three magazines (including those from this magazine) and combining them into a physical magazine. This is a bit of an experiment for us, so fingers crossed it will work out well. If it is a success, we will be doing the same for older magazines, maybe all the way back to issue #1! Wish us luck in this endeavour.

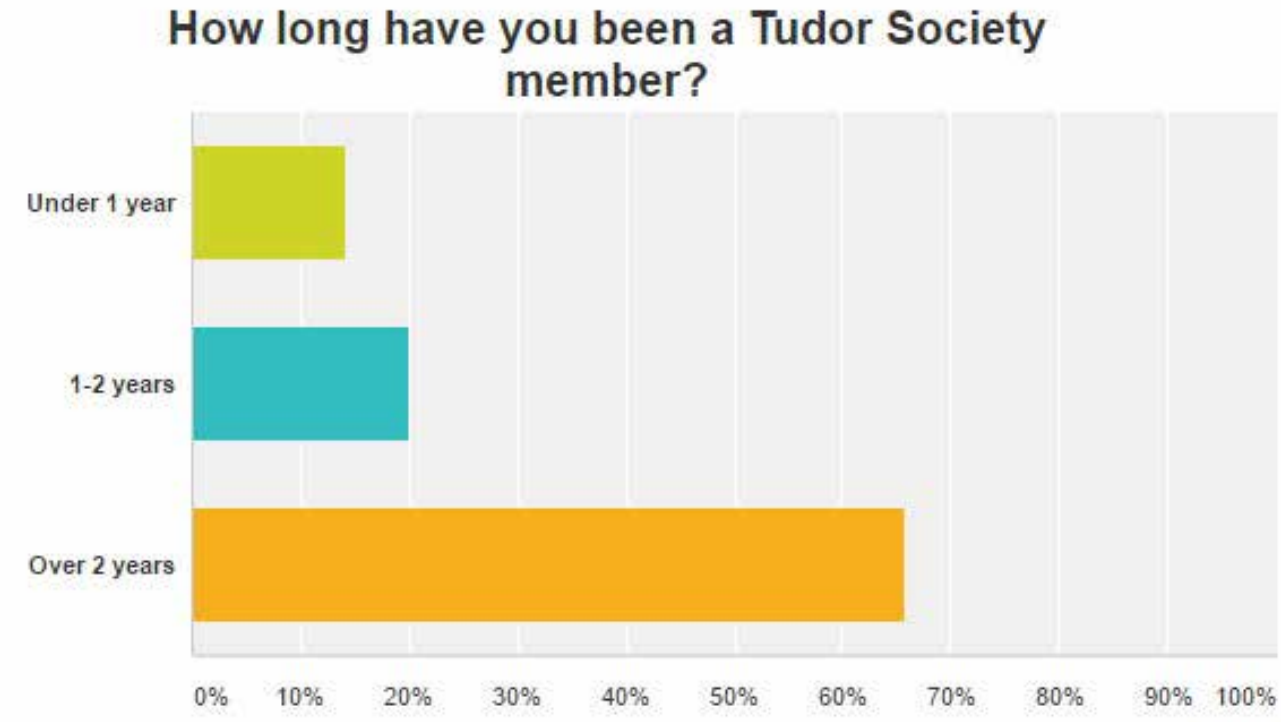
TIM RIDGWAY

Please get involved with the Tudor Society

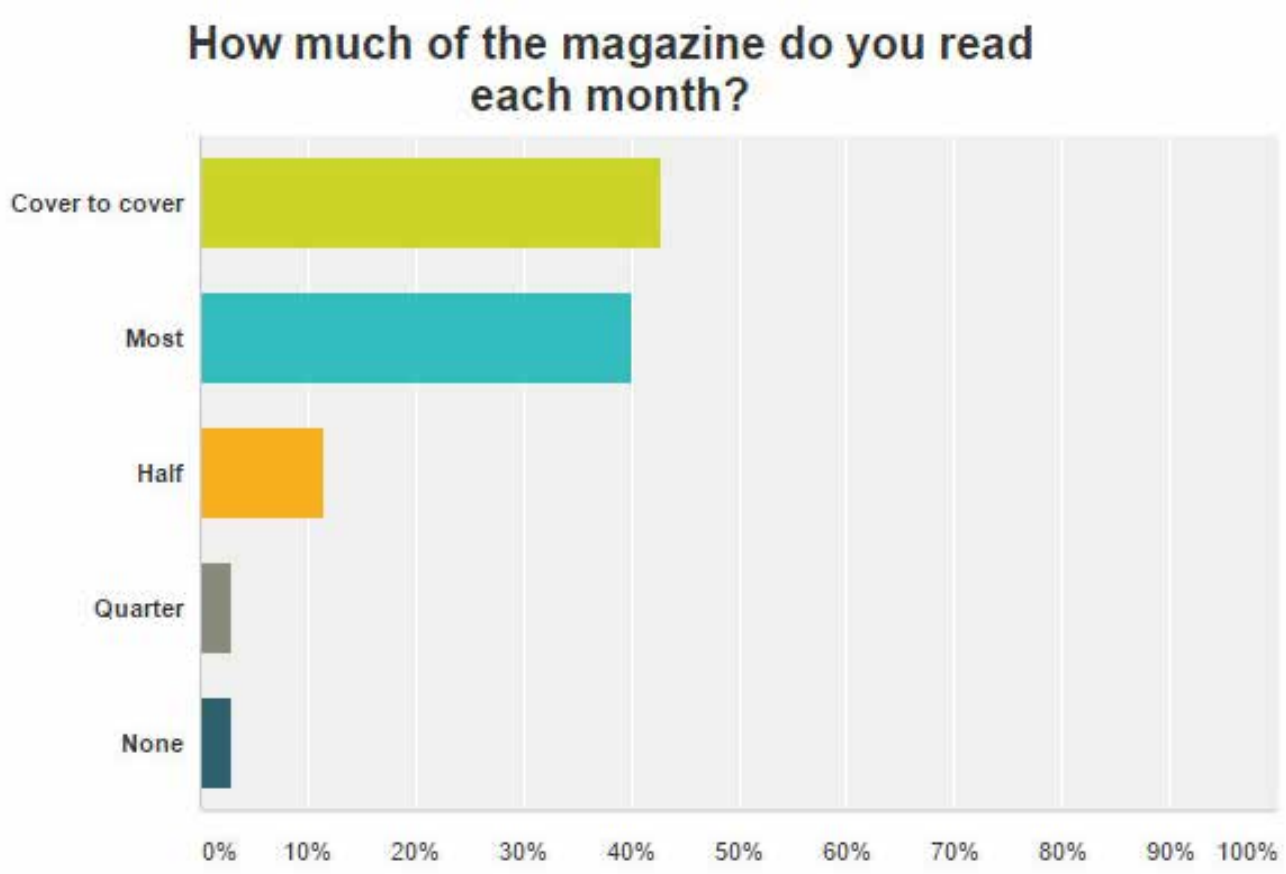
WE RELY ON YOUR ACTIVE MEMBERSHIP



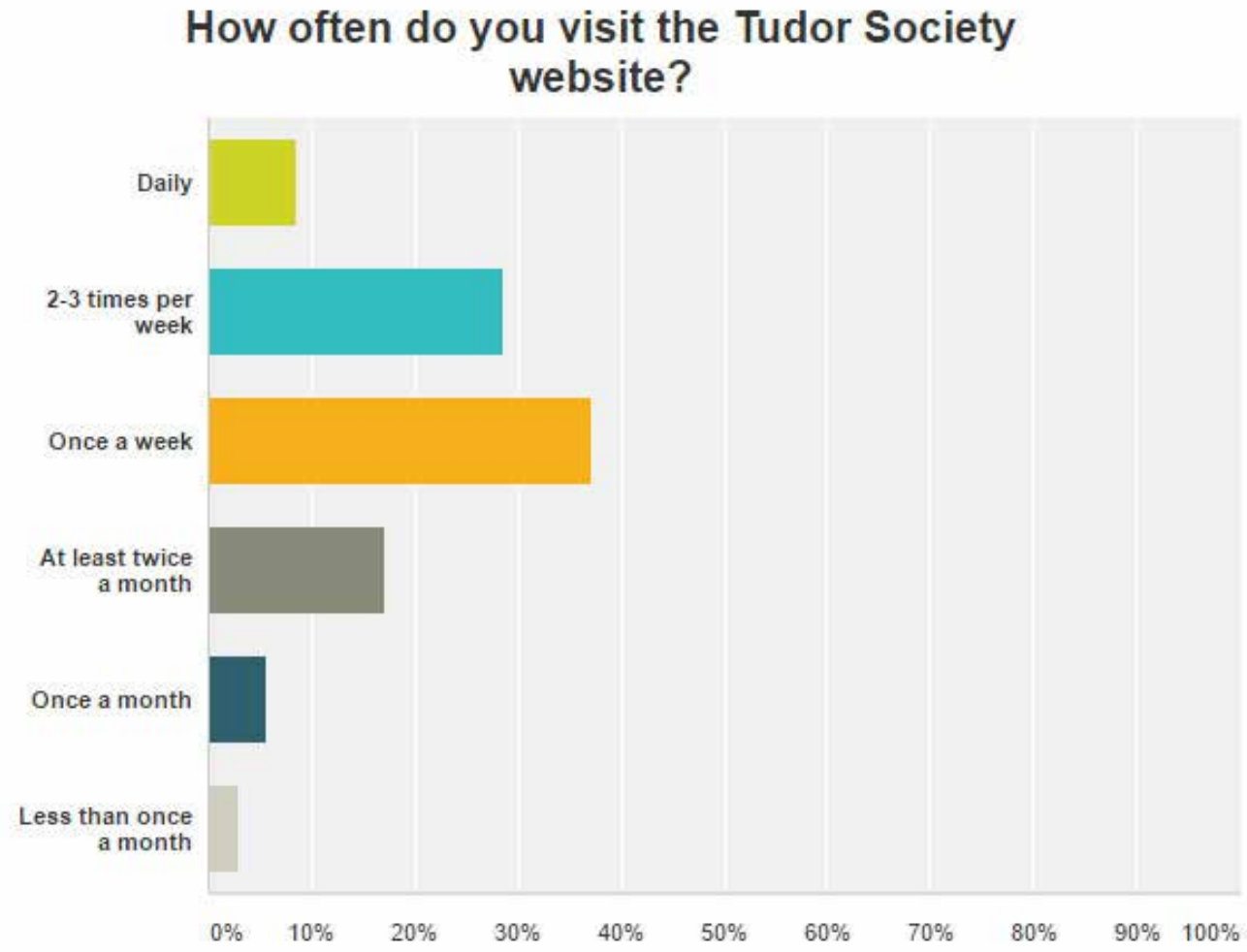
What does this mean: There are no strong favourite things that we do ... you love it all!



