

# TudorLife

THE  
TUDOR  
SOCIETY

The Tudor Society Magazine

Members Only

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## THE RELIGIOUS IMPACT OF THE TUDORS

Investigations of  
Heretics

William Byrd

The Religion  
behind the  
Pilgrimage of Grace

The Cult of the  
Virgin Mary

The Piety of  
Elizabeth Woodville



**TUDOR PLACES FEATURE:**  
Tattershall Castle, RIII Visitors Centre, Lingfield





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# Tudor Life

## THE RELIGIOUS IMPACT OF THE TUDORS

**D**AVID STARKEY ONCE described the Tudor era as “that God-infested century”. The price paid by many of the Tudors’ subjects was a horrible one, exacted as Christianity experienced the agony of its greatest schism in centuries. The Protestant Reformation and the Catholic response destroyed and ended many lives. The brutality and bigotry engendered still has the power to shock and appal. Yet Christianity also produced some of the most beautiful, touching, and inspiring moments of the sixteenth century. Above all, the Faith mattered - vitally so. It is the main focus of this issue of “Tudor Life” magazine, which asks how Christianity, the only religion legally permitted in England from the thirteenth to the seventeenth centuries, was experienced by the Tudors, their relatives, and their subjects.

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Image above: The Original Pilgrimage of Grace badge worn by Sir Thomas Constable of West Rasen, Lincolnshire. Copyright © Lincolnshire Martyrs

**GARETH RUSSELL**  
**EDITOR**



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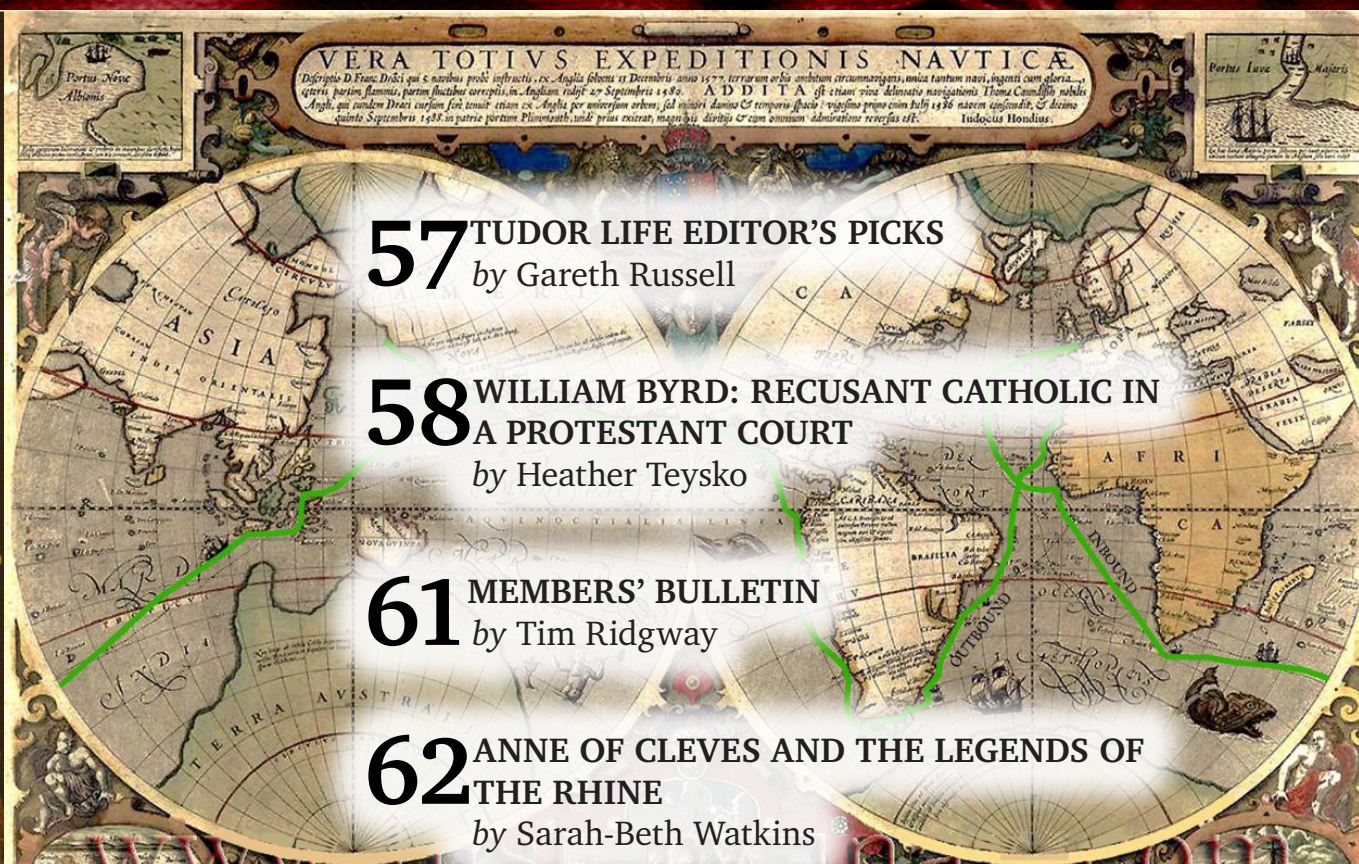
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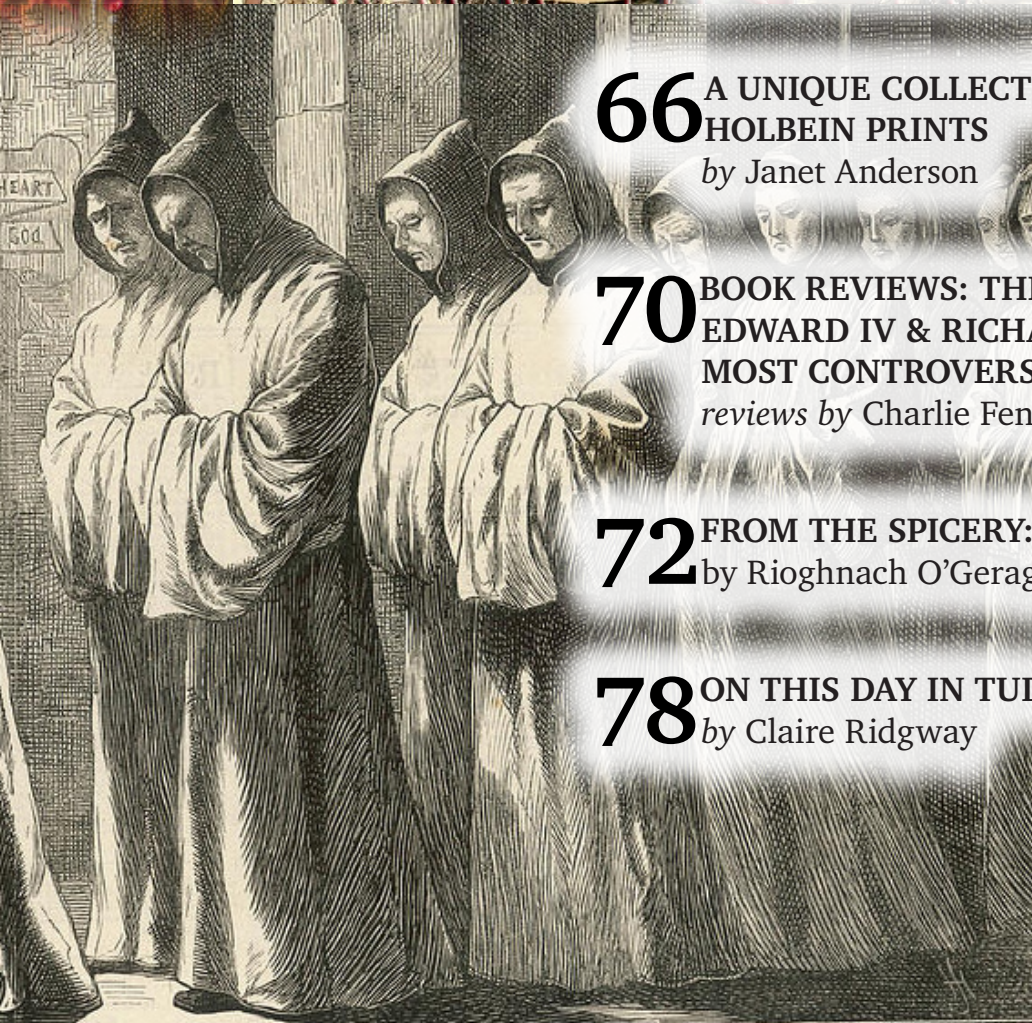


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# MAGNIFICENT TATTERSHALL CASTLE

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During the 118 years of Tudor rule in England, Tattershall Castle was considered home to some of the most important officials in the country including the King's Mother, the King's best friend and the Lord High Admiral of the Navy Royal. After the years of neglect following the death of the castle's builder, Lord Cromwell, the austere brick residence was once again made a place of power, wealth and beauty.

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**I**N OCTOBER 1537 the country was in crisis. King Henry VIII was seeking divorce and in order to make this a reality the King was forming a new Church of England and severing ties with Rome. In Louth a protest began against the suppression of the Catholic religious houses which quickly escalated to 40,000 commoners marching on Lincoln. Charles Brandon, Duke of Suffolk (and the King's best friend) was chosen to lead the forces sent to quash the rising. The task was given to Brandon primarily because



his new young wife, Catherine Willoughby (he was 49, she was 14; it was considered scandalous even by sixteenth century morals), was a member of the Willoughby de Eresby family who owned vast areas of the county. Thankfully the protesters dissipated before Brandon arrived, but once in Lincoln Brandon quickly tried and executed the ringleaders.



Charles Brandon



On 4th April 1537, as a vote of thanks for his assistance in stopping the 'Lincolnshire Rising', King Henry gifted Tattershall Castle to Brandon. He was instructed to relocate to Lincolnshire in order to keep the county in check and Tattershall Castle became his new base of operations. Charles Brandon was so

taken with Tattershall that in the event of his death he requested to be buried in Holy Trinity Church (adjacent to the castle). Henry VIII ignored this request and buried Brandon with much expense and ceremony at St Georges Chapel in Windsor Castle; a true sign of the level of friendship the pair shared.

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### **WHEN FANCY FABRICS ADORNED THE BEDS, FLOORS AND WALLS**

Unfortunately time has been very unkind to Tattershall and very little documentary evidence survives about how the castle was decorated and furnished. We do however have scraps of information in the form of an inventory made in 1551 of some of the fabric items that were removed from Tattershall following Charles Brandon's death in 1545.

The list contains Turkish carpets, sumptuous bed hangings, woollen blankets and numerous tapestries (including a piece with the story of Moses, a piece of "Our Lady" and twelve pieces called the "Ragged staffe" depicting the months that use the heraldic symbol associated with Warwick as a border motif). Amongst the list of tapestries are four pieces "of Alexander".

The 'Wars of Alexander the Great' were a very popular set of tapestries during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. The inventory listing of the Alexander hangings may be the reason why Lord Curzon chose to purchase two Flemish tapestries of the same theme, to adorn the walls of the newly restored Audience Chamber in 1914.

Also included in the inventory is a tester for a bed "of the richest purple velvet, roses and percullesses" i.e. the Tudor rose and the portcullis. It is therefore assumed that this bedding was left from when Margaret Beaufort, King Henry VII's mother, was owner of the castle; the Tudor rose and the Beaufort Portcullis being prominent symbols of power and propaganda in the sixteenth century.

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### **THE MANOR OF TATTERSHALL AS OWNED BY THE FIRST EARL OF LINCOLN**

On 5th September 1551 Lord Clinton (later Earl of Lincoln, Lord High Admiral of England and trusted privy councillor to Elizabeth I) was

granted the Tattershall estate. He made Tattershall his principal seat. Although we do not know much about events at Tattershall during his lifetime we do



have a copy of the grant that details the extent of the lands and buildings associated with the estate:

*“Grant to the said Lord Clinton and Say of the manor and castle of Tatteshall alias Tattershall, Lincolnshire, formerly parcel of the honour of Richmond and lately belonging to Henry late Duke of Suffolk, deceased, also the parks and the chace of Tatteshall, the warren of conies*

*there, the free warren, chace, preservation and hunting of deer and game and every liberty of a park in the said parks and chace, the fair and market in Tatteshall, the water mills and fulling mill commonly called Tatteshall Mills, the shops in Tatteshall, and all other lands and liberties and elsewhere pertaining to the premises, which belonged to the said honour and Duke.”*

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### AN INVITATION FROM ‘AN EXCELLENT HORSE-MAN AND A NOBLE ITALIAN GENTLEMAN’

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One of Tattershall Castle’s international links is with Captain John Smith (commonly associated with Pocahontas). Born a poor farmer’s son, John Smith grew up on the Willoughby estate in Lincolnshire with a mission to better himself and his position. In 1600, after returning from military service in the Low Countries, Smith became a hermit living in Tumby Woods (a mile from Tattershall) and began reading ‘Machiavelli’s Art of War’ to expand his mind. His goal to become a gentleman and his unusual behaviour in the woods came to the attention of a senior member of the Tattershall household, Master of the Horse - Theodore Paleologus, who invited Smith to be trained at the castle.

Smith was taught how to ride, fight and think like a gentleman by Paleologus who was of Italian royal decent and previously

employed as a soldier, assassin and spy; an ideal teacher with an unusual but deadly skill set. It is very likely that Smith chose to accompany the Italian horse master on the reputation of Tattershall’s collection of fine horses and its possession of a tiltyard.

Three years later when John Smith had been elevated to the rank of Captain he was challenged to mortal combat by three champion Turkish soldiers. Smith emerged the unlikely victor of all three fights and it is agreed by all of Smith’s biographers that his success that day was solely down to the martial skills he learnt at Tattershall under the experienced tutelage of Theodore Paleologus. When John Smith eventually created his own coat of arms his shield bore the image of three Turks heads in celebration of his victories in slaying his Turkish opponents during these duels.



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## A ROYAL INSULT

For the last eighteen years of Elizabeth I's reign Tattershall Castle was owned and inhabited by the notorious Lord Henry Clinton, second Earl of Lincoln. Earl Lincoln was known as the most obnoxious and unsavoury peer of the realm, his son in law describing the man as possessing "wickedness, misery, craft, repugnance to all humanity and perfidious mind."

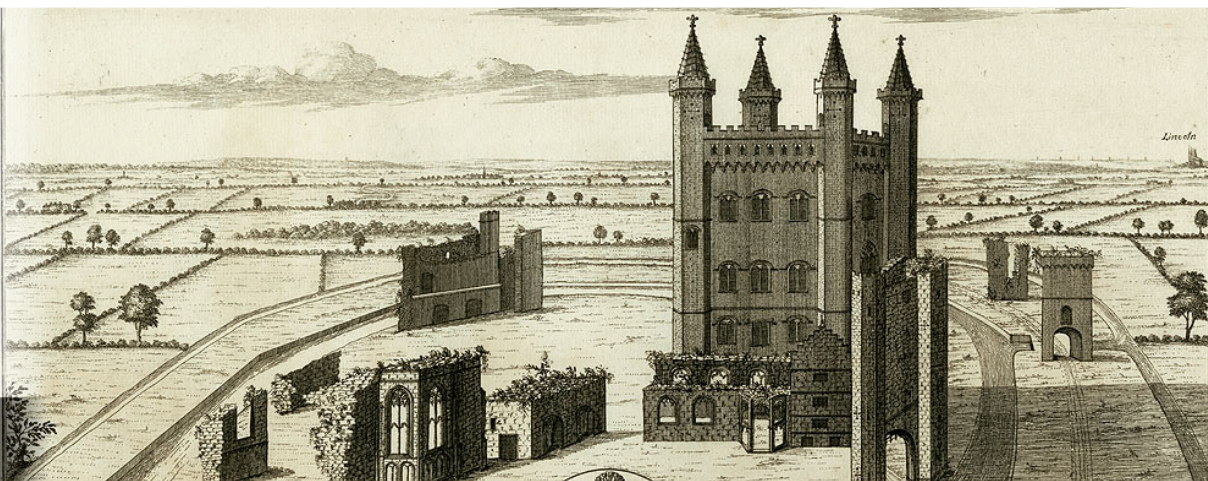
On 30th April 1601 Earl Lincoln created the circumstances that lead to one of the greatest insults to Queen Elizabeth in her later life. The Queen often invited herself to stay and dine with her councillors who in turn had no choice but to spend exorbitant amounts to entertain her in the manner to which she was accustomed. It wasn't unheard of that a visit from the Queen led to bankruptcy.

Earl Lincoln had recently acquired a town house in Chelsea and the Queen, together with the Scottish Ambassador to King James and Robert Cecil (Elizabeth's chief secretary), arrived on the doorstep expecting a reception and a sumptuous meal. What they were greeted with was locked gates and the servants at Chelsea House looking through the windows and over the walls, not responding to commands to let the Queen in. Earl Lincoln, being a very frugal spender and

a feared employer, gave orders to his servants not to open the door as he didn't want to spend the money. As the Queen was knocking on the door in London the Earl was hot footing it back to Tattershall to hide. The Queen was furious, especially as she was entertaining an ambassador. To save face and to calm the Queen, Robert Cecil lied to Elizabeth that Earl Lincoln was looking forward to the dinner and had accidentally mixed up his timings. Cecil also said that he and the Earl of Nottingham would entertain the Queen at Chelsea House, the following Saturday, in Lincoln's stead.

Cecil sent Earl Lincoln a letter informing him "we will moderate expenses as if it were ourselves, and we will also find out some present, such as we presume you will not think too much." Not only had the Earl lost favour with the Queen and Cecil but he had received a colossal bill for a dinner and a present that was considerably higher than he would have spent, had he entertained the Queen as originally requested. He must have been furious. Earl Lincoln sent his excuses and apologies but all to no avail. He had forfeited what little friendship and respect he had from the two most powerful people in the kingdom.

**FOR MORE INFO:** <https://www.nationaltrust.org.uk/tattershall-castle>







# THE FASCINATING HISTORY OF LINGFIELD VILLAGE

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Take a trip around a gloriously historic town in Surrey, UK with **Ian Mulcahy**

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Lingfield is a village in the far south east of Surrey which is home to a population of just under 4,500 (as of the 2011 census) and is probably best known for its eponymously named racecourse to the south east of the village.

Whilst observant racegoers passing through the village may notice the odd medieval building, most would be forgiven for considering Lingfield to be a fairly modern village as the main thoroughfare is mostly dominated by architecture dating from the late Victorian period up to the present date, a building boom that was no doubt encouraged by the coming of the railway in 1884 and the opening of the racecourse by the Prince Of Wales (later Edward VII) in 1890.

But Lingfield's story is much older and most likely starts three miles to the south east of the village where Dry Hill Fort, a 24 acre Iron Age hill fort, can be found. The construction of a fort covering an area of this size would have required a considerable labour force, which points to settlement of the surrounding areas. Roman roads from London to the south coast also ran close to the village; one passing approximately one mile to the west and a second approximately four miles to the east. The first documented mention of Lingfield dates to 871 in the will of King Alfred and the village was mentioned again in 984 when it was gifted to Hyde Abbey in Winchester by Aelfthryth, the Queen of King Edgar.





The Church of St Peter & St Oaul

The gift included a church and a mill which suggests that the area was at that time host to a permanent settlement, though no traces of any pre conquest buildings have ever been found and the village is not specifically mentioned in the Domesday survey.

Towards the end of the 12th century, the earliest substantial timber framed buildings started to appear around the village, though it is not known if these were built on the site of older Anglo Saxon houses. The earliest extant buildings include The Old House, Bricklands Farm, The Guest House and Pollards, all of which date from the 15th century. We shall visit these buildings in more detail later.

