Tudor Life

THE TUDOR SOCIETY

The Tudor Society Magazine

Members Only
№ 41
January 2018

HENRY VIII

HENRY'S WIVES & CHILDREN

BRAIN INJURY

HENRY ON SCREEN

THE CORONATION OF HENRY VIII AND KATHERINE OF ARAGON

THE LAST DAYS OF HENRY VIII

CATHERINE PARR

also

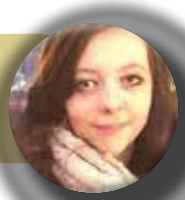
THE PORTRAITURE OF ANNE BOLEYN

+ more

LEARN ALL ABOUT TUDOR POISONS

IN THIS MONTH'S MAGAZINE

Lauren Browne is studying for a PhD in history.



Gareth Russell is a historian and author, plus editor of Tudor Life!

Roland Hui is the author of *The Turbulent Crown*.

Kyra C. Kramer is an author and historical medical anthropologist.

Emma Taylor works for *costumes for television* in her native Northern Ireland.

Alan Wybrow writes and illustrates children's books about history

Claire Ridgway is the author of 8 history books and runs the TS!

Good King Hal is a popular Henry VIII impersonator.

Conor Byrne is a historian and author of books including *Queenship in England*.

Cassidy Cash is well known for writing and speaking about William Shakespeare.

Toni Mount is a fiction and non-fiction writer, live speaker and historian.

Peter Macinnis is an expert on poisons.

Rioghnach O'Geraghty is our medieval food and cooking expert.

Tudor Life

HENRY VIII

IT MIGHT SEEM trite, or rife with opportunity for puns, to say that no figure looms as large as Henry VIII in Tudor history. Henry is an iconic and divisive cultural memory, so in the anniversary month of his death, this edition focuses on his health, his wives, his policies, his dying days, and his legacy. Lauren Browne opens with a look at the splendid pageantry of his coronation, followed by articles covering Henry's life until Conor Byrne discusses the King's agonising, terrifying decline. We are also thrilled to welcome back Roland Hui, who is continuing his series on the portraits of Henry's six wives with his fascinating article on the surviving images of Anne Boleyn, Henry's brilliant but doomed second wife. Are any of them portrayals of the face that helped launch the English Reformation? As with so much to do with Henry's reign, my previous sentence is controversial, provocative, and deeply important.

GARETH RUSSELL

Tudor Life

JANUARY

AN ACCOUNT OF THE CORONATION OF KING HENRY VIII AND KATHERINE OF ARAGON ON 24 JUNE 1509

BY LAUREN BROWNE

In the first two months of Henry VIII's reign, he oversaw three important royal occasions: his father's funeral, his marriage to Katherine of Aragon, and their joint coronation in the same month. Henry VIII's assentation to the throne, on the 21st of April 1509, was met 'with muche gladnes and reioysyng of the people', and preparations immediately commenced for his late father's funeral.[1] On 10th May, Henry VII was interred at Westminster Abbey, and attention was now turned to Henry VIII's upcoming nuptials with his late brother's wife, Katherine of Aragon. The marriage was a low-key affair, conducted in the friar's church at Greenwich on the 11th of June. On the 23rd June, Henry VIII and his new wife Katherine of Aragon travelled to Westminster in preparation for their coronation. The lavish ceremony was to be held the following day, an event which the chronicler Edward Hall describes in detail. Hall's insatiable love of Tudor pageantry means that his chronicle is a richly detailed source for historians, and will inform much of this article.