What does this mean: We have as lot of very happy long-term members. THANK YOU!



What does this mean: Most people read the whole magazine each month. That obviously includes YOU!



What does this mean: Most people visit the website at least once a week. Many more than once. Thank you for your strong support of your Tudor Society.

FROM THE SPICERY

WITH RIOGNACH

ON MEAD

"Nay then, two treys, and if you grow so nice, Metheglin, wort, and malmsey: well run, dice! There's half-a-dozen sweets."[1]

William Shakespeare, Loves Labours Lost, Act 5, Scene 2.

1 Shakespeare, W. Love's Labour's Lost, Act V, Scene I (Biron), in The Complete Works of Shakespeare, Michael O'Mara Books, 1988.

Autumn is finally here in my hometown in the Barossa Valley. Fields of grain stand ripe and golden in the sun. Grape vines heavy with red and golden fruit stand ready for this year's Vintage to begin. Local bees madly collect pollen from Autumn's flowers, ready to be stockpiled in the hive against Winter. It was the local bees that gave me the inspiration for this month's culinary topic: the golden honey-wine that is mead.

Mead is by far the oldest alcoholic tipple that mankind has imbibed in and sung the praises of. Mead's origins are quite hazy and difficult (if not impossible) to accurately pin down to an exact place or time. But fear not gentle readers, I have been able to discover a rather sweet (terrible, pun I know) little legend about mead which goes like this:

Somewhere in the mists of Time, a swarm of wild bees made their hive home inside an old lightening-blasted tree.
Then came a great storm, and a ferocious gale swept rain into the beehive, and diluted the honey. Now, the wild bees had also brought wild yeasts into the hive on their wings, and once the honey had been diluted, the yeasts began the process of fermentation.
A passing traveller stumbled upon the hive and its contents, and for want of anything else to drink, partook of the delicious, pale golden nectar, and considered himself rather lucky.
Mildly tipsy, the traveller trotted home and reminded himself of the only possible ingredients available that could have created this rare libation. Through a repeated process of trial and error, the fortunate traveller was able to produce and refine that which the wild bees and a storm had created. Mead.