From 1539, Lingfield was owned by Sir John Gresham. Born in 1495, Gresham was a successful, and therefore very rich, London based merchant involved in the export of

textiles and the import of grain, wine, silk, spices, timber and skins. He was a member of the Royal household from 1527 to 1550, rising to the position of 'esquire of the body' (personal attendant) to Henry VIII and in 1547 he served a spell as Lord Mayor of London. In 1541 he was a member of the jury who convicted Thomas Culpepper and Francis Dereham of treason, and so sent them to their death, for intimacy with Queen Catherine Howard. It is interesting to note that Gresham never lived actually lived in the village, choosing instead to reside at Titsey Place in nearby Oxted from 1534 until his death in 1556.

So, having done some homework and armed ourselves with a plan and a camera, my son and I pointed ourselves in the direction of south east Surrey late one clear and sunny



Saturday morning in April. Mindful that the football match that we were planning to attend, a mile or so to the north west of the village, was kicking off at 3pm we eschewed the old adage of saving the best until last and decided that our first port of call would be the Old Town, less than a quarter of a mile to the



The Church of St Peter & St Paul

north east of the modern village centre. This area of the village is clustered around the **Church of St Peter & St Paul** which was originally constructed during the 1360s. The tower and the south and west walls survive from this period while the remainder of the church

was rebuilt in 1431 with a vestry being added in 1490.

To the west of the Church is the site of the chantry college which was founded in 1431 by Sir Reginald De Cobham whose grandfather, also named Reginald, moved to the area in the 13th century following his marriage to Joan of Hever. The college made



The College, showing the original wall





The Guest House

provision for 'six chaplains, four clerks and thirteen poor persons'. In a nod to the past, the private house that now stands on the site is called '**The College**' and was constructed in around 1700 using many materials salvaged from the original building. Features of the site that remain from the time of the original college include the cellars and a wall that separates the property from the churchyard. Cobham, who died in 1446, rests eternally

with his second wife Ann in a tomb sited in the centre of the Church of St Peter & St Paul's chancel.

To the north of the Church stands **The Guest House**, now the village library. This grade 2\* listed hall house, which dates back to around 1431, was originally built to serve as a guest house for the college. Having later been a pub known as 'The French Horn' for some time, the house was divided into three cottages



The Guest House







The Cobham Tomb in the Chancel of  
the Church of St Peter & St Paul



The front of The College



and remained as such for over a century until it became the property of an architect by the name of C F Hayward towards the end of the 1800s. Mr Hayward restored the property to its original plan, including the main centre hall with a gallery over the northern third, and took it as his home. Now that The Guest House is a public library, visitors are free to enter and look around. The building is full of antique furniture, clocks and trinkets and much of the timber structure is visible. A visit is thoroughly recommended for anyone who has an interest in medieval buildings.

To the south of the church is a cluster of medieval houses affording a view that, cars ignored, has remained broadly unchanged for over 400 years which I find quite incredible. When viewing from the south, I was reminded of the 'Market Square' area of the Weald &

Downland Open Air Museum at Singleton in West Sussex.

Closest to the church and forming part of the boundary of the church yard is **Old Town Cottage**, a late 16th century timber framed house which retains many of its original features including the dragon beam and joists of the original jetties (now sadly hidden behind an early 20th century infill of the lower level) and some of its original windows. Adjoining Old Town Cottage to the east, and bordering the western side of the main entrance to the churchyard, is **Old Town House**, the northern part of which was constructed at the same time as the cottage. The southern part was a grocers shop which was severely damaged by a fire in 1908, being 'rebuilt entirely in the olden style to correspond with the surrounding architecture of this picturesque part of the



Old Town Cottage





Old Town House

village' by the renowned architect Leonard Stokes. Old Town House became a private residence in 1963 when the tills rang for the final time and the proprietor, quite literally, shut up shop. Together these two buildings share a single grade II\* listing.

To the east of the churchyard entrance is the small late 16th century **Church Gate Cottage** and its next door neighbours, the grade 2\* listed **Star Inn Cottages & Church House**. Formerly an Inn, a reportedly impressive Tudor structure is hidden behind a Georgian frontage. The original timber framing, infilled with brickwork, is visible at the rear of the property which can be seen from Church Road.

The jewel in the Old Towns crown is undoubtedly the old butchers shop, now a subdivided private residence known as **Pollard Cottage** and **Pollard House**. Built in the 15th century this building functioned as a shop for around 500 years and is an archetypal medieval Wealden hall house, complete with

surviving jetties, and thoroughly deserves its grade 1 listing. Behind the old butchers stands its former barn, a 16th century structure now a private house, imaginatively named **The Barn**.

A short walk south back down Church Road and a right turn into the High Street takes us past a collection of more modern buildings and into the contemporary village centre. The first building of note is **Cordreys Barn** also known as the Parish Barn. This late 15th century barn is set back from the East Grinstead Road behind modern retail units and hosts a shop and a workshop. Opposite the Parish Barn are **Drivers Cottages**, a 15th century Hall House which was restored and divided into two cottages in the last century.

At the junction of the High Street, the East Grinstead Road and Plaistow Road is the War Memorial, behind which is the village pond. The pond was created in the late 16th century when sandstone was quarried from the site for use in local road building. Immediately to the west of the pond, in the shadow of a





Church Gate Cottage



Star Inn Cottage and Church House





St Peter's Cross and Village Cage

centuries old oak tree, is **St Peter's Cross and the Village Cage**. Constructed in 1437 by Reginald De Cobham, the Cross was built to mark the boundary between the manors of Puttenden and Billeshurst. The cross itself has long since gone and only the pedestal remains. Adjoining the cross is the Village Cage, which was added in 1773 and used to lock up local miscreants! The last inmate, a poacher, was incarcerated in 1882.

Opposite the cross is the late Tudor, and grade 2\* listed **Magnus Deo**, a large former farmhouse whose extensive lands were farmed by the Stanford family for over 200 years before the development of the village swallowed them up. The timber framing at the front of the house is hidden behind tiles and bricks, but is still visible on the north west aspect. Behind the cross are **Billshurst Cottages**. This large

property has now been divided into 5 separate houses, with 3 contained in the 16th century jettied middle and 1 in each of the 19th century end extensions. One can't help but wonder how attractive this house would be if its timber framing were exposed rather than being buried under tiling. The same can be said of **Rose Cottages**, a stones throw away and a now divided house dating from the early 1500s and clad in tiles, bricks and weatherboarding.

Heading westwards away from the village centre we come to **Bricklands Farm**, a huge 3 storey 15th Century house whose timber framing is just visible on the eastern aspect above the recklessly allowed 20th century extension. To the west of the main farmhouse is its 16th century barn, restored





Magnus Deo

and converted into a house in 1983 and given the name **Michaelmas Hall**.

Finally, heading north out of the village towards Godstone, we encounter the descriptively named **Thatched Cottage**. The Cottage was built in the 15th century as a barn, being converted to a home in the 1800s. The author W E Johns (author of “Biggles”) lived in the house during the 1920s and 30s.

Behind the former barn is its parent house, the equally descriptively named **Old House**. Built in the 1400s, extended in the 1700s and probably the oldest residential building in the village, this house is particularly pleasing on the eye with its half hipped roof and exposed timbers, though it doesn’t quite compete with the picturesque nature of Lingfield’s Old Town.

**IAN MULCAHY**



Billshurs Cottages





Rose Cottages



Bricklands Farm





Michaelmas Hall



Thatched Cottage and Old House





RICHARD III  
KING OF ENGLAND  
KILLED AT  
BOSWORTH FIELD  
IN THIS COUNTY  
22ND AUGUST 1485

Buried in the  
Church of The Grey Friars  
in this Parish



# Richard III Visitors Centre

*by*  
Catherine  
Brooks





AUGUST IS the anniversary month of the Battle of Bosworth and the start of the Tudor dynasty, so what better time than to reflect on all aspects of those events in 1485? Richard III is not a Tudor, but his story is inextricably linked to the dawn of the new era.

I'm sure most of you know at least some of Richard's story and plenty about the events of Bosworth on 22<sup>nd</sup> August 1485. If not, sources abound (but read widely to get a broad spectrum of viewpoints)! Certainly, the discovery of his body underneath a council car park in Leicester, England, is truly unique event.

In 2004, Philippa Langley, a member of the Richard III Society, was in the Greyfriars area where Richard was discovered, whilst she was doing some research. She got together with John Ashdown-Hill (who, sadly, recently passed away), and in re-examining evidence on what

was believed to have happened to Richard's body, they concluded he may be buried still in the friary. The (very) short version of the story, is that they were right.

The King Richard III Visitors Centre opened in 2014, and has been extremely successful. As you enter, it proclaims 'Dynasty, Death and Discovery', and so the centre is divided into three sections (there is currently a temporary exhibition on the Battles of the Wars of the Roses too). Dynasty tells the story of the King's life and how it was shaped by The Wars of the Roses. Death talks about the Battle of Bosworth, and finally, Discovery unveils the incredible details of the research undertaken to find and identify Richard.

The experience begins with looped film of the main 'characters' in the Wars of the Roses, telling their stories and sharing their views. In front of this, is a copy of the Stone



of Scone under the Coronation Chair, used for centuries as a symbol of English rule over the Scots. This grand entrance room is adorned by a huge tapestry depicting the members of the Houses of Lancaster and York. We tend now to think of war as something that happens between nations, but Medieval England was a very different place, and the world was a lot smaller then. It is easy to forget to consider how difficult it would be to plan a battle and transport an army over what we would consider a short distance, and to remember that these people were not strangers from across the sea, but often families and friends. We are introduced to each of them, with their roles and their loyalties open to our scrutiny (or lack of, in the case of the Stanleys!).

Richard's life story, principally that of his later life and reign, has been told from many viewpoints, and is often the source of passionate debates amongst both historians and lay people. I would be amazed if he was not the most divisive monarch in British history. A large part of this is down to how Richard came

to the throne.

But that  
debate

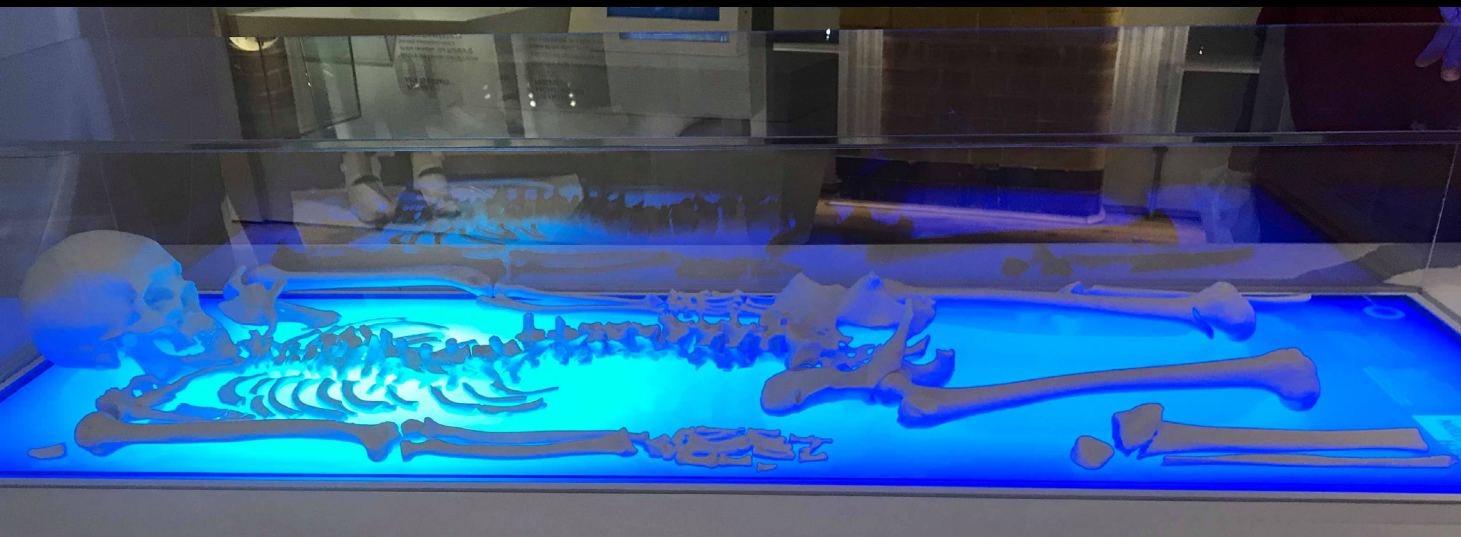


would be misplaced here. As we meander through the centre, the tale of Henry Tudor begins to emerge. Many would assume that Henry could never be a serious contender to the throne, but years of violent civil war, changes in kingship (at least one that resulted in the murder of an anointed monarch), and vicious infighting, should probably have been indicators that this was a foolish assumption to make.

Across two large walls, we see the battle film begin. On the first, we see Richard's army preparing for battle, and on the second, his cavalry charge and his final moments. These scenes are silhouetted and despite how ethereal they are, the sense of reality and enormity of these final moments is not lost. It is very simply done, and beautifully presented. There is then the after-battle tapestry, commissioned for the Visitors Centre, which depicts the crowning of Henry Tudor

The fascination for most people lies predominantly now with Richard's discovery and how the remains were confirmed as him.





This is an incredible story, but too long, unfortunately, for explanation here, as is the story of the dig itself. Suffice to say that scientific analysis, such as DNA tests and carbon dating confirmed that this skeleton was that of Richard III. Scans revealed damage to bones, which allowed both the age of the bones to be confirmed, but also gave us insight into how Richard was killed on the battlefield. One of the most fascinating exhibits is a recreation of Richard's skeleton, encased in glass, over which there is a screen. A selection of buttons allows you choose an area of the skeleton to be examined, and as you do so, the bones are highlighted on the screen, with an explanation of the trauma they had received, and the medieval weapons likely to have caused them. The scans revealed eleven injuries, mostly to the face and head. This suggests that Richard's helmet had been removed during battle.

It simply cannot be possible for us to imagine the horror of such battle grounds. Two of the wounds found on Richard's skull were judged to be fatal, and all would have been caused by vicious weapons such as halberds and swords, designed to slice, penetrate, hook and tear the victims. A wound on one of his back ribs and another on his pelvis are thought to have been inflicted after death, once his armour had been removed. And with his flesh rotted away, we have no way of knowing the other injuries Richard may have sustained.

DNA samples were matched to two living relatives of the King, Michael Ibsen (who built Richard's new coffin), and Wendy

Duldig, which meant the skeleton was related to Richard's descendants. One curious discovery of further DNA research ran into the rather delicate issue of 'false-paternity'. Here, the individual assumed to be someone's biological father, is not. So at least one point since Richard's death, the male line of succession in the monarchy has been quietly broken. Make of that what you will.

As you leave the main centre of the exhibition (through the beautiful courtyard trimmed with white roses), you find a quiet space, perfect for contemplation. The grave





site is here, and it represents the choir in which Richard was buried. A thick glass floor reveals part of Trench 1 of the dig, where Richard was unknowingly found on the very first day of the excavation in the Social Services car park. An image of the skeleton is projected into the grave site, and fades in and out. At one time we can see how the body had been buried, with the head tilted forwards, suggesting the grave was too short, and the forearms crossed, implying the hands may have been tied, and the feet missing (thought to have been accidentally removed by Victorian excavators). As it fades away, we see how small it looks, merely a rough hole in a trench, and it is in fact a very humbling experience to witness this. This was not a place for photographs.

I live only a few miles from where Richard was found, and as a result, I was very lucky, through my association with the Tudor Society, to have a small involvement with the media coverage of the reinternment for Sky News. It will always be one of the most precious experiences of my life, for which I feel truly

honoured. The area around the Cathedral, which is just across from the Visitors Centre, was gentrified in order to become a fitting final resting place of an anointed king. It is now a beautiful space, with simple landscaping and seating. It doesn't feel at all as though you are less than a minute from the noise and traffic of the City Centre. Before he was interred, Richard's coffin was set out in the Cathedral, so visitors could come and pay their respects. The numbers they predicted swelled beyond expectation, and as we walked by the coffin, I found myself unexpectedly close to tears. I did not make it into the Cathedral this time – I will save that for another visit – but the resting place is quite serene, and the whole experience, from the reinternment, to the grave side, to the Cathedral, moves you in a sneaky way you would not expect. You do not need to be a Ricardian to be absorbed, amazed, and touched by this truly unique set of circumstances. If you ever get the opportunity to visit, please do not turn it down.