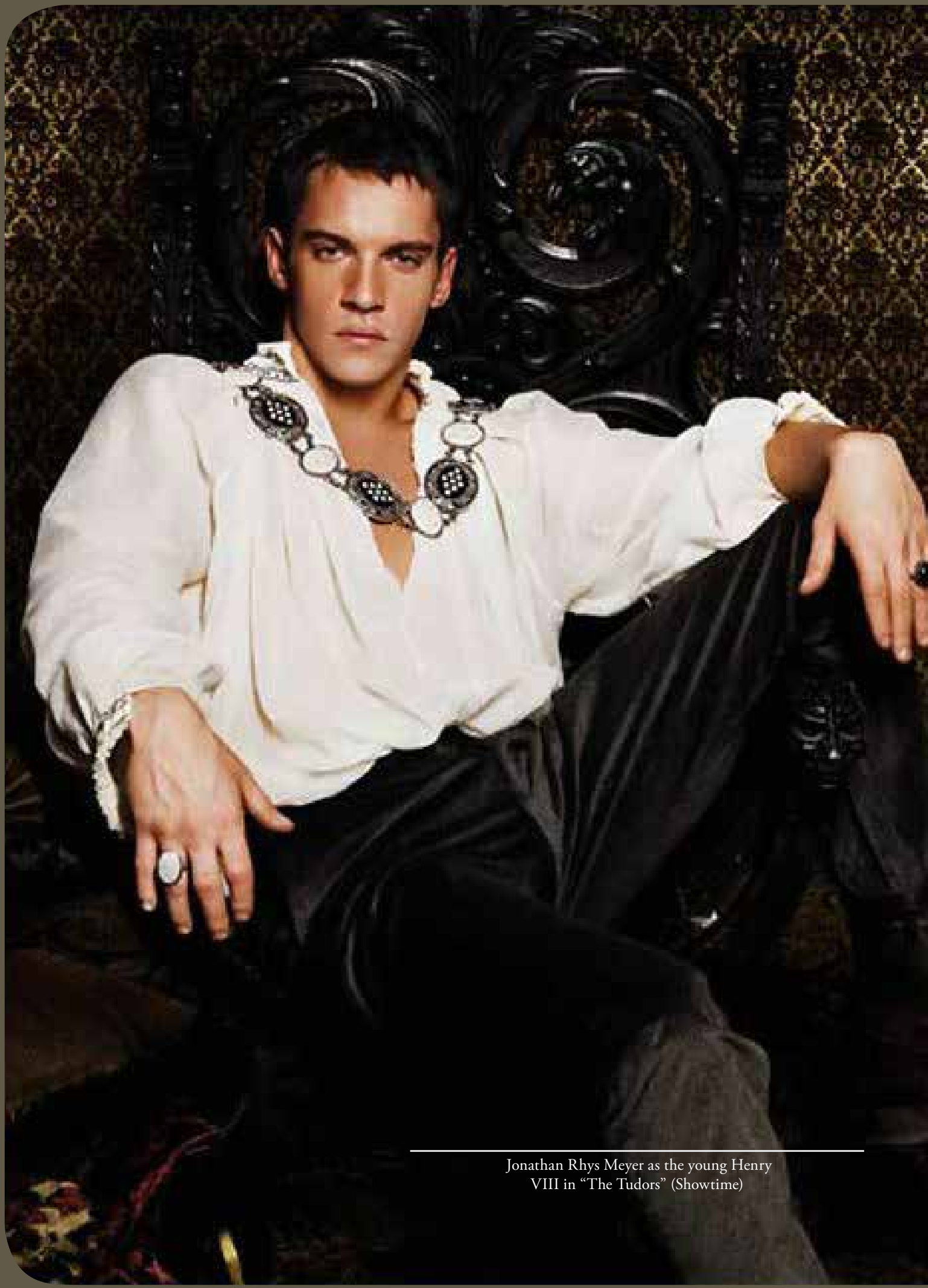
1 Hall's Chronicle containing the history of England, during the reign of Henry the Fourth, and the succeeding monarchs, to the end of the reign of Henry the Eighth, in which are particularly described the manners and customs of those periods. Carefully collated with the editions of 1548 and 1550, p. 503

A woodcut of Henry and Katherine's coronation

HENRY VIII AND Katherine of Aragon's joint coronation on the 24th of June 1509 was a spectacular event, which followed the prescribed tradition of royal coronations. The *Liber Regalis* contained such traditions and prescribed the order of service for coronations. It was kept at Westminster Abbey along with the coronation regalia, and is still housed there today. The *Liber Regalis*, latin for 'royal book', was composed in the fourteenth century, although there is some debate over exactly when it was written. It specifies the rites to be observed during the coronation of a king, a king and queen-consort, a queen-consort, but not that of a queen regnant, as well as the funeral rites and customs for a king. It stipulates the liturgy the clergy should follow, as well as the correct form for the ceremony as a whole, for example how the king should prepare the night before the rite and instructions for a stage to be erected in the Abbey.[2] The instructions contained in the *Liber Regalis* articulates an agreement between the church and crown, and the 'language with which a king- and a queen- was anointed and adorned with the regalia is frozen into the text, and thus the meaning of the ceremony is similarly fixed.'[3] This is not to say that every Tudor coronation was exactly the same, there were