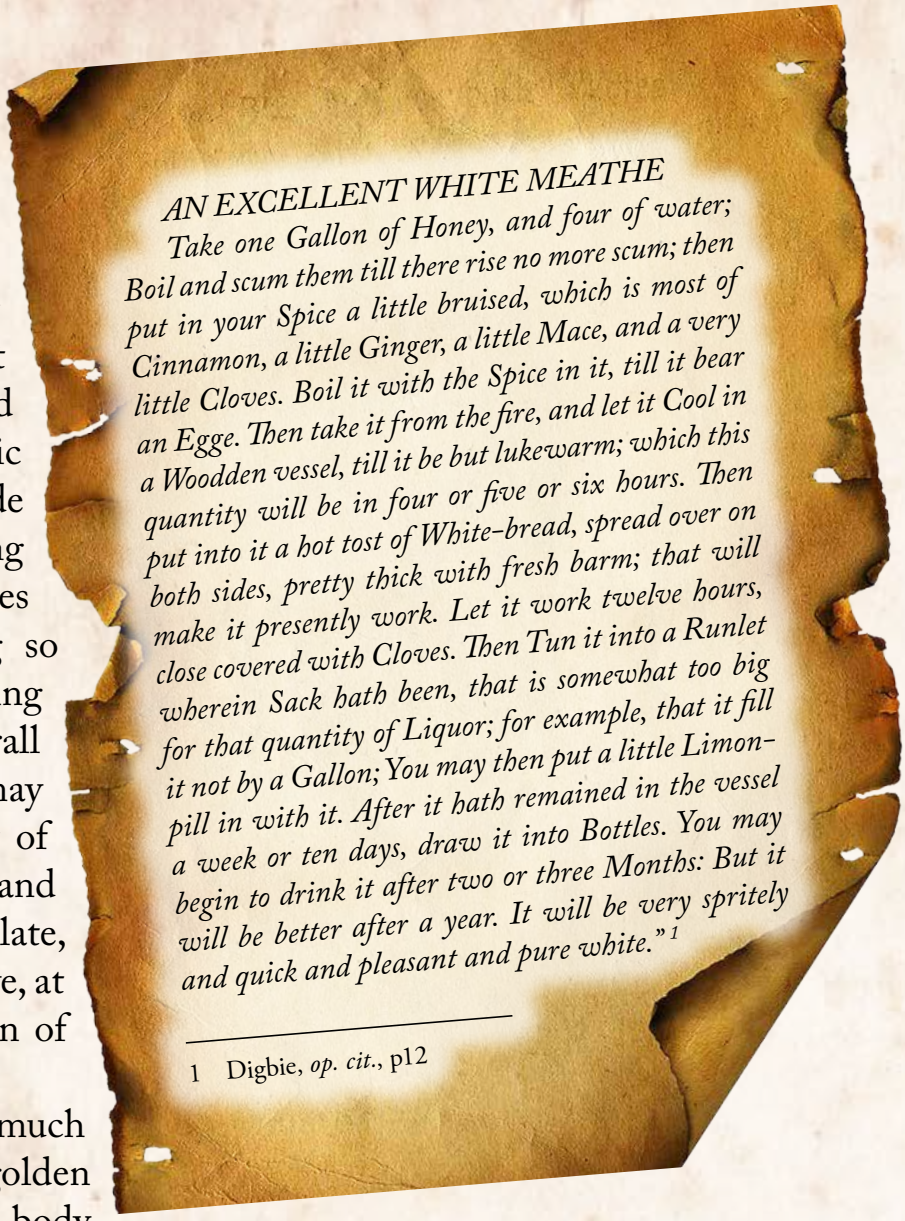
From such humble origins, mead quite literally became 'the drink of champions'. Great bards wrote equally great poems and ballads about it.[2] In great halls specially designed for the purpose, fearless warriors toasted their bravery and successes with it.[3] Even the average person could be transformed into a great bard by merely sampling some mead, given of course that the mead

2 Matthews, J & C. *Taliesin – Shamanism and the Bardic Mysteries in Britain and Ireland,* Aquarian, 1991, Part Two *The Poems of Taliesin Pen Beirdd*, specifically Kanu y Med (Song of Mead)

3 *Beowulf* Saga, written between 8th-11th Century in England, but set in Scandinavia.

in question contained the blood of a certain wise man.[4]

By the medieval and Tudor periods, the making of mead became almost exclusively associated with the great monastic houses. The monks made mead as a way of using up their surplus supplies of honey, and by doing so kept the old mead making traditions alive. Overall consumption of mead may have declined as a result of the introduction of beer and wine to the medieval palate, but the monks kept it alive, at least until the Dissolution of the Abbeys.



AN EXCELLENT WHITE MEATHE

Take one Gallon of Honey, and four of water; Boil and scum them till there rise no more scum; then put in your Spice a little bruised, which is most of Cinnamon, a little Ginger, a little Mace, and a very little Cloves. Boil it with the Spice in it, till it bear an Egge. Then take it from the fire, and let it Cool in a Woodden vessel, till it be but lukewarm; which this quantity will be in four or five or six hours. Then put into it a hot tost of White-bread, spread over on both sides, pretty thick with fresh barm; that will make it presently work. Let it work twelve hours, close covered with Cloves. Then Tun it into a Runlet wherein Sack hath been, that is somewhat too big for that quantity of Liquor; for example, that it fill it not by a Gallon; You may then put a little Limon-pill in with it. After it hath remained in the vessel a week or ten days, draw it into Bottles. You may begin to drink it after two or three Months: But it will be better after a year. It will be very spritely and quick and pleasant and pure white."[1]