## CATHERINE BROOKS





  
RUIII



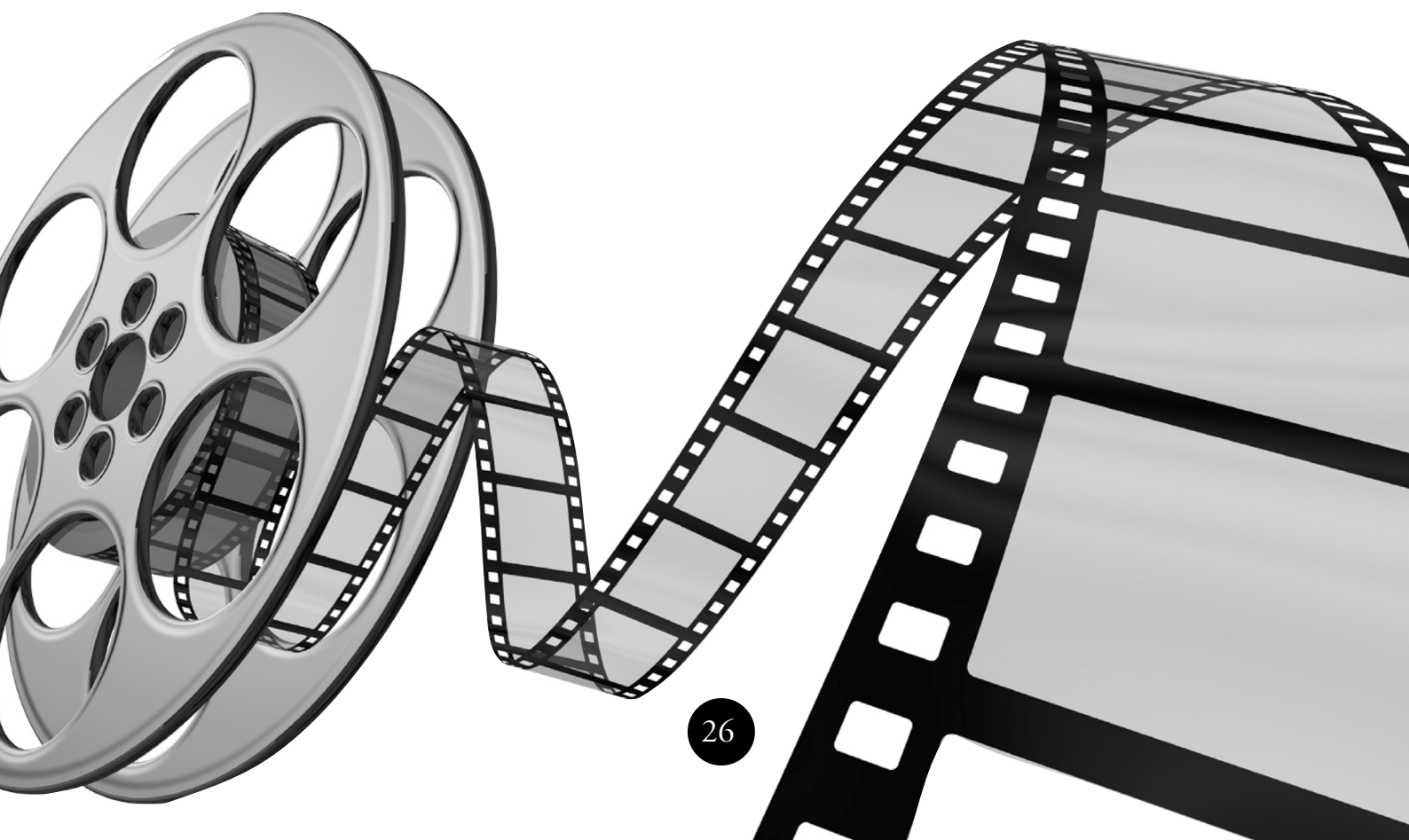




*FILM*

# **THE SERPENT AND THE COMFORTER: CONVERSATIONS WITH A HERETIC**

*By Emma Elizabeth Taylor*

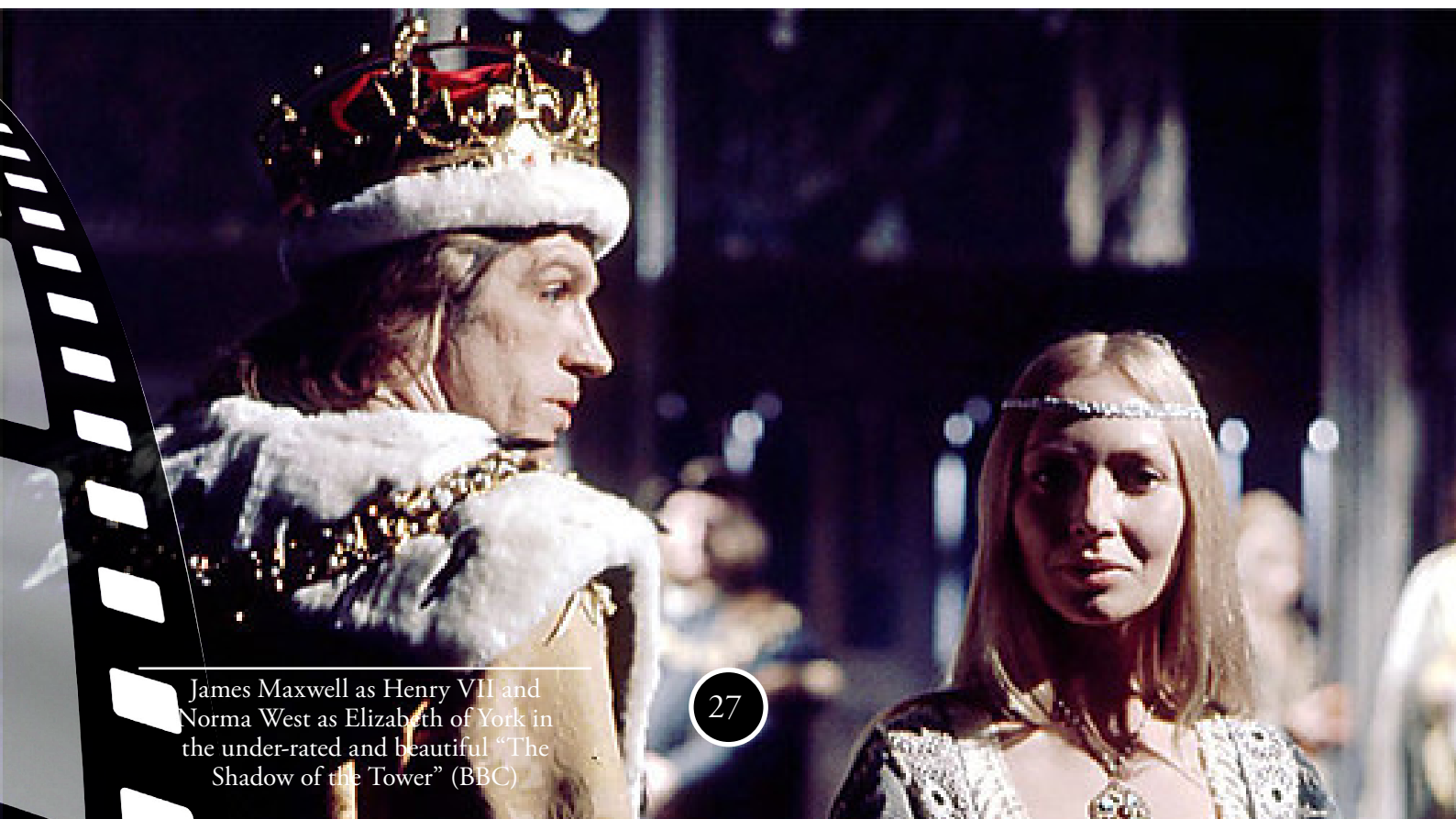
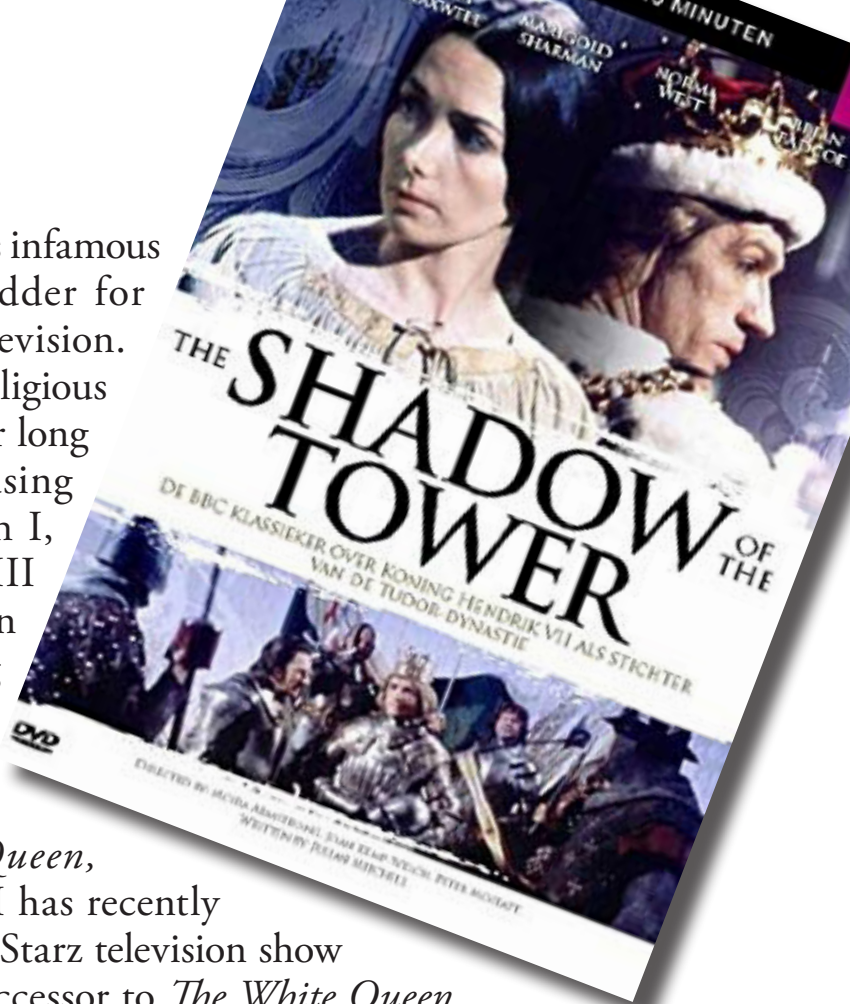




The Tudor Dynasty, in all its infamous glory, provides ideal fodder for the world of film and television.

Betrayal, rebellion, scandal and religious reform litter the family's 118-year long rule, with many adaptations focusing on the Virgin Queen, Elizabeth I, or the infamous King Henry VIII and his six wives. However, in comparison, adaptations of King Henry VII's story seem few and far between. Parts of his early life were chronicled in the 2013 television drama *The White Queen*, and the character of Henry VIII has recently made an appearance in the 2017 Starz television show *The White Princess*, a spiritual successor to *The White Queen*.

However, one of the most memorable portrayals of Henry's life can be found within the 1972 series, *The Shadow of the Tower*. This series, designed as a prequel to the hugely popular *The Six Wives of Henry VIII* (1970) and *Elizabeth R* (1971), spans the course of Henry's life from his victory over Richard III at the Battle of Bosworth, all the way until his death in 1509. It is an excellent series that stands the test of time just as well as its predecessor, and a must-watch on any Tudor enthusiasts list.



James Maxwell as Henry VII and Norma West as Elizabeth of York in the under-rated and beautiful "The Shadow of the Tower" (BBC)



One episode, *The Serpent and the Comforter*, revolves around conversations between Henry and a heretic, who challenge each other's views on the Church and the nature of belief. Henry finds himself enraptured with the preacher on a philosophical level; he likes the preacher as a man, yet cannot reconcile the preacher's ideas of a simple, personal relationship with God with his own learned, strict Catholic faith. Religion is a subject that can be easily skimmed over in television and film adaptations set around the time of the Tudors, which is somewhat bizarre when one considers how integral the Church was to everyday life in the 15<sup>th</sup> and 16<sup>th</sup> Century. Adaptions such as *The Tudors* examine the Reformation of the Church, which took place in the reign of Henry VIII, but most adaptations fail to outline how utterly vital the Catholic Church was to the routine of everyday life. This episode, thankfully, addresses the topic of religion, and explores what forms this religion took, and how deviance from the norms of the Church could be harshly punished.

The episode is framed around two conversations between the heretic preacher and the King. The preacher is never named, but makes quite the impression on everyone he meets, including a young guard in the Tower who is charged with the duty of lighting the fire that will burn the man to death. The episode is a fascinating look at religion and morality in the time of King Henry VII, and manages to successfully convey the passion and fervour with which many people believed in the Church, and how

the fear of Hell was as powerful a motivator as the love of Christ.

We are introduced to the nameless preacher as a prisoner, escorted into his cell by prison guards. Despite his status as a prisoner facing death, the young guard comments that he looks 'almost kindly', which the man does. He maintains a polite, calm manner for most of the episode, seeming kindly and likeable throughout. We feel for this man, held here simply because of his beliefs, and we learn alongside the young guard that this man is not a monster; he simply holds views different to that of the Catholic Church. One of the young men guarding him becomes something of a friend, and the preacher attempts to show the young man that he is not a devil worshipper or a blasphemer; he simply dislikes some of the doctrine and ceremony attached to the Church. He is a devoted, serious man, who seems to cling to his faith in the depths of his despair, convinced that he will die for his faith.

The man known as the heretic, or preacher, and King Henry VII are opposites in almost every way; however, *The Shadow of the Tower* does an excellent job of framing the men as equals. While one is clothed in a roughshod brown robe, and the other in red and gold brocade, the men talk and debate as equals. On his first visit to the King, the preacher attempts to kneel, but cannot due to his chains. Henry asks the preacher not to kneel, but to sit with him, placing them both at the same height, at eye level with one another. While this seems like a small,





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**“The Shadow of the Tower” is one of the few Tudor dramas to capture the complexity and importance of contemporary religious faith. (BBC)**

unimportant detail, it is hugely important in terms of identifying the status of the characters. In both scenes with the King and the preacher, both men are bringing to this conversation a version of religion that has huge personal significance to them. Each man is prepared to address the others questions and concerns with a considered, thoughtful answer. The preacher accuses the Church and the clergy of being overly powerful, corrupt, and needlessly concerned with the trappings of power and wealth. In opposition to this, Henry accuses the preacher of oversimplifying the majesty of God; Henry tells him that it is arrogant to assume that the Almighty Lord is like us, and arrogant to question his

mysteries. The King drops to the floor as he talks about the Majesty of God, lowering his body, and his status before the Almighty, imploring the preacher to listen to him. He rises, towering over the preacher, almost shouting in an attempt to convince him to repent his sins and die a member of the Church. The status of the men changes; one towering over another, the other on his knees; the ebb and flow of their argument can be tracked by their physical status, and both begin and end at the same level. The back-and-forth between the two men is fascinating and very well-written; it is an examination of faith and belief, of a personal relationship with God and a God-fearing one.



However, the preacher is frequently shot with his face half in shadow, which is sometimes known in art and cinema as a *chiaroscuro*. This half-light, half dark face symbolises an internal conflict within the character, one that the audience is not yet privy to. As the episode progresses, we discover that this shadow is representative of the preacher's doubt; doubt that he has taken the true path, and doubt over the validity of his decision to leave the Church. However, the King is also shown in half light, half shadow, at both the beginning and end of the episode; also symbolising his doubts over religion. He reveals these doubts to his priest, who claims never to have doubted his religion, which Henry waives away as impossible. Both men are a lot more similar than they are willing to admit, which makes the situation they are in all the more dire.

However, despite the touching professions of faith from both the King and the preacher, we also see the effect that fear and impending death can have on faith. We see the preacher in his cell, a broken, shattered man, tortured by words and phrases he has heard over his life. He hears the confession of a dying man, the voice of the King threatening eternal hellfire if he does not repent, and visions of flames burning his body. In the shadows of his prison cell, he cries out for God to forgive him, but hears his young self, talking to a clergyman, expressing his boyhood dream of becoming pope. One phrase tortures him; 'Suppose you're wrong, and don't recant' and he repeats this, coming to the real-

isation that he must recant and that he must die with his sins forgiven by the Church. He later admits to the young guard that he repented out of fear that he may be wrong, claiming that he needs '[...] the comfort of the Church, and not the serpent of reason.' It is something of a disappointing revelation; this man, who endured horrendous torture on the rack for his faith, has been turned from his beliefs in his last moments, simply because he fears he has made a mistake. It is hard not to sympathise with the humanity of his plight; in this moment, he seems utterly human, and we see him struggle with faith, as many of us will do in our own lives.

This episode, while focused around religion, does not attempt to evangelise, or convince the viewer to decide on one point of view or another. Rather, it is an exploration of belief and how belief can both bring us together and divide us. Despite the relationship that forms between Henry and the preacher, the accusation of heresy can never be forgotten, despite the preacher's sudden repentance. Henry's faith disallows him from pardoning and forgiving this man, whom he otherwise admires and respects, and the preacher is forced to repent due to fear of the fires of hell. It is something of a frustrating end, as it does not end with a moral lesson. Rather, it leaves this up to the viewer. In a poignant final scene, the King holds the skull of the preacher, burnt and blackened by the fire. He asks the skull a final question that we are also left to ponder; 'Well, my friend? What is the answer?'

**EMMA ELIZABETH TAYLOR**



*Guest Expert*

**SARAH-  
WATK  
SPEAKS**

**MARGARET  
TUDOR**

**IN  
AUGUST**



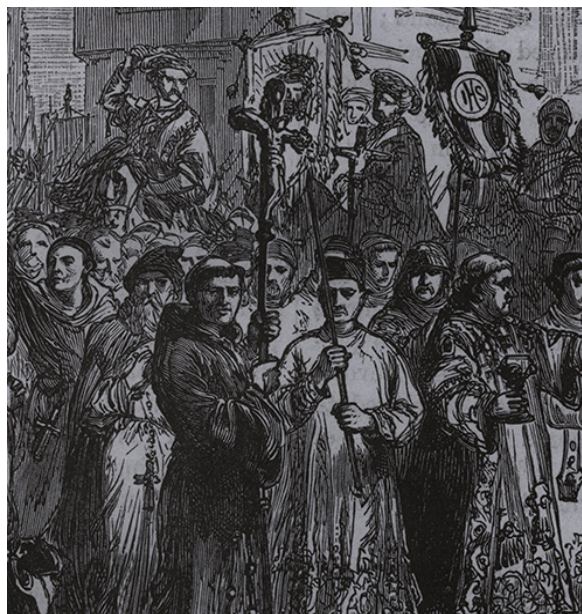




# THE PILGRIMAGE OF GRACE

BY ROLAND HUI

In the tumultuous reign of Henry VIII (1509-1547), no year was more turbulent than 1536. A queen was dead, a queen was beheaded, and a queen was made. The King's marital adventures however, were more than just personal affairs confined to the royal bedchamber. Their repercussions were far reaching, affecting the very lives of his subjects. In divorcing his wife Katherine of Aragon to marry his mistress Anne Boleyn earlier, Henry VIII had found it necessary to sever the English Church from Rome and to assume its sovereignty. With that came transformations in religious doctrine and in the very spiritual life of the kingdom. Such alterations were so detestable to some Englishmen that Henry VIII faced the greatest threat to his authority - the rebellion known as the Pilgrimage of Grace.



A Victorian illustration of the Pilgrimage of Grace





Henry VIII by Cornelis Anthonisz  
(after Hans Holbein)

When Henry VIII was granted the title of Supreme Head of the Church of England by Parliament in 1534, he was not hesitant to exercise his new prerogatives. Empowered to 'repress and extirpate all errors, heresies, and other enormities and abuses' in 'Christ's religion within this realm of England',<sup>1</sup> the King, who had always fancied himself a theologian, set about redefining the faith of the English Church in the summer of 1536. By the so-called 'Ten Articles', certain traditional practices (such as the veneration of the Virgin Mary and of the saints, the use of religious images, clerical vestments, holy water, and candles) were maintained, but of the Seven Sacraments, only

three - baptism, reconciliation, and the Eucharist - were recognized.

To further amend his new national Church, Henry VIII also looked to reform the religious houses scattered throughout the land. Earlier in 1535, a survey was made, under the direction of his minister Thomas Cromwell, of all Church property in the land, and its wealth was meticulously catalogued in the 'Valor Ecclesiasticus'. These account books of 'church valuation' were invaluable to the authorities in implementing the plundering of religious properties; as Head of the Church, Henry VIII believed himself entitled to their riches.



The changes in doctrine and the visitations of Cromwell's agents to assess church holdings were not well received in many parts of the kingdom. Lincolnshire, in particular, still largely traditional in faith, was especially aggrieved. Rather than the King as their authority in religious matters, many still looked to the Pope in Rome. As well, what was now considered sacred and what was not caused great upset. Certain holy days were no longer observed, and even the number of the Sacraments had changed. "Now is taken from us four of the seven Sacraments", the people lamented, "and shortly you shall lose the other three also".<sup>2</sup> The loss of local religious institutions was another cause for alarm. Some small monasteries, such as Louth Park Abbey, were being suppressed and it was believed that more destruction was to come. Soon, it was said, there 'shall be no church within five miles, and that all the rest shall be put down'.<sup>3</sup> Besides the Church, the King was intent on oppressing his own subjects too. There were increases in taxes, unfair changes to property and inheritance laws, and it was rumoured that even more extreme measures were to be put in place to fill the royal coffers. Charges would even be placed upon food staples such as bread, many thought, and no man may even 'eat a piece of roast meat, but he should for the same, first pay unto the King a certain sum of money'.<sup>4</sup>

With so much unrest, Lincolnshire was a powder keg ready to explode. The fuse was lit on October 2 when a commissioner came to Louth to inspect St. James' Church - no doubt to confiscate its parish treasures, the locals said. The man was seized and taken prisoner by an angry mob led by a shoemaker named Nicholas Melton (or 'Captain Cobbler' as he was nicknamed), along with a group of royal representatives at Legbourne Priory nearby. Although hands were laid upon the King's detested agents, no harm was meant towards the Sovereign himself, the citizens declared. All they wanted was an end to the new unjust laws and taxes, and to the changes in religion.

Very soon, neighbouring towns and villages declared for Louth as well. Many of the gentry were sympathetic to the rebels and joined their ranks, as did some of the clergy. The local aristocracy, however, largely remained loyal to the Crown. Great magnates, such as the Earl of Northumberland, were aloof to the insurgency. But some were forced to side with Melton and his increasingly large army. Lord Hussey of

Sleaford and John Neville, Baron Latimer (the second husband of Henry VIII's future wife Katharine Parr) were among those who would be made to set aside their allegiances under threats of violence.