1 Digbie, *op. cit.*, p12

But in fact, mead is so much more than a glass of golden deliciousness. A large body of evidence (modern scientific and reconstructive archaeological) that argues that mead was also medicinal.[5] We've known about the antibiotic properties of honey for some time, and perhaps our ancestors did to given the high esteem in which it was held. The practice of standing honeycombs in cold water to extract the honey promotes a rapid increase in the numbers of beneficial microorganisms in the finished product. The end result is a "living medicine", a probiotic-rich, sweet and flavoursome alcohol. No wonder Viking warriors were so partial to the stuff! [6]

The original recipe for mead was very simple: water and honey,

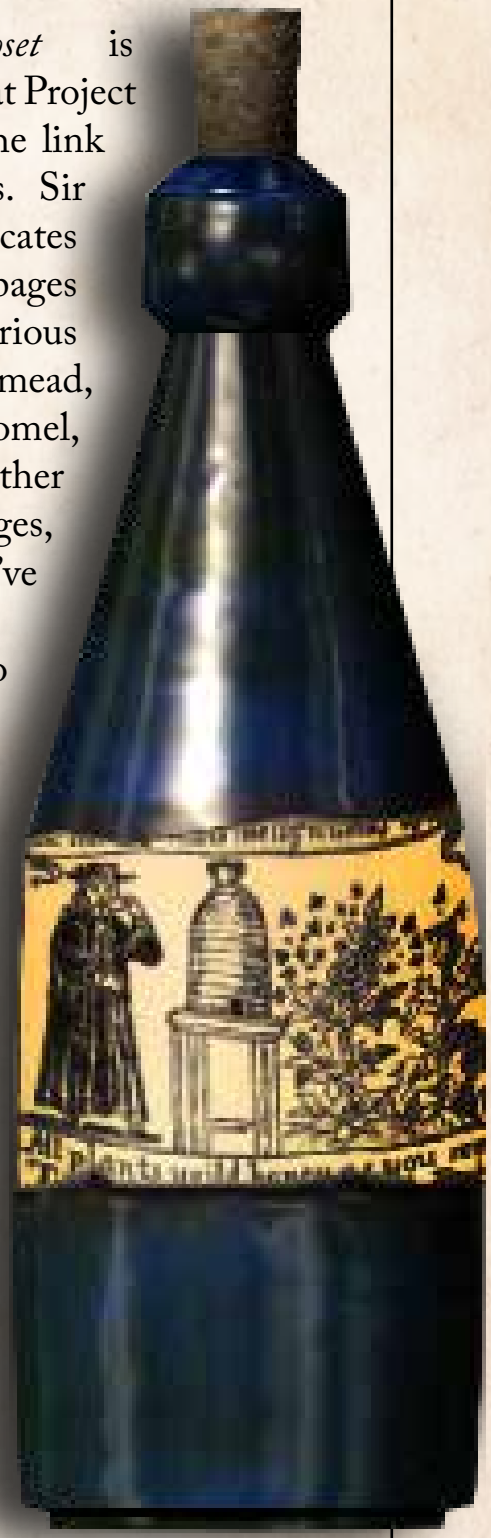
4 *The Mead of Poetry* from Norse mythology contained the blood of Kvasir and is seen as the vector by which poetry was introduced to humankind.

5 http://gizmodo.com/the-drink-of-viking-warlords-could-help-fight-disease-1759503055

6 *ibid*

natural yeasts and an amount of luck. Natural yeasts are temperamental and difficult to work with, hence why I call mead a modern medievalists pleasure and pain. But mead recipes don't stop there. Adding different herbs and spices, fruits and flowers resulted in new types of mead. For example; mead that contained spices such as cinnamon or cloves was called a *metheglin*.[7] Add summer fruits like blackberries and raspberries, damsons and sloes, and one created *melomel*.[8] As an aside, I didn't know that adding fruits to fermenting mead was considered a method of preservation[9]. Just imagine the soused preserves that could be using mead-preserved fruits! Yum!! The story of mead keeps on getting more and more delicious! But I digress.

On the subject of making mead, the best primary resource for modern medievalists by a country mile has to be *The Closet of the Eminently Learned Sir Kenelme Digbie KT Opened*, by English courtier Sir Kenelme Digby (11 July 1603 – 11 July 1667).[10] Sir Kenemle's *Closet* is available on-line at Project Gutenberg, via the link in the footnotes. Sir Kenelme dedicates over a hundred pages in his book to various recipes for mead, metheglin, melomel, sack and other alcoholic beverages, three of which I've included here.