With their increase in numbers - some 20,000 strong - the rebels grew audacious and even bloodthirsty. At Horncastle, a representative of the unpopular Bishop of Lincoln was beaten to death. Emboldened, Melton and his followers began making more demands. The Princess Mary, made a bastard upon the King's second marriage, must be restored to the succession, they declared at Lincoln, and ministers like Thomas Cromwell and Richard Rich, along with certain radical clergymen, must be expelled from office for ill advising the King.

When the rebels' demands reached the capital, the King was furious. It was presumptuous, he exclaimed in a lengthy reply, for his own subjects to 'find fault with your Prince for the electing of his councillors and prelates, and to take upon you -

**Thomas Cromwell by Wenceslaus  
Hollar (after Hans Holbein)**





contrary to God's law and Man's law - to rule your Prince, whom you are bound by all laws to obey and serve with both your lives, lands, and goods'. After defending and justifying his policies, Henry was still willing to be merciful, he said. The unruly thousands were ordered to disperse in peace or else face 'destruction and utter ruin by force and violence of the sword'.<sup>5</sup> To show his might, soldiers led by the Duke of Suffolk, were ordered to Lincoln to make war upon the rebels if necessary. When the King's message was received, the rebels - not without some grumbling and distrust - decided to accept his pardon. They disbanded, and no blood was shed. Nonetheless, Henry VIII still exacted vengeance. Melton and other prominent leaders were arrested and put to death.

The collapse of the uprising in Lincolnshire did not deter likeminded men to the North in Yorkshire. Led by a charismatic lawyer named Robert Aske, some 10,000 - marching under the banner of the Five Wounds of Christ adopted by Melton and the former rebels - occupied the city of York beginning on October 16. Theirs was not a revolt, Aske claimed, but a 'pilgrimage for the preservation of Christ's Church, of this realm of England, the King our Sovereign Lord, the nobility and commons of the same... for the reformation of that which is amiss'.<sup>6</sup>

Again, owing to the great number of the rebels which was continuing to expand in the thousands, the King was forced to stay his hand. This time, his tactic was to negotiate. Through the Duke of Norfolk, sent north to squash the rebellion, Henry VIII appeared to be amenable to Aske's petitions. He would alter his religious policies, amend unfair laws, and remove bad men from his government, he promised, and hold a free Parliament in York. And as a further sign of good faith, he would have his new wife Jane Seymour crowned as Queen there as well. To celebrate this new accord with his subjects of the North, Robert

Aske was even invited to spend Christmas with the royal family.

Despite Henry VIII's good will towards the rebels - he had even given Robert Aske 'apparel and great rewards' during his visit to court<sup>7</sup> - he had no intention of honouring his promises. When unrest, stirred up by one Sir Francis Bigod, broke out in early 1537, the King struck. Bigod was apprehended, along with Aske who actually had nothing to do with the new insurrection. Among the many also arrested was Lord Hussey and his friend Lord Darcy of Templehurst, both accused of sympathizing with the traitors. A certain Sir John Bulmer was also taken, along with his wife Margaret Cheney, reported as being 'a very fair creature'.<sup>8</sup> All were condemned for conspiracy and paid with their lives. The penalty for treason for Margaret Cheney was especially cruel. As a woman, she burnt at the stake.

In the end, the Pilgrimage of Grace was a glorious failure. No Parliament was ever held to address the rebels' grievances, and the dissolution of the monasteries would continue unabated. At court, hated men like Cromwell continued to be favoured; he was even made a Knight of the Garter in the aftermath of the rebellion. The Pilgrimage remains one of the great 'what ifs' of English history. Had it succeeded, what might have happened? Despite Aske's assurances to Henry VIII of his loyalty to him, it would not have been impossible if the King was dethroned if he remained stubborn to the Northerners' demands. It can then be supposed that this daughter Mary Tudor would have been made Queen; years ahead of her time. The English Reformation would have been halted and Mary perhaps successful in bearing an heir to succeed her. With these possibilities, the history of the nation - and likely that of Europe - would have been radically altered.

## ROLAND HUI

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2. Edward Hall, *The Triumphant Reigne of Kyng Henry the VIII*, London: T.C. & E.C. Jack, 1904, vol. II, p. 270.
3. Anthony Fletcher and Diarmaid MacCulloch, *Tudor Rebellions*, 4th edition, London: Longman, 1997, p. 22.
4. Edward Hall, *The Triumphant Reigne of Kyng Henry the VIII*, vol. II, p. 270.
5. Edward Hall, *The Triumphant Reigne of Kyng Henry the VIII*, vol. II, pp. 271-274.
6. Anthony Fletcher and Diarmaid MacCulloch, *Tudor Rebellions*, p. 26.
7. Edward Hall, *The Triumphant Reigne of Kyng Henry the VIII*, vol. II, p. 277.
8. Charles Wriothesley, *A Chronicle of England During the Reigns of the Tudors, From A.D. 1485 to 1559*, London: printed for The Camden Society, 1875-77, vol I, p. 64.



are Seymour Queen.



Jane Seymour was a conservative queen in a time of turmoil. (Author's Collection)





# **THE PILGRIMAGE OF GRACE**





# RESOUNDING TO THE NAME OF MARY: TUDOR VENERATION OF THE BLESSÈD VIRGIN MARY

*by Gareth Russell*

*“I am angelic love who wheel around that high gladness inspired  
by the womb that was the dwelling place of our Desire; so shall I  
circle, Lady of Heaven, until you, following your Son, have made  
that sphere supreme, still more divine by entering it.”*

*So did the circulating melody, sealing itself, conclude; and all the  
other lights then resounded with the name of Mary.*

**- Dante, “The Divine Comedy: Paradise”, Canto XXIII**





The Blessèd Virgin and her Son, the Christ Child, blessing the rule of King Richard II from a 14<sup>th</sup>-century icon. (The National Gallery)



Few aspects of medieval Christian worship or, indeed, of modern Catholicism, are more poorly understood or consistently misrepresented than veneration of the Virgin Mary. Although some early Protestants, like Martin Luther, piously agonised about the theological justification for praying to Mary and laboured for years, Luther ultimately felt in vain, to find scriptural support for the practice he loved, their future co-religionists generally did not experience the same qualms. The gutting of the cult of the Virgin began in earnest with the first generation of Protestants, gathering an inexorable pace after the 1570s. It produced a view, entrenched amongst most but by no means all modern Protestant denominations and, curiously, in many secular perceptions of Christianity that veneration of Mary is axiomatically absurd, devoid of Biblical justification, and thus a theological smorgasbord of superstition, garish pseudo-spiritualism, saccharin idiocy, and palpable nonsense. Even if one does not believe in Christianity, there is a widespread belief that “serious” Christians are those who pray to Christ alone and certainly not to His Mother. Marina Warner, a lapsed Catholic who wrote a brilliantly stinging feminist critique of Catholicism’s historical views on Mary in “Alone of All Her Sex: The Myth and the Cult of the Virgin Mary” nonetheless attempted to counteract such breezy dismissal by pointing out that “the finer points of Mariology have

delighted and enthralled some of the greatest minds” in Christian history and that the complexities of Marianism have thus been misrepresented through reduction.

This point stands as relevant for the study of Tudor society’s religiosity, both on the eve of the Reformation and in the aftermath, in which devotion to the Virgin Mary proved, along with prayers for the dead, to be the hardest traces of Catholic worship to eradicate among the majority of lay English and Welsh Christians. To understand the depth of this devotion, it is necessary to understand its nature. The frequently

repeated assertion that Catholics “worship” the Virgin Mary is the first and most important point to refute. As with all main branches of Christianity, Catholicism holds that worship (or “latria”) is due alone to the Holy Trinity of Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. Veneration or honour (“dulia”) is owed to the confraternity of canonised saints. The Holy Virgin, as the Mother of God, exists in a special spiritual category entirely of her own, one which nonetheless tellingly places her closer to the



Queen Katherine of Aragon who was, like many in her family, devoted to veneration of the Holy Virgin.

saints than to the Godhead. Catholicism classes devotion to the Virgin properly as “hyderdulia”, a form of veneration deeper and more intense than that paid to any other saint, but which nevertheless remains firmly removed from latria. It is true that certain early modern sources muddy the waters on this by referring to “worship to be had of the Virgin Mary”, the precise phrase used, for instance, in legislation



enacted by the Scottish Parliament convened by James V in 1541. However, it is worth noting that in the context of early modern syntax “worship” could, and often was, used to mean “honour”, hence the interchange usage, for instance, of “your worship” or “your honour” for contemporary judges and sheriffs.

Crucial to the distinction between latria and hyperdulia is the teaching that the Virgin Mary is not a goddess, nor even close. She is an intercessor, a mediatrix, between the Faithful and her Son, a core Catholic belief which negates the Protestant insistence that Catholicism is an inherently un-biblical strain of Christianity.

Mary’s elevation to the role of the “Aqueduct of Grace,” one of over three hundred devotional titles bestowed upon her by the end of the Middle Ages, springs from two main incidents recorded in the canonical Gospels. The first is the miracle at the wedding feast in Cana when, despite His reluctance to perform a miracle publicly at that time, Christ transformed water into wine as an act of filial kindness to His mother, who had begged Him to do so in order

to save the hosts and their servants from any embarrassment. This, the first of Christ’s major ministerial adult miracles, was thus carried out solely by Him, but at the request of His beloved mother. Mary’s heart was moved by the seemingly trivial concerns of ordinary people and she carried these fears and worries to her Son, as part of a special and holy relationship seemingly corroborated to medieval theologians by

Christ’s very last set of instructions from The Cross. In His final agony, Christ informs Saint John the Evangelist, the “Beloved Disciple” generally held then to personify the Eternal Church, “This is your mother.” To most, if not all, medieval theologians this was an example of the eternal mixing with the human, one of the most potent points of Christ’s Incarnation. On the one hand, Christ is asking John to physically provide shelter and care for His widowed mother, who has no other children of her own body, yet, the timing and heart-rending, horrible location of Christ’s words also speaks to

a more timeless concern - namely, He is telling John, thereby the Church and its future congregations, “This is your mother.” Mary becomes Mother of the Church, one of the most popular medieval titles for her and one still in not-infrequent use in modern Catholicism.

Medieval devotion to Mary had accelerated rapidly since several Church councils focused on Marianism between the fourth and sixth centuries AD, although Luigi Gambero is almost certainly correct in



**A later portrait of Queen Anne Boleyn, who publicly expressed her desire to go on pilgrimage to the shrine of Our Lady of Walsingham to pray for a child.**

his 2001 academic paper “Patristic Intuitions of Mary’s Role as Mediatrix and Advocate: The Invocation of the Faithful for Her Help”, in which he argues that spiritual and historical interest in Christ’s mother had preoccupied Christian communities far earlier, almost from their origin. One of the earliest, and most influential, texts attesting to that interest is “The Protoevangelium of Saint James”, an early sec-



ond century AD text, likely born from memories and accounts preserved in the earliest wave of Jewish converts to Christianity, who were especially protective of the Jewish legacy of the Virgin's family, quite possibly in an attempt to counter-act the perceived Hellenization of the faith during the missionary activity of Saint Paul.

The Protoevangelium is a sort of prequel, for want of a better word, to the Gospel according to Saint Luke, in recounting the biographies of the Virgin's parents, Saint Joachim and Saint Anne, and Anne's prayers for a child when she and her husband were ostracised by many of their co-religionists who regarded Anne's childlessness as a sign of a merited curse. When their child, Mary, is born, her education is entrusted to the Holy Temple in Jerusalem, directly placing Mary in the line of holy Israelites, most obviously the ancient temple-raised prophet Samuel. Throughout her childhood, the young Mary repeatedly sees visions of angels and heavenly beings, a crucial point which apparently explains the otherwise odd words quoted in the Bible as Mary's first recorded response to seeing the Archangel Gabriel at the Annunciation. Later, as she reaches the age of womanhood, the Temple authorities and her parents are determined to respect Mary's culturally unusual vow of virginity by finding her a pious man for a husband, who will respect the spiritual decision of a young woman raised near the Holy

of Holies. They find a groom in the form of a devout widower, Joseph of Nazareth who, like Mary, is very distantly descended from the deposed Davidic line of Israel and Judah. Mary travels north to Joseph's home in Nazareth where, after their betrothal, she is visited by another angel - Saint Gabriel - who greets her with words that later became part of the most repeated prayer in human history, "Hail Mary, Full of Grace; the Lord is With thee." To which Mary responds, "What manner of greeting is this?" It is not the vision or visit itself that shocks Mary who, according to the Protoevangelium, had already experienced multiple such interactions throughout her childhood, rather she is taken aback by the extreme deference and salutary language used towards her in this instance by the archangel.

This was to remain an accepted part of the Virgin's biography for centuries. Tudor England was a land steeped in the accumulated centuries of devotion to Mary. Art frequently focussed on Mary's saintly parents, her extended family, and scenes



A statue of Christ with Our Lady of Walsingham at the revived shrine. (The National Shrine of Our Lady of Walsingham.)

from her childhood in Jerusalem. For queens of England, Mary was a point of spiritual and cultural significance. Queenly coronations in medieval England deliberately and unambiguously cast queens consort in the roles of earthly handmaidens to Christ's Mother, whose coronation as Queen of Heaven was celebrated between the 15<sup>th</sup> and 22<sup>nd</sup> of August and foretold, so the Vatican believed, in the twelfth chapter



of the apocalyptic book of Revelation. Mary, font of mercy and mediatrix at the heart of the faith, was a sublime role model for queens, who were expected to carry errands of mercy to their husbands, themselves theoretically aspiring to be fonts of justice on earth as God was in Heaven. In this issue of the magazine, Lauren Browne discusses how deeply Henry VIII's mother, Elizabeth of York, venerated the Virgin Mary. She, her mother Elizabeth Woodville, and her eventual daughter-in-law, Anne Boleyn, all bore as their patron saints women tied to the Virgin's family - in the Elizabeths' case, the Virgin's elderly kinswoman, Saint Elisabeth, mother of Saint John the Baptist; in Anne's, Mary's mother. Marianist iconography was prominently incorporated into the coronation pageants of Elizabeth of York in 1487 and Anne Boleyn in 1533. Earlier that year, Anne had publicly expressed her desire to go on pilgrimage to the shrine of Our Lady of Walsingham in Norfolk, one of the largest centres of Marian devotion in pre-Reformation Europe. Her predecessor, Katherine of Aragon, the child of a queen so pious she was sometimes painted in the guise of the Holy Mother, had gone to Walsingham many times, proof of her deep and lively devotion to veneration of the Virgin Mary.

These queens both led, and were the products of, their country's zealous Marianism or, as Protestants would later cuttingly rebrand it, Mariolatry. Richard II and Henry V had both

at different times consecrated their entire kingdom to Mary's protection, earning England the local nickname of "Our Lady's Dowry". Her festivals dotted the liturgical year. Marigold flowers got their name from "Mary's Gold", a gentle joke that even the soil of England was offering up glowing tributes to Mary-Immaculate. Roadside shrines to the Virgin proliferated; every church, from the largest cathedral to the smallest rural parish church, had a "Lady Chapel", a side chapel to encourage veneration of "the Daughter of Zion". The great shrine to Mary at Walsingham, where

legend claimed she had appeared in a miraculous vision during the reign of Saint-king Edward the Confessor, had towers capped with gold, producing a pilgrim trail so famous that European philosophers like Erasmus wrote in praise of it. Mary would, as she had at Cana, carry the prayers and needs of the Faithful to Christ. Her gentle prayers would add with theirs. They could, and would, be heard without her, but Christ had given Mary's motherhood to the Faithful



A common devotional image showed Saint Anne clutching her daughter, the Virgin Mary, or teaching her to read. (Saint Anne's Parish)

for a reason. She would, as the most frequently intoned prayer in Catholicism begged of her, "pray for us sinners, now, and at the hour of our death." Philosophers poured over Pope Sixtus IV's musings on Our Lady's Immaculate Conception (still habitually misunderstood and conflated with both the Incarnation and the Virgin Birth); the whole notion of Christ's Divinity, the nature of Grace, prayer, interces-

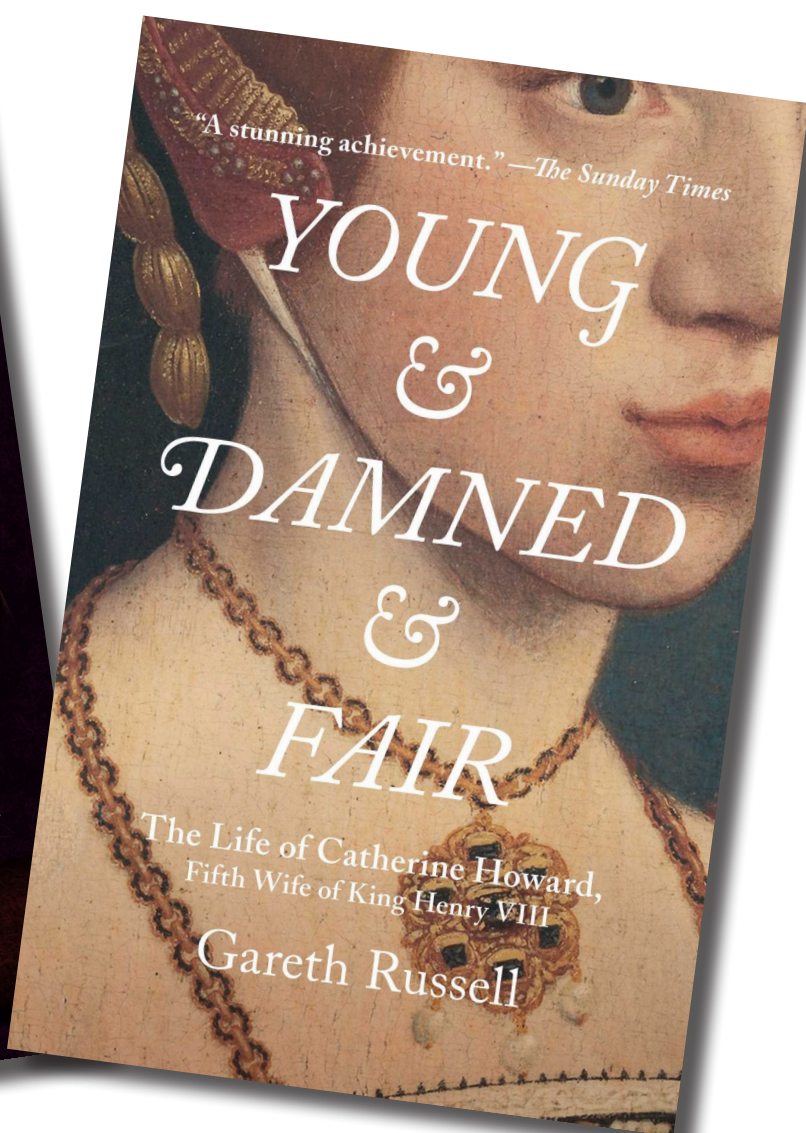
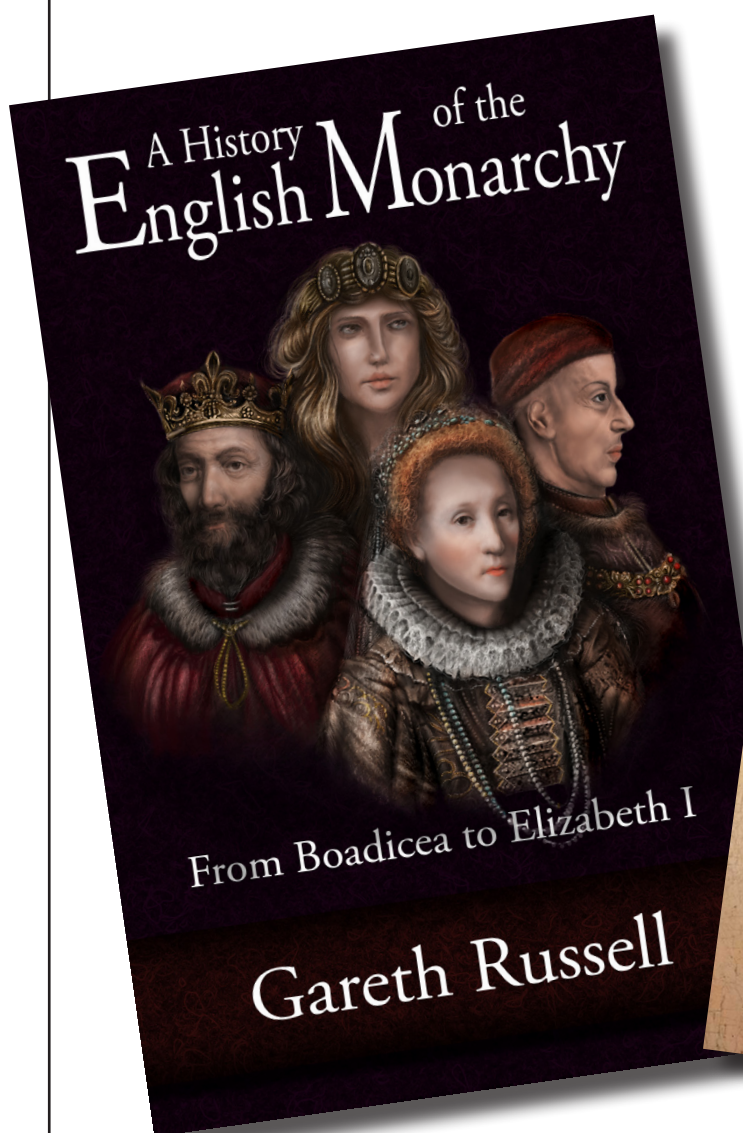


sion, death, and hope were distilled in part by discussions of, and references to, philosophy and theology pertaining to her, through which it was hoped a clearer understanding of Jesus Christ would be made possible.