In addition to Sir Kenelme's collection of recipes, he also provides a valuable insight into the types of honey, their location, and the best extraction techniques for removing the honey from the comb. According to Sir Kenelme, there were three types of honey available to the medieval and Tudor mead maker: virgin, life and stock honeys, each with their own unique characteristics. Unfortunately Sir

7 http://www.castlesandmanorhouses.com/life_05_drink.htm
8 *ibid*
9 *ibid*
10 Digbie. K. *The Closet of the Eminently Learned Sir Kenelm Digby Kt Opened: Whereby is discovered several ways for making of Methglin, Sider, Cherry-wine etc, together with Excellent Directions for Cookery, and also for Preserving. Conserving and Candying etc.* London, 1669, at Project Gutenberg http://www.gutenberg.org/ebooks/16441

HYDROMEL AS I MADE IT WEAK FOR THE QUEEN MOTHER

I do like Sir Kenelm's instruction to use 'Hyde Park water', however, I would advise against using it today. I also like Sir Kenelme's aside regarding the King's dislike of cloves as used in the original recipe.:

"Take 18 quarts of spring-water, and one quart of honey; when the water is warm, put the honey into it. When it boileth up, skim it very well, and continue skimming it, as long as any scum will rise. Then put in one Race of Ginger (sliced in thin slices,) four Cloves, and a little sprig of green Rosemary. Let these boil in the Liquor so long, till in all it have boiled one hour. Then set it to cool, till it be blood-warm; and then put to it a spoonful of Ale-yest. When it is worked up, put it into a vessel of a fit size; and after two or three days, bottle it up. You may drink it after six weeks, or two moneths.

Thus was the Hydromel made that I gave the Queen, which was exceedingly liked by everybody."[1]

1 *ibid.*, p35

Having read this recipe several times, I've found myself wondering if this hydromel was actually intended as a medicinal for the Queen Mother. The presence of ginger and rosemary which warms the body, and cloves which reduce inflammation leads me to think that perhaps it was indeed a medicine.

Kenelme doesn't admit to favouring one extraction technique over another, however, he is adamant the comb must be treated with the utmost respect, lest the resulting product taste of wax! Unlike other authors of primary resource texts, Sir Kenelme actually provides measurements for the water and honey in his recipes, but often the amounts for other ingredients are not given.

All in all, a medieval feast would not be really complete without a mead course of some sort. As we saw with last month's topic of chocolate, some food and drink which we tend to take for granted in the modern world may have had some excellent medicinal qualities. Unlike the modern perception that medicine by default must taste bad in order to be good for you, chocolate and mead are the exception to that rule. Obviously the sweeter it is the better for you, but then again isn't life supposed to be sweet?

RIOGHNACH O'GERAGHTY

MR. WEBBES MEATH

"Master Webbe, who maketh the Kings Meathe, ordereth it thus.

Take as much of Hyde-park water as will make a Hogshead of Meathe: Boil in it about two Ounces of the best Hopp's for about half an hour. By that time, the water will have drawn out the strength of the Hopp's. Then skim them clean off, and all the froth, or whatever riseth of the water. Then dissolve in it warm, about one part of Honey to six of water: Lave and beat it, till all the Honey be perfectly dissolved; Then boil it, beginning gently, till all the scum be risen, and scummed away. It must boil in all about two hours. Half an hour, before you end your boiling, put into it some Rosemary-tops, Thyme, Sweet-marjorame, one Sprig of Minth, in all about half a handful, and as much Sweet-bryar-leaves as all these; in all, about a handful of herbs, and two Ounces of sliced Ginger, and one Ounce of bruised Cinamon. He did use to put in a few Cloves and Mace; But the King did not care for them. Let all these boil about half an hour, then scum them clean away; and presently let the Liquor run through a strainer-cloth into a Kiver of wood, to cool and settle. When you see it is very clear and settled, lade out the Liquor into another Kiver, carefully, not to raise the settlings from the bottom. As soon as you see any dregs begin to rise, stay your hand, and let it remain unstirred, till all be settled down. Then lade out the Liquor again, as before; and if need be, change it again into another Kiver: all which is done to the end no dregs may go along with the Liquor in tunning it into the vessel. When it is cold and perfect clear, tun it into a Cask, that hath been used for Sack, and stop it up close, having an eye to give it a little vent, if it should work. If it cast out any foul Liquor in working, fill it up always presently with some of the same liquor, that you have kept in bottles for that end. When it hath wrought, and is well settled (which may be in about two months or ten weeks) draw it into Glass-bottles, as long as it comes clear; and it will be ready to drink in a Month or two: but will keep much longer, if you have occasion: and no dregs will be in the bottom of the bottle.

He since told me, that to this Proportion of Honey and water, to Page 16make a Hogshead of Meathe, you should boil half a pound of Hopps in the water, and two good handfuls of Herbs; and six Ounces of Spice of all sorts: All which will be mellowed and rotted away quite, (as well as the lushiousness of the Honey) in the space of a year or two. For this is to be kept so long before it be drunk.

If you would have it sooner ready to drink, you may work it with a little yeast, when it is almost cold in the Kiver: and Tun it up as soon as it begins to work, doing afterwards as is said before; but leaving a little vent to purge by, till it have done working. Or in stead of yeast, you may take the yolks of four New-laid-eggs, and almost half a pint of fine Wheat-flower, and some of the Liquor you have made: beat them well together, then put them to the Liquor in the Cask, and stop it up close, till you see it needful, to give it a little vent."[1]

1 Digbie, *op. cit.*, p15

RIEVAULX ABBEY

This Cistercian abbey was founded in 1132 and became one of the most influential abbeys in the north of England, housing a community of 650 people in the 1160s.

It was dissolved in 1538 and pillaged for its lead, but its ironworks, which included a prototype blast furnace, continued to be used well into the 17th century. After that, it became a haunt for poets, painters, and scholars who appreciated its romantic ruins and setting.

Rievaulx is said to be the most complete and impressive abbey in the whole of the UK, and its location on the edge of the North Yorkshire Moors is just stunning. Visitors can listen to an audio tour, follow in the footsteps of medieval pilgrims by doing the one-hour Helmsley Castle to Rievaulx Abbey walk, or simply enjoy the beautiful scenery.

Been to a place?
Send us your photos!

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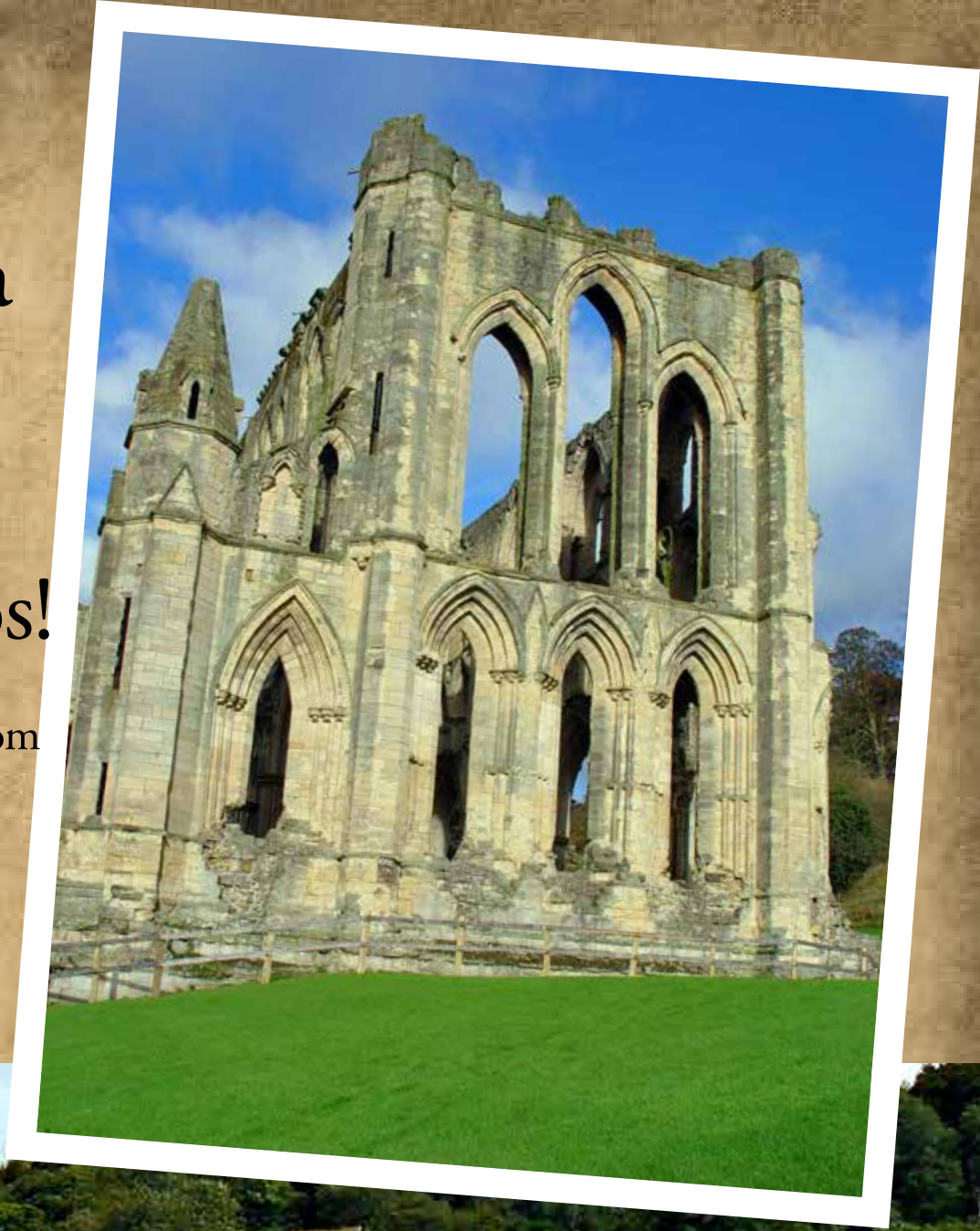