Centuries after her shrines had been gutted, her statues burned on Thomas Cromwell's orders in front of large London crowds, and her name erased from English prayer books, the Oxford Movement of the nineteenth century influenced some sections of the Anglican Communion to emulate certain parts of the Lutheran and Orthodox communities in re-finding the utility of devotion to Mary. A small Protestant chapel at Walsingham was opened

to encourage a revived pilgrimage trade. The shrine itself had once stretched a mile, before Henry VIII had it ransacked and destroyed. At the other end of the now empty mile, a Catholic chapel was constructed. Today, pilgrims walk with ecumenical ease between the two sites of worship, praying, and reflecting. Veneration of Mary was no more, nor less, illogical than the faith which birthed it. To be a Christian and hold no, or much, devotion to the Virgin Mary is equally possible. For the early Tudors, it was central. To later, problematic. To the last generation, anathema. Early modern Marianism is a central part of the extraordinary splendour and savagery of Christianity's impact on the Tudor faithful.

**GARETH RUSSELL**





# Two Tudor Thomases

## Questions and Wordsearch

### Quiz by Catherine Brooks

#### Sir Thomas More

I J D R I C H A R D  
H A D E T H G I N K  
M N Q W Y A V G M Z  
M E I O Z N Y W T N  
I O J T Y C T W R K  
L N R E A E A F S G  
K H I E J L M J D X  
C Z E P T L W E E A  
U I C I L O H T A C  
Q V V C A R N W K

Born on 7th February, 1478, in ....(4) Street, London  
Died on 6th July, 1535, executed at the .....(5) of London  
In 1491, he joined the household of John .....(6)  
He studied .....(5) and Logic at Oxford University  
Also Studied ... (3) in London  
Was .....(8) in 1521  
Became Lord .....(10) in 1529  
Between 1512-18, he wrote but never completed his work 'History of King Richard III', said to have influenced Shakespeare's '.....(7) III'  
He had 4 children with his first wife, ....(4) Colt  
Supporter of the .....(8) Church – he saw Catholicism as the true faith

#### Archbishop Thomas Cranmer

Born on 2nd July, 1489, in .....(9)  
Died 21st March, 1556, in .....(5) Street, Oxford  
1510, he was given a Fellowship at .....(5) College, Cambridge  
His first wife, ....(4), passed away during childbirth  
He was ordained as a .....(5) in 1520  
He became England's .....(10) to the Holy Roman Emperor, Charles V of Spain  
He was a staunch believer in the Royal .....(9)  
His marriage to his second wife, .....(9), was shrouded in secrecy  
He became Archbishop of .....(10) in October 1532  
Despite recanting his faith, he was burnt at the stake for crimes of heresy and .....(7)

K T A D U Y A T E A  
H S O I S C M R T S  
U E R B E A N T E L  
X I B D J M R H R O  
Y R U B R E T N A C  
M P K Z A R J E G K  
W F O S G P E O R T  
Y Y O W L U Z H A O  
S N Q N R S V S M N

Answer the questions, then  
find the words in the grids

QUIZ ANSWERS ON PAGE 65





# THE PIETY OF ELIZABETH OF YORK: ‘HUMBLE AND REVERENT’

BY LAUREN BROWNE

**As queen, Elizabeth of York was expected to participate in a wide variety of religious rituals, processions and pilgrimages. However, her religious devotion extended far beyond her royal duty, and she appears to have held a particular veneration of the Virgin Mary. Elizabeth’s motto, ‘humble and reverent’, preserved on her seal at the National Archives, was carefully chosen to reflect her piety, which we will explore in this article.**

Elizabeth of York has been referred to as ‘the forgotten Tudor queen’. Indeed, Amy Licence has used this sobriquet as the subtitle for her biography on Henry VII’s wife. This reflects the lack of extant evidence about her personal life, her personality, and how she thought about or interacted with contemporary issues and events. Therefore, as an historian, one must access this queen-consort through creative means. One such method is to examine her household expenses and read between the lines of this information. The financial records for Elizabeth’s final year, 1502, are intact, and through their study

we can see that she was a great benefactress of several religious institutions.

It appears that she was especially fond of the Carthusian charterhouse of Jesus of Bethlehem, which was founded at Sheen by Henry V in 1414. According to Carthusian rule, the monks lived in solitary cells and only met in common for quire and chapter. Like her mother, Elizabeth Woodville, Elizabeth of York ‘venerated its strict, ascetic monks who devoted their lives to secluded and scholarly study.’<sup>1</sup> The

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<sup>1</sup> Arlene Naylor Okerlund, *Elizabeth of York* (New York, 2009), p. 144





Henry VIII's mother, Elizabeth of York, was a pious devotee of the Virgin Mary.





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Elizabeth of York had many spiritual  
devotions in common with her mother,  
Queen Elizabeth Woodville



charterhouse received several gifts from Elizabeth of York, and from 24 June 1497 to 25 December 1498, the procurator Don Philip Underwood, recorded several contributions from the royal family, including alms from 'the king at Killingworth by the hands of William Tomson £6 13s 4d; the lady Queen there by the hands of the same William £5, besides smaller contributions at other times.'<sup>2</sup> Elizabeth also gave £6 3s 4d for the celebration of Mass for the year, and another £6 13s 4d as 'alms and rewards for various causes and considerations.'<sup>3</sup> Another contribution of £10 was given by Elizabeth 'for celebration of mass again for a year and a half... also for the horses for the lord Duke of York and his sister at divers times.'<sup>4</sup> She also gave £20 in order to fund repairs to the manors at Sheen and for new buildings for the monastery itself.

It seems that Elizabeth's frequent contributions to the Carthusians at Sheen implies a certain affinity with their order. Indeed, it appears that she was particularly fond of those who followed a strict, ascetic worship of God, which we can see in donations to other orders and individuals. The privy purse expenses for 1502 show that on 1 May she gave 11s to three nuns of the Minories, 'to Dampne Ketyryne and Dampne Elizabeth... and to a daughter of William Cormer', she also gave 8d 'to an olde woman servaunt' there.<sup>5</sup> The Minoresses, or 'the Poor Clares' were a contemplative order of nuns, and the female followers of St Francis. Like the Franciscan monks, the Minoresses observed a life of silence, prayer, and complete poverty. In November of the same year, the three nuns, servant, and the Abbess herself received another 15s 8d.<sup>6</sup>

Elizabeth also gave alms to individual Anchoresses, women who had wholly withdrawn from secular life. Anchoresses, and their male equivalents - Anchorites - lived a solitary existence of religious contemplation and prayer, 'anchored' to

God. They were walled into a small cell, no bigger than 12 feet, which they could never leave. Anchorite cells, or anchorholds, were attached to a church and usually contained three windows. One opened onto a chamber and was used to bring food to the anchoress and take waste away. A prospective Anchoress would have to prove that could provide for herself during her enclosure, and usually had two servants who would see to her needs. Another window, sometimes called the 'squint' looked through into the church itself. This allowed the Anchoress to hear Mass and receive communion. The third window looked on to the outside world. Anchoresses were still a part of the community however, unlike hermits, and they often provided spiritual guidance to visitors. Elizabeth of York appears to have been rather fond of such women as she made several gifts to them; the Anchoress of St Peter at St Albans received 3s 4d, and the Anchoress at St Michael near St Albans received 26s 8d in the accounts which were settled after Elizabeth's death in February 1503. Therefore, it appears Elizabeth was especially fond of those whom had chosen to lead a frugal, ascetic life in complete devotion to God.

Elizabeth of York, and her mother Elizabeth Woodville, held a special reverence for the Virgin Mary, as well as their patron saint Elisabeth, and the Feast of the Visitation. In 1492, the Queen petitioned the Pope for a special pardon for the Feast of the Annunciation that granted 300 days of pardon to those who recited 'the whole salutation of our Lady, Ave, Maria gratia' three times after the tolling of each Angelus Bell.<sup>7</sup> Elizabeth of York's affinity with Marianism is also reflected in her many pilgrimages to Walsingham, 'the centre of the East Anglian cult of the Virgin Mary.'<sup>8</sup> It was established by Richeldis de Faverches, the widow of the Lord of the Manor of Walsingham in 1061. She was taken in spirit to Nazareth and shown the house where the Annunciation took place, and was asked by the Virgin Mary to build a replica in Norfolk. The wooden house which was built there was later

2 Margaret E. Thompson, *The Carthusian Order in England*, (London, 1930), p. 195

3 *ibid.*, p. 195

4 *ibid.*, p. 196

5 *Privy Purse Expenses of Elizabeth of York*, (ed.) Nicholas Harris Nicholas, (Charleston, 2009), p. 8

6 *ibid.*, p. 57

7 Arlene Naylor Okerlund, *Elizabeth of York*, (New York, 2009), p. 144

8 Amy Licence, *Elizabeth of York: The Forgotten Tudor Queen*, (Stroud, 2014), p. 205



encased in stone to protect it from the elements, and throughout the medieval period it became one of the greatest pilgrimage sites in England and Europe. Our Lady of Walsingham, as it came to be known, was often associated with mostly female concerns, which may be why Elizabeth visited in 1495, after the death of her four-year-old daughter, Elizabeth, and a son born prematurely. We also know Elizabeth visited the shrine again in October 1497.

From the Queen's privy purse expenses (March 1502- February 1503), we can see that also employed proxies to go on pilgrimage on her behalf. Sir William Barton, a priest, is paid 22s 6d to present offerings from the queen to shrines at Windsor (Our Lady and Saint George and the Holy Cross), Eton (Henry VI and Our Lady), Reading (Child of Grace), Caversham (Our Lady), Northampton (Holy Rood and Our Lady of Grace), Walsingham (Our Lady), Sudbury (Our Lady), Woolpit (Our Lady), Ipswich (Our Lady), and Stokeclare (Our Lady).<sup>9</sup> Richard Milner was given 10s 10d for a pilgrimage which took him 13 days, during which he made offerings to various shrines in Kent:

*'to our lady of Crowham...  
To the roode of Grace in Kent... to  
Saint Thomas of Canterbury... to  
oure lady of undrecroft there... to  
Saint Adrean... to Saint Augustyn...  
to our lady of Dover... to the roode  
of the north dore in Poules... to  
our lady of Grace there... to Saint  
Ignasi... to Saint Dominik... To  
Saint Petre of Melayn... to Saint*

*Fraunces... to Saint Savioure...  
to oure lady of Piewe [of pity or  
grace at Westminster]... to our lady  
of Berking... and to our lady of  
Willesdone...'.<sup>10</sup>*

In February 1503, during the month when Elizabeth lost her life due to complications from childbirth, an unnamed man was also paid 3s 4d to go on pilgrimage to Our Lady of Willesdon.<sup>11</sup>

We can see from the overwhelming presence of pilgrimages made to sites linked to the Virgin Mary, that Elizabeth was clearly devoted to Marianism in particular. It is evident that her veneration of Mary is even more prominent in the lead up to the birth of her child, which is by no means an accident. The Virgin was a particularly potent symbol for childbearing women, especially in their pilgrimage activities. Elizabeth also particularly venerated the Virgin during periods of illness, and she may have had a pregnancy related illness in August 1502 as she makes payments for several Masses to be said at Northampton.

There is also reference made in the expenses to a payment for a 'Lady gyrdelle'

in December 1502, two months before her delivery. It is likely that this could be a relic or blessed girdle which were used by women in childbirth to ensure a safe delivery for both child and mother. The use of charms, talismans, and handwritten prayers, which were placed over the stomach during labour were common throughout the medieval period. Unfortunately, the charm did not work, and Elizabeth died in childbirth on 11 February 1503. As we have



**Both Elizabeth and her mother were devoted to veneration of their patron saint, Elisabeth who, in the Gospels, is honoured by the Visitation from her pregnant kinswoman, the Holy Virgin Mary. Painting by Karl von Baas. (CatholicFire)**

<sup>9</sup> Susan S. Morrison, *Women Pilgrims in Late Medieval England*, (London, 2000), p. 74

<sup>10</sup> *Privy Purse Expenses of Elizabeth of York*, (ed.) Nicholas Harris Nicholas, (Charleston, 2009), pp. 3-4

<sup>11</sup> *ibid.*, p. 96





As queen, Elizabeth of York was a generous benefactress of the austere Carthusian order, shown here attending a 2 a.m. service. (FineArt)

seen, Elizabeth of York was an incredibly pious woman, and her devotion, especially to Mary, appears to have gone beyond her role and duties as queen-consort. She held those who lived a devout, ascetic,

contemplative life, so different to her own filled with jewels and ermine, in very high regard, and her expenses show that she was a generous benefactress to numerous individuals, institutions and shrines.

**LAUREN BROWNE**

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# TUDOR SCIENCE

## ‘EXPLORATION’

Having mentioned maps and charts, in my previous article, this time we shall look at how aids to navigation and exploration, such as better compasses, along with improved ship design, made global exploration possible, spreading new knowledge and thinking about two Tudor gentlemen in particular: Richard Hakluyt and William Gilbert.

In my first Tudor Science article, I wrote about how exploration of the world was rewriting the ideas of global geography, Sir Francis Drake’s claiming of America’s West Coast in the name of Queen Elizabeth and the first tentative efforts at colonising Virginia on the East Coast. Back in England, few would have known of these ventures into uncharted lands if it hadn’t been for Richard Hakluyt, a man from a Herefordshire family, born c.1552 possibly in London, and sometimes referred to as ‘the father of modern geography’<sup>1</sup>.

His father died when Richard was just five and his mother and all the children were cared for by a cousin – also named Richard Hakluyt. The cousin was a lawyer with close connections to London merchants at the forefront of trading ventures, as well as explorers and map-makers of the day.

These acquaintances would inspire

the younger Richard as well as his cousin’s geography lessons. One lesson in particular ended with a biblical reference: ‘They that go down to the sea in ships, that do business in great waters; These see the works of the Lord, and his wonders in the deep’<sup>2</sup> – words that the younger Richard never forgot. The lad attended Westminster School, a forward-looking educational institution in Tudor times, and then went to Oxford University, gaining his Master’s Degree in 1577. By 1580, he was giving public lectures on geography, using the old, out-dated maps and globes as visual aids and comparing them to the latest, revised versions, showing new lands and recent discoveries.

Hakluyt made a point of getting to know some of England’s most daring sea-captains and discussing their previous adventures and forthcoming plans for exploration. During Queen Elizabeth’s reign, trade with the Far East was the ambition of any merchant who hoped to get rich. Commodities like spices and silks could be sold in Europe and make a fortune but the Portuguese had a monopoly on sailing around Africa while the Spaniards dominated South America. The English were late-comers to such trading ventures and were desperate to find a short cut to the



Orient, avoiding any Portuguese or Spanish interference either by sailing to the north of Russia or to the north of Canada. These routes – known as the North-East and North-West Passages – had not yet been investigated, mainly because both were ice-locked for much of the year. In fact, no one was certain that there were ways through either route even in high summer, but that didn't deter intrepid explorers like Sir Hugh Willoughby [1495-1554] and Richard Chancellor [c.1521-56].

Their combined expedition to Lapland and Northern Russia in 1553 led to a royal charter being granted to the Muscovy Trading Company in 1555. Willoughby, Chancellor and Sebastian Cabot, another adventurer, were named as having founded the company in 1551. Sadly, Willoughby had already perished during the first Russian voyage but Chancellor made another voyage to Russia and when Tsar Ivan the Terrible heard of the Englishman's arrival, Chancellor was summoned to the tsar's court. As a result, the first Russian ambassador to London met Queen Elizabeth on behalf of Tsar Ivan, however, Chancellor had died during the voyage home. So neither of these two intrepid sea captains lived to enjoy the fame they deserved and their attempts to find that illusive North-East Passage were unsuccessful.

Despite this, Richard Hakluyt wrote detailed accounts of their expeditions in his vast work *The Principal Navigations, Voyages, Traffiques and Discoveries of The English Nation, made by Sea or over Land to the most remote and farthest distant Quarters of the Earth at any time within the compass of these 1500 yeeres: Devided into three severall parts, according to the positions of the Regions wherunto they were directed*<sup>B</sup>. Phew! That's quite a title. The English adventures

in 'North-Eastern Europe and Adjacent Countries: The Muscovy Company and the North-Eastern Passage' were dealt with in Part II.

This three-volume book – its title usually abbreviated to *The Principal Navigations* – was published in London in 1589 under license to the Queen's Printer, Christopher Barker and became a Tudor best-seller, for those who could afford it. Part I dealt with the lands around the Mediterranean and the West Coast of Africa as far south as the Cape of Good Hope. Part III covered the New World 'further than ever any Christian hitherto hath pierced', as Hakluyt tells his readers on the title page.

With the search for the North-East Passage getting explorers no closer to the Far East, the hunt was on for a navigable way through arctic waters north of 'the backside of Canada', as Hakluyt called it: in other words, hoping to reach the Pacific Coast as a short cut to China. Humphrey Gilbert [c.1539-83] and Martin Frobisher [c.1535-94] both attempted it with Frobisher making three voyages in search of the North-West Passage. All their efforts failed although, apparently, a route through does exist using modern ice-breakers or submarines beneath the ice. Also in his Part III, Hakluyt recommended that anyone who was unemployed in England should sign up to go to Virginia as a colonist – he also thought the prisons should be emptied by sending all the inmates as well, but they would not be given a choice. The Elizabethan government didn't take his advice.