APRIL'S ON THIS

1 April 1538
Death of Sir **Amyas (Amias) Paulet**, soldier and landowner, at Hinton St George.

2 April 1552
The fourteen year-old **Edward VI** fell ill with measles and smallpox. Fortunately, he survived.

3 April 1578
Burial of Lady **Margaret Douglas**, Countess of Lennox. She was buried in Westminster Abbey.

4 April 1581
Francis Drake was awarded a knighthood by Elizabeth I.

5 April 1531
Richard Roose (or Rouse), Bishop **John Fisher**'s cook, was boiled to death after confessing to poisoning soup.

9 April 1483
Death of **Edward IV** at the Palace of Westminster. He was laid to rest in St George's Chapel, Windsor Castle, on 20th April. His cause of death is unknown. It may have been caused by a chill, but he was also known for overindulging in food and drink.

10 April 1550
Edward Seymour, Duke of Somerset, was re-admitted into **Edward VI**'s council.

11 April 1548
Death of Sir **John Welsbourne**, Gentleman of the Privy Chamber to **Henry VIII** and Justice of the Peace.

12 April 1533
Thomas Cromwell became Chancellor of the Exchequer.

16 April 1512
The *Mary Rose* began her first tour of duty in the English Channel on the hunt for French warships.


The Mary Rose

17 April 1554
Thomas Wyatt the Younger's head was stolen in the rejoicing after **Nicholas Throckmorton**'s acquittal.

18 April 1540
Henry VIII made **Thomas Cromwell** Earl of Essex, just three months before he was executed for treason.

22 April 1542
Death of **Henry Clifford**, 1st Earl of Cumberland. He supported **Henry VIII** during the *Pilgrimage of Grace*.

23 April 1564
This day traditionally marks the birth of the Bard, **William Shakespeare**, the famous Elizabethan playwright and actor. William Shakespeare also died on this day in 1616. He was buried at the Holy Trinity Church, Stratford-upon-Avon.

27 April 1536
Writs were issued summoning Parliament, and a letter was sent to **Thomas Cranmer**, the Archbishop of Canterbury, asking him to attend Parliament.

28 April 1572
Burial of **William Paulet**, 1st Marquis of Winchester, administrator and nobleman.

29 April 1536
Anne Boleyn argued with Sir **Henry Norris**, rebuking him with the words "You look for dead men's shoes"

30 April 1547
Sir **Anthony Denny** was made **Henry VIII**'s Groom of the Stool.

Background image: Westminster Abbey Photo © Paul Gillett

DAY IN TUDOR HISTORY

6 April 1523
Death of **Henry Stafford**, Earl of Wiltshire. Stafford had served **Henry VII** and was made a Knight of the Garter in his reign, and although he was imprisoned for a time due to his brother's plotting, he was a favourite of **Henry VIII**.

7 April 1590
Burial of Sir **Francis Walsingham**, **Elizabeth I**'s principal secretary, at St Paul's at 10pm in the same tomb as Sir **Philip Sidney**. He had died the previous day.

8 April 1580
Birth of **William Herbert**, 3rd Earl of Pembroke, courtier, patron of the arts.

13 April 1534
Sir Thomas More was called to Lambeth to swear allegiance to the "Act of Succession".


Henry Stafford

14 April 1556
Death of Sir **Anthony Kingston**, former Constable of the Tower of London

15 April 1545
Death of Sir **Robert Dymoke**, champion at the coronations of **Henry VII** and **Henry VIII**.

19 April 1558
Mary, Queen of Scots and **Francis**, the Dauphin, were formally betrothed.

20 April 1483
Burial of **Edward IV** in St George's Chapel, Windsor Castle.

21 April 1566
Death of Sir Richard Sackville, member of Parliament and administrator, in London.

24 April 1549
Death of **Ralph Neville**, 4th Earl of Westmorland, one of the peers who sat in judgement on **Anne Boleyn**.

25 April 1544
Publication of **Queen Catherine Parr**'s English translation of John Fisher's "*Psalms or Prayers*". It was published anonymously.

26 April 1564
Baptism of **William Shakespeare** at Holy Trinity Church, Stratford-upon-Avon.

FEAST DAYS

23 April – St George's Day
24 April – St Mark's Eve
25 April – The Feast of St Mark the Evangelist

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