As an additional section at the end of his book he added 'The last most renowned English Navigation round about the whole Globe of the Earth', telling of Sir Francis



Drake's incredible circumnavigation achieved in 1577-80. Drake sailed in a ship barely 100 feet long manned by a crew of seventy-five. It was called *The Pelican* with four other vessels in his little fleet. Only Drake's ship returned to England after 1,020 days with just fifty-six crewmen remaining, by which time he had renamed it *The Golden Hind*. The secret objective of Drake's voyage was to intercept the valuable cargoes the Spanish were taking from the western coast of South America (the Spanish 'Main') and shipping back to Spain by crossing the Isthmus of Panama and then sailing home across the Atlantic Ocean. To do this, he first had to risk the perilous waters of Cape Horn to round the southern tip of South America and then sail into the Pacific. This part of the plan was incredibly successful. Drake captured twenty-six tons of silver, half a ton of gold, thousands of coins and jewels, brought out of Peru and Bolivia by the Spaniards, but having stolen the treasure off the coast of Peru, he dared not sail home by the same route because Spanish ships were waiting to take revenge.

Instead, Drake went north to California then on to present-day Vancouver. One of Queen Elizabeth's secret instructions to Drake was that he should attempt to discover that elusive North-West Passage from the western end and return to England by that route, so he sailed over 1,000 miles north to Alaska. He couldn't find any way through the Canadian arctic so had to sail west instead, towards Japan. His tiny ship crossed the vast Pacific Ocean. Australia and New Zealand were yet undiscovered but Drake made landfall in the Spice Islands of Indonesia where he added tons of valuable cloves to his haul of treasures. The *Golden Hind* then voyaged south-west across

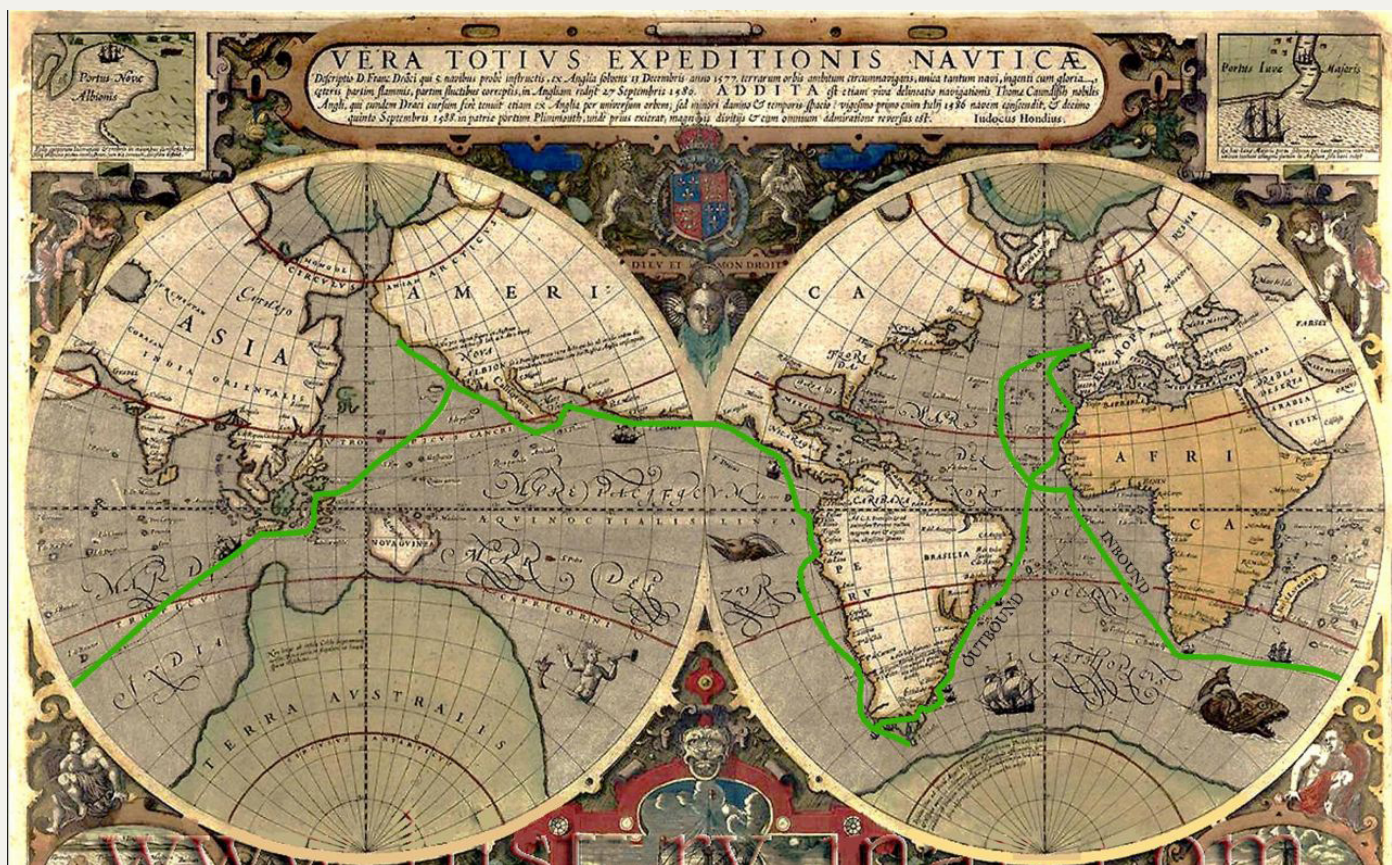
the Indian Ocean and back into the Atlantic at the southern tip of Africa via the Cape of Good Hope. The voyage had taken three years and considerable loss of life but the queen was so delighted with her share of the plunder – enough to wipe out all England's debts – she knighted Drake. Sir Francis also earned a nickname from the Spaniards, 'El Draco', a play upon his surname that meant 'the Dragon'.

Drake's ability to evade the mighty Spanish galleons would prove useful once more during the attempted Armada invasion of 1588. The huge galleons were cumbersome and difficult to manoeuvre but could overwhelm the much smaller English ships. Yet improved ship design meant the English could make better use of the weather in their agile little craft. It was also clear that the small vessels were just as capable as the galleons of crossing vast oceans but such intrepid endeavours also needed a better understanding of magnetism and the use of a compass to locate the magnetic north pole.

William Gilbert (he often signed himself Gilberd) was born on 24<sup>th</sup> May 1544 into a prosperous family in Colchester, Essex<sup>5</sup>. His house, called 'Tymperleys', is still there in the centre of Colchester and open to the public. William was educated at Cambridge University, where he received a BA, MA and MD, after which he became a senior fellow. He practised as a physician in London for many years and in 1600 became president of the Royal College of Physicians and served as Queen Elizabeth's doctor.

He spent much of his income on his hobby of studying rocks as England's first geologist. He was particularly fascinated by 'lodestones'. Lodestones are a rare form of the mineral magnetite ( $\text{Fe}_3\text{O}_4$ ) that occur





Map showing the voyage of the Golden Hind 1577-80<sup>4</sup>

naturally as permanent magnets<sup>6</sup>. They attract metallic iron and this ‘magic’ property was known to many ancient cultures. By the eleventh century AD the Chinese had discovered that freely suspended elongated lodestones would tend to hang with their long axes approximately north-south and used them as magnetic compasses. They also discovered that this magical ability could be passed on to a steel needle by stroking it with a lodestone.

Gilbert studied these stones in a more scientific manner, writing about his work and publishing his discoveries in his book *De Magnete* [About Magnets] in 1600. The book soon became the standard text on electrical and magnetic phenomena throughout Europe. In it, Gilbert discussed

and disproved the folktales about lodestones – that their effect was reduced if diamonds or garlic were nearby and that they could cure headaches. He replaced such odd ideas with proper physical laws of magnetism: that the north and south poles of a magnet attract each other but like poles repel. He also distinguished between magnetism and static (known as the amber effect), inventing the word ‘electricity’. He compared the magnet’s polarity to the polarity of the Earth, suggesting that magnetism was the soul of the Earth, and that a perfectly spherical lodestone, aligned with the Earth’s poles, would spin on its axis, just as the Earth spins, over a period of twenty-four hours. Gilbert was adding further weight to Copernicus’ theory that the Earth revolves around the Sun. He



# TONI MOUNT

also studied 'inclination' and 'variation' in the magnetic field as possible aids to mariners in finding their location at sea. His work may well have continued to assist navigators but,

sadly, Gilbert died in 1603, probably of the plague. Even the queen's physician was not immune to this dread disease.

TONI MOUNT

- 1 <https://www.britannica.com/biography/Richard-Hakluyt>
- 2 King James Bible, Psalm 107, v.23-24.
- 3 For the text go to <http://www.gutenberg.org/ebooks/7476>
- 4 <http://goldenhind.co.uk/pages/sir-francis-drake/the-circumnavigation-1577-1580/106>
- 5 Hart-Davis, A, *Local Heroes*, BBC Publications, 1997, pp.12-13.
- 6 <https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/00033790310001642812>

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Toni mount has a busy speaking schedule throughout the year, and can often be found sharing her in-depth knowledge of history to groups both small and large.

After many years of teaching history to adults several of her courses are now available online at **[www.medievalcourses.com](http://www.medievalcourses.com)**. You can also visit her on her own website to see what she's up to: **[www.tonimount.com](http://www.tonimount.com)**





# Tudor Life

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## EDITOR'S PICKS



There is a vast corpus of work on the Tudors' religious policies and their impact. At just over one thousand pages, Professor Eamon Duffy's *The Stripping of the Altars: Traditional Religion in England, c. 1480 - 1570* is not for the faint hearted. However, ever since it was published by Yale University Press in the 1990s, this superbly researched work has become one of the great works of Tudor history, through its meticulous presentation of Christian worship on the eve of the Reformation and how it was dismantled.

One of Duffy's fellow professors at Cambridge, Richard Rex, is the author of the short but enlightening *Henry VIII and the English Reformation*, which is a fantastic examination of what Henry personally believed and how he influenced the birth of the Church of England. Likewise of potential interest is Eric Ives's biography of Anne Boleyn, which expertly navigates how the elite experienced Christianity in the decade on either side of the schism with Rome.

For those looking for a good novel on Tudor faith, C. J. Sansom's *Dissolution* is a fast-paced, well-researched murder mystery set in a Benedictine monastery as it is inspected by Cromwell's commissioners. A young nun, Joanna Stafford, and Catholic fears in Henry's reign forms the inspiration for *The Crown*, the beautiful debut novel by Nancy Bilyeau.





# WILLIAM BYRD

## RECUSANT CATHOLIC IN A PROTESTANT COURT

**Many people fell into their love of the Tudors through a television series, or maybe a good historical fiction book that inspired them to learn more. Down the rabbit hole they went, and now their shelves are filled with books. I get it! But for me, falling in love with Tudor history came through a different path.**

I was a fifteen year old choral nerd in high school in Amish country, Pennsylvania. Our high school chamber choir chose that year to sing *Ave Verum Corpus* by William Byrd. My director gave us a tiny taste of the story behind the music. It was written by a composer who was a Catholic, but wrote church music for the Protestant church under Queen Elizabeth I.

All of the teenage angst inside of me suddenly felt a kindred spirit. An artist, unable to fully express his relationship with his God, forced to write music for services his conscience couldn't allow him to attend. Yearning for spiritual fulfillment, unable to fully show who he was. Gosh, the drama was something fifteen year old me loved! Thus began my love of Tudor history, which I tend to view through the lens of music.

And so, Byrd is as good a starting off point as any, particularly looking at his recusancy, and how he managed to succeed at court while writing illicit music echoing the sentiments of the Jesuits and the counter-Reformation. But it's interesting to note that while all my teenage angst was correct in empathizing with Byrd seeming to be unable to express his true faith, he was actually quite daring in making his beliefs known. Had it not been for his talent as a composer and musician, he likely

would have been put to death for his activities.

William Byrd was born in 1540, just as Henry VIII's dissolution of the monasteries was reaching its zenith. He excelled in music, working early on with greats like Thomas Tallis, and his brilliance was recognized early on both by Mary I and her sister Elizabeth. As Byrd was coming of age, religion in England was going through a massive flip flop, seeming to change with every change of monarch.



By the time of Elizabeth, the most pressing matter was to find some sort of religious compromise, which the Act of Supremacy and Act of Uniformity attempted to create. It became a crime, punishable by fines, not to attend the official royal church

service. Those who refused were named "recusants," and were seen with suspicion in England. After plots involving Mary Queen of Scots, and Elizabeth's own excommunication from the Catholic church, Catholics suffered even more suspicion against them. Officials questioned their loyalty, wondering how one could be loyal to both the Queen and the Pope.

Into this maelstrom of religious uncertainty came William Byrd. He was a gentleman of the Chapel Royal, and wrote music for the Protestant liturgy, as well as popular commercial hits (he was one of the leading composers of madrigals). But it was the music he wrote for the Catholic worship that caught the attention of officials under the Queen.

In 1577, the Privy Council ordered the local bishops to submit names of known recusants, or Papists, in their home parishes, as well as an estimate of their worth. One of those listed is "the wife of William Bird, one of the gent. of Her Majesties chapell." This listing is in the Catholic Record Society, and the assumed purpose was to see how much money could be extorted from leading recusants.

Byrd lived only two miles from the leading Catholic activists Lord Thomas Paget and his brother Charles, in Harlington Parish.



Thomas and Charles were involved in the Throckmorton Plot to free Mary Queen of Scots, and fled to France. In 1580 Jesuits were planning the first mission to England, and identified Byrd as a potential friend to Catholic exiles. Byrd was indeed involved with the activists involved in the Throckmorton plot, as Elizabeth's spymaster Francis Walsingham found a letter proving that Byrd was corresponding with them. The letter didn't prove anything else suspicious, and so Byrd was simply put on house arrest in 1585, and was fined for not attending the local church.

Another example of his Catholic leanings, and his daring expression of those beliefs, was in his ode to Edmund Campion. In 1581, the Jesuit priest Edmund Campion was martyred at Tyburn. A young man, Henry Walpole, witnessed the execution and expressed his sadness in a poem, "Why do I use my paper, inke, and penne?" Walpole would also become a Catholic priest, and later, a martyr as well. A few years later William Byrd set a few stanzas of Walpole's poem to music. This was almost reckless - one other attempt to publish the poem led to the torture and death of the publisher. But Byrd was shielded from some of the worst repercussions because of his talent and standing with the Queen, and so he published his song.

Some of the stanzas included in Byrd's song are:

*Why do I use my paper, ink and  
pen?  
And call my wits to counsel  
what to say?  
Such memories were made for  
mortal men;  
I speak of Saints whose names  
cannot decay.  
An Angel's trump were fitter for  
to sound*

*Their glorious death if such on  
earth were found.*

*That store of such were once on  
earth pursued,  
The histories of ancient times  
record,  
Whose constancy great tyrants'  
rage subdued  
Through patient death,  
professing Christ the Lord:  
As his Apostles perfect witness  
bare,  
With many more that blessed  
Martyrs were.*

By 1588 Byrd wanted to rehabilitate his reputation back at Court, and he published a songbook, *Psalms, Sonnets and Songs*. One of the songs in the book - which, fortunately for Byrd was popular - was a Christmas carol, "Lullaby." Even fourteen years later in 1602, the Earl of Worcester wrote, "we are frolic [joyful] here in court Irish tunes are at the time more pleasing, but in winter *Lullaby*, an old song of Mr. Byrd's, will be more in request, as I think." Some of the lyrics clearly show Byrd's sympathies. Like the line, "O woe and woeful heavy day when wretches have their will."

Byrd was taking a chance there, but he took an even greater chance when he wrote his three, four, and five part masses. The recusant celebration of mass was an intimate and quiet affair. It was done largely in secrecy, quickly so that it could blend in with the normal events of the day. In more noble homes where there were servants, the loyalty of those in the home was paramount.

This is the era of priest-holes, and secret places to hide the items necessary to worship the mass.

When one listens to Byrd's simple three part mass, written in Latin, you can almost imagine a recusant family trying to squeeze in their worship in between mealtimes, or in other domestic situations. So while the music is moving and beautiful, and still stirs emotions in us today, it is important to remember that this music was sung by and to people for whom this was an illegal act.

Their very identities were wrapped up in the words, and by singing those words they could be tortured or killed. They were experiencing the texts on a much profound level than we can imagine today; taking comfort in their worship and their fellowship with their fellow Catholics. Some of the motets to be sung during the service are extremely short - a minute or so long. This was because Byrd was conscious of the need to keep the service short.

That brings us to the song of my teenage years, *Ave Verum Corpus*. Published in collection called *Gradualia*, this motet was written, like his masses, to be sung in a private home, with only 2 or 3 voices to a part. It is illicit music, but because so much of it was dedicated to the Queen (and he was such a genius) he got away with it.

Byrd spent his life writing music for a Queen whose religion he couldn't abide, and yet he still managed to walk a fine line where he was able to support and follow his own conscience in matters spiritual. While it is tempting to view Byrd with sympathy as this unfulfilled artist, it appears that his talent afforded him the ability to be quite open with his faith, and he attempted to use that talent to further the cause where he could.


**HEATHER TEYSKO**

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# THE TUDOR SOCIETY



## *MEMBERS' BULLETIN*

Claire and I live in a small, secluded mountain village in Spain. Our house is around 300 years old and it is lovely to live here. Of course, some might say that it's a strange place for the centre of an international historical society whose focus is the Tudors. Yet, here we are!

Every now and then we get to meet up with other Tudor historians as they pass through Spain. Memorably, we met up with Natalie Grueninger when she came to see the Alhambra in Granada (where Catherine of Aragon spent her childhood). We've also had Clare Cherry (George Boleyn) to stay a number of times. Recently we met up with the online sensation who is Heather Teysko. Many will know Heather from her Tudor Summits online. It turns out that Heather also now lives in Spain - it's a small world after all, as they say!

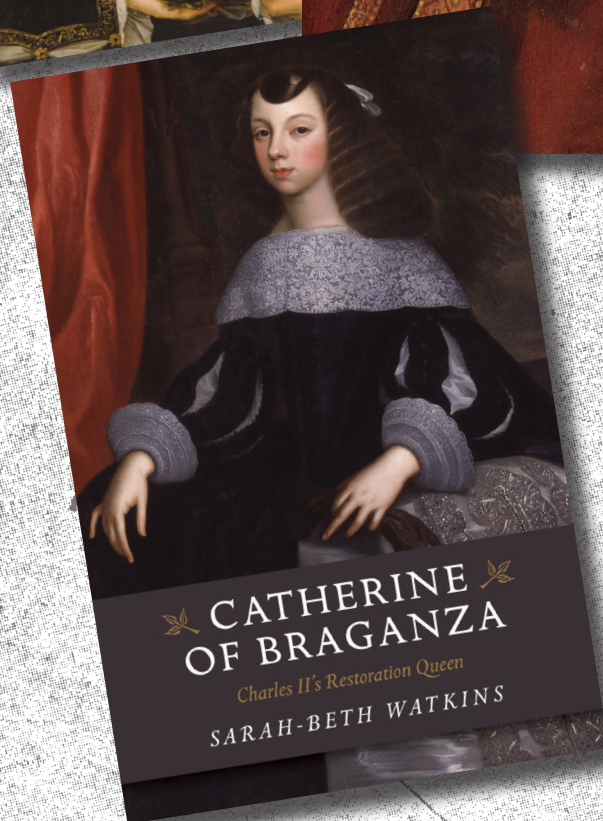
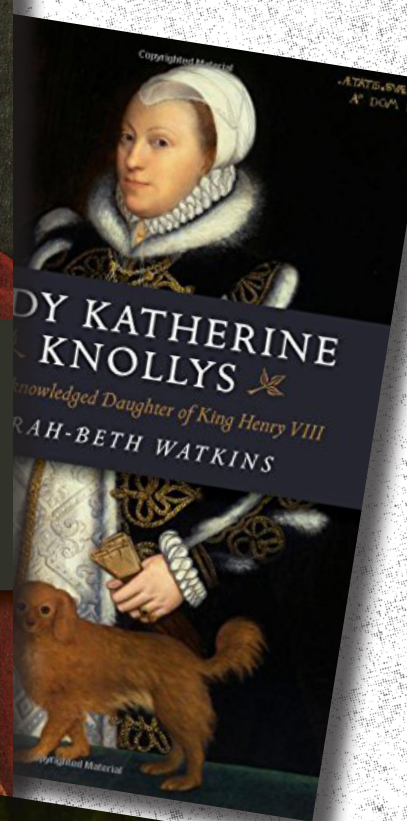
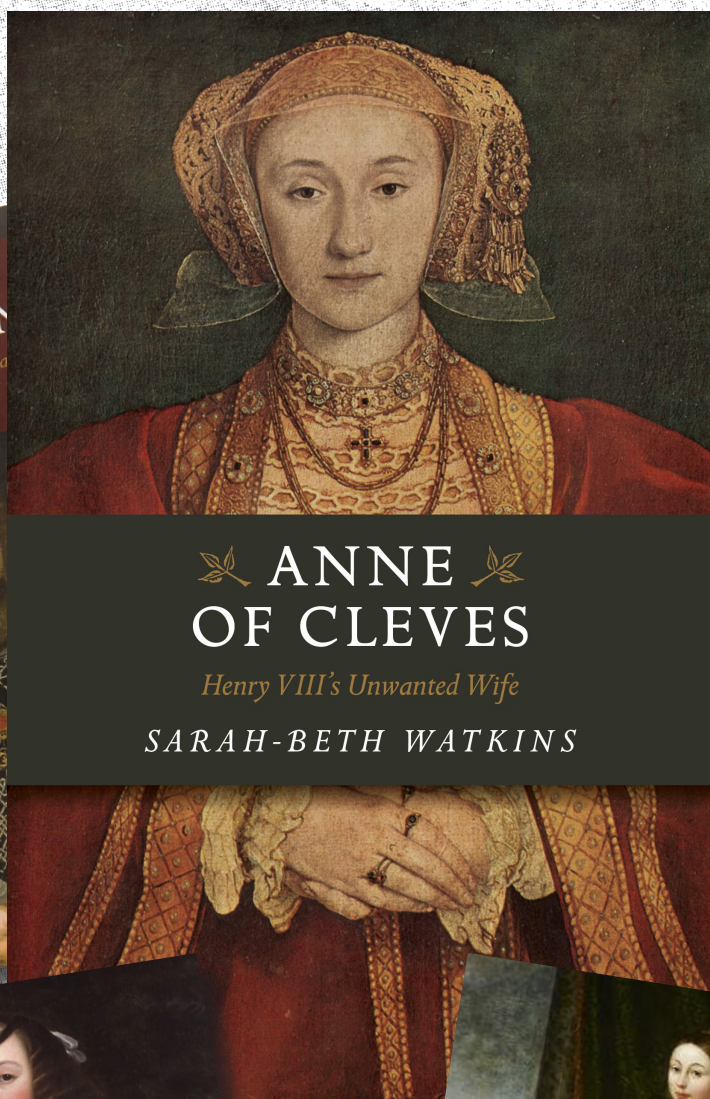
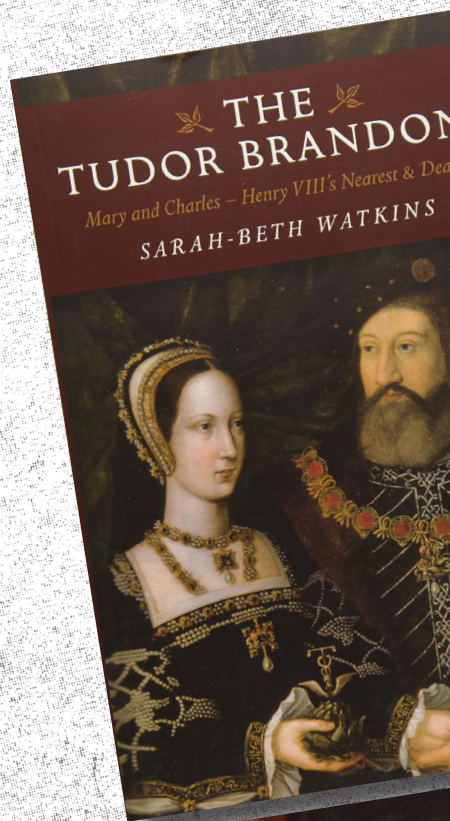
Anyway, Heather is now a new regular columnist for Tudor Life magazine. She'll be focusing on Tudor music and culture, and we're thrilled that she has joined the team.

We are, of course, also looking forward to the next Tudor Summit from Heather. I believe it is in September and we'll let you know about it as soon as we know more. Claire was interviewed via the power of the internet all about Catherine Howard. I was banished from the office to keep things quiet(er!) around the house. It was nice to get some time to contemplate how to expand and improve the Tudor Society. Watch this space as it's going to be amazing when it all comes together!

THANK YOU for your continued membership, allowing us to bring everyone together to learn more about the Tudors!

**Tim Ridgway**





Sarah-Beth Watkins grew up in Richmond, Surrey and began soaking up history from an early age. Her love of writing has seen her articles published in various publications over the past twenty years. Working as a writing tutor, Sarah-Beth has condensed her knowledge into a series of writing guides for Compass Books. Her history works are Ireland's Suffragettes, Lady Katherine Knollys: The Unacknowledged Daughter of King Henry VIII, The Tudor Brandons, Catherine of Braganza and Margaret Tudor, Queen of Scots.





# ANNE OF CLEVES AND THE LEGENDS OF THE RHINE

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**Sarah-Beth Watkins**, author of  
*“Anne of Cleves: Henry VIII’s  
Unwanted Wife”* gives us a quick  
overview of Anne’s life, from a  
childhood in the lower Rhine to being  
the discarded wife of Henry VIII and  
beyond ...

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Anne of Cleves, the unwanted fourth wife of Henry VIII, grew up in the Lower Rhine region of what is now Germany, an area rich with legend and myth.

The Schwanenburg, or Swan Castle, in Cleves, was one of her childhood residences used by her family in the spring and summer and was also where her entourage gathered for her journey from Cleves to England. Here the impressive 180 foot Swan Tower topped by a golden swan weather vane gave a vantage point from which to look out across the medieval town of Kleve and the countryside beyond.

The Cleves family claimed descent from a swan-knight, Lohengrin, who came to the rescue of Elsa of Brabant held in a castle in Cleves.

*It was the day on which Elsa was to be wedded to her tyrant. She had spent the night in tears and bitter lamentations, and now, weary and distraught, too hopeless even for tears, she looked out from the bars of her prison with dull, despairing eyes. Suddenly she heard the melodious strains and a moment later saw the approach of a swan-drawn boat, wherein lay a sleeping knight. Hope leapt within her, for she remembered the prophecy of an old nun, long since dead, that a sleeping knight would rescue her from grave peril. Directly he stepped ashore the youth made his*



way to the place of her confinement and, espying her face at the heavily barred window, knelt before her and begged that she would take him for her champion.

At that moment the blast of a trumpet was heard, followed by the voice of the Herald as, for the last time, he challenged any knight to take up arms on behalf of Elsa of Brabant. Lohengrin boldly accepted the challenge, and Telramund, when the news reached him of the unexpected opposition, on the very day he had appointed for his wedding, was surprised and enraged beyond measure, yet he dared not refuse to do battle with the stranger knight, because of the Emperor's decree. So it was arranged that the combat should take place immediately. News of it reached the people of Cleves, and a great concourse gathered to witness the spectacle, all of them secretly in sympathy with the persecuted maiden, though these feelings were carefully concealed from the ruthless Telramund.

Elsa's swan-knight would stay with her as long as she never asked his true identity. But before long curiosity won out and she asked him who he was. 'Oh, Elsa,'" he said sorrowfully, 'thou knowest not what thou hast done. Thy promise is broken, and to-day I must leave thee for ever.' And with that he blew a blast on his silver horn and the boat he had arrived on returned, pulled by two white swans, to take him away from his wife and sons.

A later story linked the legend more directly with Cleves when Beatrice, the only daughter of Dietrich, the Duke of Cleves, saw a boat being pulled along by a white swan with a gold chain carrying the knight Helias towards her. He married her and became Duke of Cleves but as with the earlier legend, she broke their bond by asking who he was. He left his children his sword, his horn, and his ring before he sailed away. These children would carry on the line of the swan-knight as dukes of Cleves.

Elsa had been saved from the tyrant only to lose her true love. Poor Anne was to marry a man





who some would call a tyrant and was nothing like a swan-knight. She would never find her true love.

As she arrived in England to start her new life she might have been reminded of the Dusseldorf legend of the cartwheelers. Anne was born in Dusseldorf and it would be where her brother would sign her marriage treaty. As with all legends, there are different versions of this particular story. One, however, tells of a noble marriage in the city which was marred when a spoke on the wheel of their carriage snapped – a sign of bad luck. To make sure the marriage went ahead a young boy jumped into the wheel and brought good luck to the couple by doing ‘cartwheels’. Another version has the bride to be being so unhappy as she was driven to her marriage that local boys cartwheeled alongside her carriage, entertaining her and bringing her joy. They were the only thing that cheered her on such a day.

Anne was happy to marry Henry VIII. It was a great honour for her and her family but she could have done with some cartwheelers to bring her luck. The marriage was only to last for six months with Henry being disgusted with his new bride. He had tried to wriggle out of their marriage even before their wedding day. He asked his councillors ‘Is there none other remedy, but that I must needs, against my will, put my neck in the yoke?’ To which no one had a reply and they were wed on 6 January 1540.

The king was not happy and Cromwell foolishly asked him after his wedding night how he liked his new queen to which he raged ‘I liked her before not well, but now I like her much worse! She is nothing fair, and have very evil smells about her’. Not to mention his disgust at the ‘looseness of her breasts’. Poor Anne! To be manhandled by the king and found wanting.

She soon realised that Henry was displeased and she worried for her safety given the fates of Katherine of Aragon and Anne Boleyn. Knowing Anne had been dispatched with a sword it reminded her of the swords of Solingen, another place where Anne spent her childhood days at Castle Burg. A tale told here was of how the

smiths found out the secret of making the most amazing swords.

*A young woman Martha was betrothed to her father's apprentice, Wilhelm, but her father would not consent to their marriage until Wilhelm had found out the secret of making Damascus blades. Wilhelm was determined to set out in a quest to find out the secret but Martha cried and wailed she did not want him to go.*

*Nevertheless, Wilhelm wandered for two weeks until he came upon a cottage where an old woman gave him food and lodging. During the night a mysterious visitor arrived and the old woman woke Wilhelm to tell him the stranger could tell him the secret of making Damascus swords. The man took a document out of his pocket and told Wilhelm to sign it. Wilhelm knew he was making a pact with the Devil but signed anyway for his love of Martha. In return, the man gave him a letter and told him to return to Solingen. Wilhelm took the letter back to Martha's father but he would not open it telling him*

*‘You must keep this until your own son and my grandson can open it,’ he said to Wilhelm, ‘for over his infant soul the enemy can have no power.’*

*Wilhelm and Martha married and had a son. When he grew up he found the letter and opening it, the secret was revealed without consequence to himself. He mastered the art of refined sword-making and made Solingen renowned for its magnificent blades.*

But there would be no execution for Anne. Henry was to richly reward her for her acquiescence to their marriage annulment. Not only would she be one of the richest women in England but she would be as the king's sister with precedence over the ladies at court bar his daughters and new queen.

Perhaps in her later years, living in England, Anne thought back to her childhood days and the legends of her country. They may have given her comfort in the days when she was not often at court and living a quiet life. She would outlive her ex-husband seeing both his son Edward and daughter Mary come to power but would never return home to the splendour of the Rhine and its rich culture.

**SARAH-BETH WATKINS**



# QUIZ ANSWERS

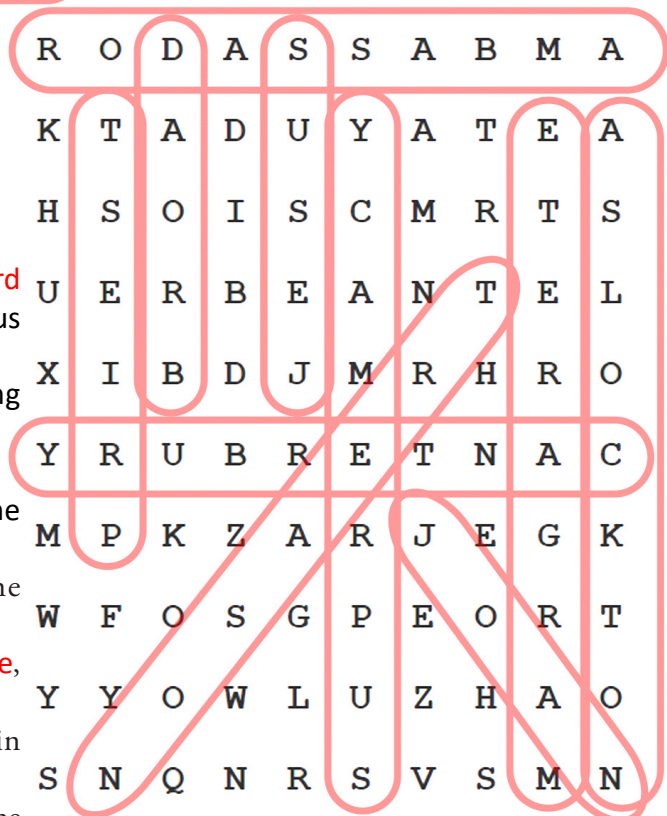


Sir Thomas More

1. Born on 7<sup>th</sup> February, 1478, in **Milk Street**, London
2. Died on 6<sup>th</sup> July, 1535, executed at the **Tower** of London
3. In 1491, he joined the household of John **Morton**
4. He studied **Latin** and Logic at **Oxford University**
5. Also Studied **Law** in London
6. Was **knighted** in 1521
7. Became Lord **Chancellor** in 1529
8. Between 1512-18, he wrote (but never completed), his work 'History of King Richard III', said to have influenced Shakespeare's '**Richard III**'
9. He had 4 children with his first wife, **Jane** Colt
10. Supporter of the **Catholic** Church – he saw Catholicism as the true faith

Archbishop Cranmer

1. Born on 2<sup>nd</sup> July, 1489, in **Aslockton**
2. Died 21<sup>st</sup> March, 1556, in Broad Street, **Oxford**
3. In 1510, he was given a Fellowship at Jesus College, **Cambridge**
4. His first wife, **Joan**, passed away during childbirth
5. He was ordained as a **priest** in 1520
6. He became England's **Ambassador** to the Holy Roman Emperor, Charles V of Spain
7. He was a staunch believer in the Royal **Supremacy**
8. His marriage to his second wife, **Margarete**, was shrouded in secrecy
9. He became Archbishop of **Canterbury** in October 1532
10. Despite recanting his faith, he was burnt at the stake for crimes of heresy and **treason**





# A UNIQUE COLLECTION OF HOLBEIN PRINTS...

*The Tudor Society has been contacted by Janet Anderson who has a fascinating collection of prints taken from Hans Holbein portraits which she wishes to sell. We hand over to Janet...*

I don't have much more information other than we bought the prints from the Medici Society who were the best known fine art publishers of their time. We bought all of their stock of these portraits, which I believe they had had since they were printed in 1910.

They have a lovely matte finish and have a pinkish background, an exact reproduction of the original drawings.

The ones we have are

1. Sir Thomas Strange
2. Henry Howard, Earl of Surrey
3. Katherine, Duchess of Suffolk
4. Lady Jane Lister
5. Lady Ratcliffe
6. George Brooke, Lord Cobham
7. Lord Thomas Vaux
8. Sir Charles Wingfield
9. Sir Nicholas Poins
10. An unknown gentleman

The prints vary in shape and size. The one shown on the next page of Sir Thomas Strange is about 9" x 8". We have at least one of each framed in a reproduction period frame. And these we were planning to ask £60 each for + postage. Unframed £20.

You can contact Janet Anderson via email direct on [janetandtonyanderson@talktalk.net](mailto:janetandtonyanderson@talktalk.net) to enquire about these prints.



# FOR PRIVATE SALE





**FOR PRIVATE SALE**





# FOR PRIVATE SALE





# Charlie

## THE PRIVATE LIFE OF EDWARD IV

by John Ashdown-Hill

# Books



The Wars of the Roses and the life of Edward IV have become popular topics in recent years, particularly with the release of the book and TV series *The White Queen*. Many books have been released looking at Edward's life and reign, including *The Private Life of Edward IV* by John Ashdown-Hill. This book proposes several new theories on Edward's personal life, including a possible affair with a man, which will be explored in this review.

The biggest problem with the book is the author's theory that Edward IV had an affair with Henry Beaufort, Duke of Somerset. There is little evidence for this, with the author basing it on the fact that Somerset was a Lancastrian and close to Edward. However, Edward's initial policy was one of forgiveness, so him bringing Somerset into his inner circle isn't odd at all.

Despite the absurd theory regarding Edward and Somerset's relationship, there are some more compelling theories in the book. For instance, Ashdown-Hill puts forward an interesting theory that, as his marriage to Eleanor Talbot was an official marriage (a real priest was there and stood as a witness), Edward may have kept it secret as he wanted to wait to see if Eleanor proved fruitful. Ashdown-Hill proposes that Edward would have made his marriage to Eleanor public if she had given him children. It is an old tradition and does seem possible. However, to make this theory more credible, the author suggests that Elizabeth Woodville was pregnant before having Elizabeth of York, which is why Edward had to acknowledge his marriage to her. Yet the author doesn't cite much evidence for this, and so I would take this with a pinch of salt.

Ashdown-Hill's bias against Elizabeth and the Woodvilles, and in favour of Richard III is evident throughout the book, but even more so as we reach Edward's death. I know he is part of the Richard III Society, but it shouldn't have this much of an impact on his writing. He describes Elizabeth's '*illegal*' plot against Richard immediately after Edward's death, caused by '*her own natural worldly ambition*'. He even suggests, despite admitting that there is no evidence for it, that Elizabeth Woodville may have murdered Eleanor Talbot and her brother-in-law the Duke of Norfolk.

I enjoyed some of it and it is an 'okay' book, but there were several things that bugged me and lowered my rating. Ashdown-Hill repeats himself multiple times; I can't count how many times he said 'there is not a shred of evidence for', which quickly gets annoying. It was even more annoying when he then went on to say Edward VI had an affair with Henry Beaufort, yet all the evidence he provides doesn't support his theory. Edward was inclined to show favour to Lancastrians at the beginning; he did so with several men. Beaufort was one of many, and that doesn't mean they had some kind of affair. That theory failed to convince me. Ashdown-Hill's bias against the Woodvilles and for Richard III was disappointing, and I expected better.

The book, however, does provide a lot of information on Edward's and it is well-referenced, although it is bad practice to reference yourself. It contains itineraries for the different years throughout the book, showing Edward's movements and what exactly happened during that time. It also includes the full text of Edward's will, not something that is easy for the average reader to find, taking up 15 pages of the book. There is also an excellent appendix on the mtDNA sequence of the Princes in the Tower.





# RICHARD III: ENGLAND'S MOST CONTROVERSIAL KING

by Chris Skidmore



Richard III is as notorious now as he has ever been, with several plays, documentaries and books having been released on him. The traditional view of Richard as a murdering tyrant is now questioned by many, with many historians seeking to find the 'truth' behind the disappearance of the Princes in the Tower. Chris Skidmore avoids this with his new book *Richard III: Brother, Protector, King* and instead aims to shed more light on Richard's personality and life as a whole.

Skidmore proposes an interesting theory as to why Richard III had to seize the throne. He puts it down to Richard's past experiences:

*'Since Richard had yet to obtain his majority, any grants that were made by the king were provisional, with the king free to revise his arrangements as he chose. As soon as the lordship of Richmond had been granted to Richard, it was to be taken away, for it seems that Clarence, who already held the Honour of Richmond, wanted the lands for himself; after Clarence had protested, Edward duly complied. Though Richard was eventually compensated for this, the process was characterised by hesitation and contradiction, with no guarantee that he would*

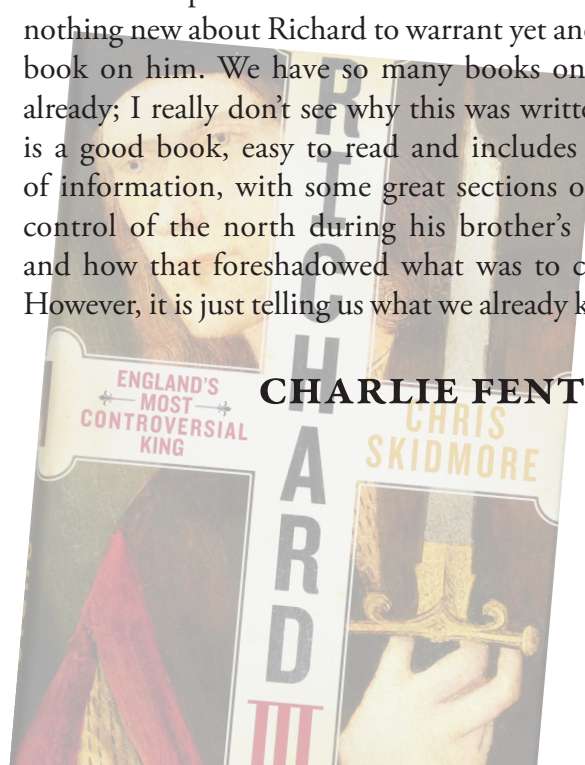
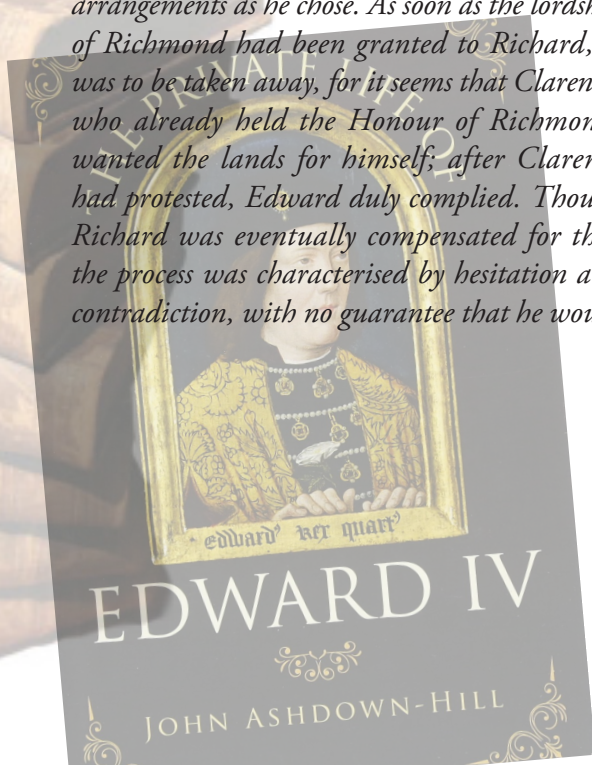
*be given an estate that would not only secure his income as a royal duke, but more importantly would allow him the opportunity to build up a territory that he might call his own. In the absence of stability over his own future, Richard must have learnt from an early age that, in contrast to his elder brother Clarence, the heir to the throne, his life was set to be very different, a life in which he would need to seize every opportunity that presented itself to him.'*

Personally, I have always thought that Richard seized the throne because he knew that, once Edward V's minority ended, he would be in a very precarious position, especially after he had killed the boy's uncle. He knew he didn't have enough time to change his mind and keep him away from the Woodvilles and so had to take the throne for himself. This is supported by Skidmore's observations; Richard had always been in a precarious position and needed to take the throne to keep his position after Edward IV died.

Thankfully, this book doesn't dwell much on the mystery of the Princes in the Tower, mainly because we will never know and it has been debated in many other books. It does, however, put to rest the idea that the Tudors were the first to suggest Richard III murdered the princes, as contemporaries during his reign believed it too. It also settles some myths about Richard, such as the one that he was distraught over his the Duke of Clarence's death. Skidmore states that this is unlikely, as he very quickly reaped the benefits of his downfall, even while he was still alive and awaiting sentencing in the Tower.

The main problem with this book is that there is nothing new about Richard to warrant yet another book on him. We have so many books on him already; I really don't see why this was written. It is a good book, easy to read and includes a lot of information, with some great sections on his control of the north during his brother's reign and how that foreshadowed what was to come. However, it is just telling us what we already know.

CHARLIE FENTON







# ON MUSHROOMS



Image above: The Fall of the Rebel Angels by Peter Bruegel 1562



# ALL MUSHROOMS ARE EDIBLE, BUT SOME ONLY ONCE IN A LIFETIME. (CROATIAN PROVERB)



If you take a close look at Pieter Bruegel the Elder's 1562 painting *The Fall of the Rebel Angels* (left, detail above), you'll get a hint at the subject for this month's *From the Spicery* article. Go on; take a good look at the bottom right-hand quarter of the picture. Almost vertically parallel with the Archangel Michael's left foot, and in amongst various assorted hellspawn, is a single *Amanita phalloides*; better known as the Death Cap mushroom. It could also be an *Amanita virosa* (aka Destroying Angel), but without stepping into the battle, I can't be sure.

So if you are still in any doubt, this month's article is about mushrooms (in all their diverse glory) and their role in medieval cuisine.

Before going any further, I need to clarify that the photographs I have used in this article are of Australian

mushrooms, and were taken by myself and my mentor during our wanderings of the Mount Crawford area of the Adelaide Hills. Almost all of these mushrooms are introduced species and arrived on the rootstock of trees such as birch, oak and pine. I have deliberately included the botanical names of the fungi as the names I know them by may well be utterly alien to someone reading this article in Europe or the Americas. I have added the following faces to indicate their edibility (☺ = edible or choice, and ☹ = inedible or poisonous).

And a final word of warning; unless you're absolutely 100% certain of your skills in accurately identifying edible mushrooms from poisonous ones, don't attempt to forage your own. I've been foraging mushrooms in the Adelaide Hills for about ten years, and my rule of thumb is this: never try to identify a fungus by its appearance or smell. Always check the structure and colour of the stem and gills. A spore print may be of use; the general rule being if a particular wild mushroom has white gills or a white spore print DO NOT eat it. Something like 95% of all mushroom poisonings occurs when people have foraged and consumed white-gilled or white-spored mushrooms. So if you have the slightest inkling of uncertainty; don't risk it.



You might be forgiven for thinking that mushrooms would have been considered one of Nature's gifts to mankind, and would be a welcome addition to the medieval diet. However, you'd be wrong. The reason for this wasn't so much that entire families died from accidentally eating misidentified mushrooms; it was because they came from the earth. Mushrooms and truffles would suddenly appear without any visible root system or means of reproduction. And when they look like the Horse Shit Puffball (*Pisolithus albus*), it is not hard to see why they were called *excrementa terrae*, or the excrements of the earth!

The fact that mushrooms come from the earth also gave rise to the belief that like carrots, swedes and parsnips, mushrooms were just not fit for the kitchens and dining tables of the medieval rich. The mushroom's questionable reputation was further marred by the Fifteenth Century Italian humanist and gastronome, Bartolomeo Platina (1421-1481) who argued that the consumption of mushrooms and other fungi (such as truffles) contributed to criminal activity. Platina cites the example of the murder of Emperor Claudius by his wife as evidence of this.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Church, A & Brodribb, W *The Annals by Pullius Cornelius Tacitus Book 12 0 AD 48-54*, <http://mcadams.posc.mu.edu/txt/ah/tacitus/TacitusAnnals12.html>

Mushrooms only really became acceptable foodstuffs around the end of the Middle Ages. However, recipes for mushrooms and truffles are still relatively hard to come by because of their somewhat dubious reputation as a foodstuff of the common people. The earliest cookbook that references mushrooms that I could find is *The Forme of Cury* (1390), which suggests the following:

*Take Funges and pare hem clere and dyce hem take leke and shred hym small and do hym to seep in gode broth. colour it with saffron and do per inne powdour fort.*<sup>2</sup>

A modern redaction would be to dice cleaned mushrooms and to cook them with shredded leeks in a rich broth that has been coloured with saffron and flavoured with the savoury spice, Powder Forte (a combination of

black pepper and ginger, cinnamon and cloves).

The next earliest is reliable reference is *Ménagier de Paris* (Paris 1393), and like all good early medieval cookbooks, is available online (I accessed it via Washington State University's website<sup>3</sup>). Later recipe books that reference mushrooms include Lancelot de Casteau's



*Pisolithus albus* aka **Horse Shit Puffball** ☹️. This is a mature specimen and this not fit for human consumption.  
Photo Copyright © 2017  
Mrs Bev Lane, taken in Mt Crawford Forest, Adelaide Hills

<sup>2</sup> *The Forme of Cury*, 1390, recipe is located under the title of *Funges*. <http://www.gutenberg.org/cache/epub/8102/pg8102.html>

<sup>3</sup> *Le Menagier de Paris*, 1393, the recipe is located in the section referencing pastry. <https://public.wsu.edu/~delahoyd/medieval/menagier.html>.



*Ouverture de Cuisine* (France 1604); Sir Kenelm Digby's *The Closet of Sir Kenelm Digby Knight Opened* (London 1663)<sup>4</sup>; and Johannes Fransiscus van Sterbeeck's *Traktaat van de kampernoeljes* - Treatise on Field Mushrooms (Antwerp, 1688) as part of *De Verstandige Kock* or The Sensible Cook.

Wild mushrooms such as Chanterelle (*Cantharellus cibarius*) and Morels (*Morchella* species), Horse Mushrooms aka Field Mushrooms (*Agaricus arvensis* and *A campestris*) and Shaggy Ink Caps aka Lawyers Wigs (*Coprinus comatus*), Wood Blewits (*Lepista nuda*) and many members of the *Bolete* species such as Cep, Porcini and Penny Bun are all edible and considered choice. Bracket fungi like Chicken of the Woods (*Laetiporus* species) and various members of the Puffball family (*Calvatia* species) are also edible, but only when young (and having first confirmed that the fungi is, in fact, a Puffball and not an immature *Amanita phalloides* or Death Cap!)

The author of *Ménagier de Paris* (a loving, French husband no less!) considers that “mushrooms of the night”

are the best for eating, and should be “small and red inside, closed above”.<sup>5</sup> He goes on to suggest the following preparation:

*Et les couvient peler, puis laver en eaue chaude et pourboulir. Qui en veult mectre en pasté, si y mette de l'uille, du frommage et de la pouldre. Item, mectez les entre deux plats sur charbons, et mectez ung petit de sel, du frommage et de la pouldre.*

In modern terms, *Le Menagier* suggests that the mushrooms be peeled, washed in hot water and then parboiled. Unfortunately, I've no idea which specific type of mushrooms

*Le Menagier* is referring to. You could use bog-standard supermarket mushrooms, or you could try an assortment of edible wild ones; the choice is

yours. Once cooked, the author suggests that the prepared mushrooms be used as a filling for a pasty; with oil (olive?), cheese (I'd recommend a farmhouse-style goat cheese), salt, and some Poudre Forte. The mixture would then be placed into a prepared coffin and baked or fried. As with so many medieval recipes, *Le Menagier* is remarkably unclear with regards to quantities, methods of cooking and timings. My suggestion would be



*Laetiporus sulphureus* aka Chicken-of-the-Woods ☺  
- although this particular specimen is a little old.  
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R. O'Geraghty, taken in Mt Crawford Forest, Adelaide Hills

<sup>4</sup> *The Closet of Sir Kenelm Digby Knight Opened* (1663) <http://www.gutenberg.org/files/16441>

<sup>5</sup> *Le Menagier de Paris*, op cit.





A selection of pine mushrooms (*Lactarius deliciosus*) and cep (*Bolete sp*)

☺ excellent eating.

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Photo taken in Mt Crawford  
Forest, Adelaide Hills



Fly Agaric (*Amanita muscaria*)

⊗ definitely not for eating

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Forest, Adelaide Hills

to go ahead and have a play. This is the beauty of medieval cookery; there are no hard and fast rules designed by

temperamental cooks, that simply MUST be followed.

**RIOGHNACH O'GERAGHTY**



Mushrooms, from Mattioli, 1563



# *Forthcoming guest speakers for the Tudor Society...*

AUGUST	Sarah Beth Watkins	Margaret Tudor
SEPTEMBER	Julian Humphrys	Tudor Cambridge
OCTOBER	Lauren Mackay	Thomas and George Boleyn
NOVEMBER	Claire Ridgway	The arrests and interrogations of November 1541
DECEMBER	Kate Cole	The witches of Elizabethan and Stewart Essex

Our full members enjoy our expert talks each month, with a different expert and a different topic each month. The talks are carefully pre-recorded and put onto the site, normally as video talks or as slideshows with audio. Full members can access ALL of our talks back to when the Tudor Society started, and that's over 62 talks available at the moment. We also have a live chat with the expert in our chatroom where people can ask questions and discuss the topic of that month's talk - these chats are always great fun and very informative. It is fantastic to be able to enjoy spending time with experts while they share their knowledge.

Are you a FULL member? If not, then there's no time like the present to join us and enjoy all these wonderful talks and live chats. And if you ARE a full member, why not make sure you join us on the next live chat?

THE TUDOR SOCIETY



# AUGUST'S "ON THIS"

**1 Aug**  
1556

Burning of **Joan Waste**, a blind woman, in Derby for heresy after she refused to recant her Protestant faith.

**2 Aug**  
1521

**Cardinal Wolsey** arrived in Calais to act as peacemaker and preside over a conference aiming to put an end to the fighting between France and the Empire.

**3 Aug**  
1549

**Lord Russell** marched his 1000 men from Honiton to Woodbury and set up camp for the night. He was heading towards Clyst St Mary and the rebels of the *Prayer Book Rebellion*.

**7 Aug**  
1514

Peace treaty signed between England and France, arranging the marriage **Louis XII** of France and **Princess Mary**.

**8 Aug**  
1503

The formal wedding of **Margaret Tudor** and **James IV** of Scotland in the chapel of Holyroodhouse.

**9 Aug**  
1561

**Elizabeth I** issued a royal mandate preventing heads or members of colleges or cathedral churches from having a wife.

**10 Aug**  
1553

**Mary I** held a Catholic requiem mass for the soul of her late half-brother, the protestant **Edward VI**.

**11 Aug**  
1556

Death of Sir **John Kingsmill**, a man who had been close to **Thomas Cromwell** and **Thomas Wriothesley**.

**16 Aug**  
1513 ✂

The *Battle of Spurs* took place at Guinegate (Enguinegatte) in France, between the English and the French.

**17 Aug**  
1510

**Henry VII's** chief administrators, Sir **Edmund Dudley** and Sir **Richard Empson**, were beheaded on Tower Hill.

**18 Aug**  
1587

The first European Christian was born in the New World, named **Virginia Dare**.

**22 Aug**  
1485 ✂

In rural Leicestershire near Market Bosworth, the armies of King Richard III and Henry Tudor faced each other in a battle that would see the death of the King and the beginning of the Tudor dynasty. This battle was to become known as the *Battle of Bosworth*.

**23 Aug**  
1535

**Anne Boleyn** and **Henry VIII** visited the Walsh family at Little Sodbury Manor in the village of Little Sodbury.



Margaret Tudor

**27 Aug**  
1549 ✂

The *Battle of Dussindale* took place, ending *Kett's Rebellion* in Norfolk. Between 1,000 to 10,000 rebels were killed.

**28 Aug**  
1588

Execution of **William Dean**, Roman Catholic priest and martyr, by hanging at Mile End Green, Middlesex.

**29 Aug**  
1538

Arrest of **Geoffrey Pole** on suspicion of being in contact with his brother, Cardinal **Reginald Pole**.

**30 Aug**  
1534

**Thomas Belchiam**, Observant Franciscan friar was starved to death at Newgate Prison.

**31 Aug**  
1555

**Robert Samuel**, was burned at the stake in Ipswich. He was one of the *Ipswich Martyrs*, a group of Protestants.



# DAY IN TUDOR HISTORY

<b>4 Aug 1540</b> <b>William Horne</b> , laybrother of the London Charterhouse was hanged, disembowelled and quartered at Tyburn. He was the last of the Carthusian martyrs to be killed after 18 members were condemned to death in 1535 for refusing to accept <b>Henry VIII</b> as the Supreme Head of the Church.		<b>5 Aug 1549</b> ✂ The Battle of Clyst St Mary during the <i>Prayer Book Rebellion</i> . The rebels were defeated by <b>Lord Russell's</b> troops	<b>6 Aug 1549</b> ✂ Battle of Cyst Heath during the <i>Prayer Book Rebellion</i> . 2000 rebels made their way to where <b>Lords Russell and Grey</b> were camped, and opened fire. The battle lasted all day, but the rebels were defeated in the end.
<b>12 Aug 1570</b> Death of Lady <b>Ursula Stafford</b> (née Pole), daughter of <b>Margaret Pole</b> , Countess of Salisbury.	<b>13 Aug 1579</b> Executions of Roman Catholic martyrs Friar <b>Conn O'Rourke</b> and <b>Patrick O'Healy</b> , Bishop of Mayo.	<b>14 Aug 1473</b> Birth of <b>Margaret Pole</b> , Countess of Salisbury, daughter of <b>George, Duke of Clarence</b> and his wife <b>Isabel Neville</b> .	<b>15 Aug 1588</b> Catholics <b>Robert Wilcox</b> , <b>Edward Campion</b> , <b>Christopher Buxton</b> and <b>Robert Widmerpool</b> were examined. Campion, Wilcox and Buxton were found guilty of being Roman Catholic priests. They were executed by being hanged, drawn and quartered on 1 <sup>st</sup> October 1588
		<b>19 Aug 1531</b> Burning of <b>Thomas Bilney</b> , Protestant martyr, at Lollard's Pit, just outside Bishopsgate.	<b>20 Aug 1589</b> Marriage of <b>James VI</b> of Scotland and <b>Anne of Denmark</b> , second daughter of King <b>Frederick II</b> of Denmark.
		<b>21 Aug 1535</b> <b>Henry VIII</b> and his wife, Queen <b>Anne Boleyn</b> , visited Sir <b>Nicholas Poyntz</b> at his home, Acton Court.	
		<b>24 Aug 1595</b> Death of <b>Thomas Digges</b> , who is known as the first man to expound the Copernican system in English.	<b>25 Aug 1540</b> Date traditionally given for the birth of Lady <b>Katherine Grey</b> , one of the sisters of Lady <b>Jane Grey</b> .
			<b>26 Aug 1555</b> <b>Mary I</b> and her husband, <b>Philip of Spain</b> , left Whitehall in preparation for Philip's return to the Low Countries.

Nicholas Poyntz

## TUDOR FEAST DAYS

1 August - Lammas (Loaf Mass)

1 August - Feast of St Peter ad Vincula

15 August - Assumption of our Lady

24 August St Bartholomew's Day

29 August - Beheading of John the Baptist

TudorLife



NEXT MONTH IN YOUR REGULAR

# TudorLife

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## THE DUDLEYS

### GARETH RUSSELL

The Dudleys and the  
royals they served

### LAUREN BROWNE

Edmund Dudley

### ROLAND HUI

Jane - the film

### CLAIRE RIDGWAY

The Dudley tombs  
at Warwick and the  
carving in the Tower

### CHRISTINE HARTWEG

Amy Robsart

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out every month for  
**ALL MEMBERS.**

We hope you enjoy it!

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