2 Alice Hunt, *The Drama of Coronation: Medieval Ceremony in Early Modern England,* (Cambridge, 2008), p. 20

3 *ibid*., p. 20



Jonathan Rhys Meyer as the young Henry VIII in "The Tudors" (Showtime)

also coronation 'Devices' produced for each coronation, which were specific manuscript orders of service. These devices show that there was 'opportunity for alteration and inconsistency.'[4] It is through the examination of the *Liber Regalis*, Henry VIII's coronation Device, 'the coronacion of kyng henry viiith' and Edward Hall's chronicle, that we are able to explore Henry and Katherine's coronation on 24th June 1509.

The preparations for the occasion were an intricate affair, it appears that men of various crafts were employed to create an innovative and original aesthetic for the new king's coronation. Hall makes special mention of this in his chronicle,

> *'If I should declare, what pain, labour, and diligence, the Taylers, Embrouderours, and Golde Smithes tooke, bothe to make and deuise garments, for Lordes, Ladies, and Knightes, and Esquires, and also for decking, trapping, and adorning of Coursers, Ienetes, and Palffreis it wer to long to rehersse, but for a suretie more riche, nor more straunge nor more curious works, hath not been seen, then wer prepared against this coronacion.'*[5]

With the preparations complete, Henry travelled from Greenwich to the Tower, via London Bridge on the 21st of June. He was accompanied by 'many a well appareled gentlemen, but in especiall the Duke of Buckyngham, whiche, had a goune all of goldsmiths worke, very costly…'.[6] On the following evening, Friday the 22nd, a celebration was held in the Tower, with both King and Queen in attendance. Over the course of the evening, twenty-four men were created Knights of the Bath, 'with all the obseruaunces and Ceremonies to the same belonging.'[7] The following day, Henry and Katherine departed from the Tower and processed through the city of London. The streets were hung with tapestries and cloth of Arras, 'and the greater parte, of the South side of Chepe, with cloth of gold, and some part of Cornehill also.'[8] The procession included the guilds of London, dressed in their respective liveries, 'beginnyng with base and meane occupacions, and so assendyng to the worshipfull craftes: highest and lastly strode the Maior, with the Aldermen.' Virgins dressed in white were also present, as well as priests and clerks, who were holding crosses and censers made of sliver, censed the king and queen as they passed by them.

Two men appeared in front of Henry during this procession, the bore the robes of the 'Duchie of Guyon, and the other for the Duchie of Normandie, with Hattes on their heddes.'[9] Henry wore a crimson velvet robe trimmed with ermine and a coat of gold, which was adorned with diamonds, rubies, emeralds, pearls, and other precious stones, and his horse was dressed in damask gold. The barons of the Cinque Ports bore a canopy above him. Hall states that there were too many noblemen, knights, and esquires involved in the procession to name, but makes a point of describing the rich fabrics their clothes were made from, which were 'more plenty and abundance, than hath ever been seen, or redde of at any tyme before.'[10] Sir Thomas Brandon, master of the king's horse, came behind Henry and wore a finely woven coat embroidered with roses of gold. Next came the nine children of honour dressed in blue velvet which was embroidered with gold fleurs de lis, their horses were 'trapped with a trapper of the kynges title, as of Englande, and Fraunce, Gascoyne, Guyan, Normandy, Angeow, Cornewall, Wales, [and] Ireland.' Following them, came the queen who was carried on a litter which was covered with a decorative cloth. Katherine wore her hair loose, flowing down her back, which Hall describes as 'bewtefull and goodly to behold'. She wore an embroidered, white satin dress, and a coronal (a type of crown usually associated with weddings) which

4 *ibid*., p. 22
5 Hall's Chronicle, p. 507
6 *ibid*., p. 507
7 *ibid*., p. 507
8 *ibid*., p. 507
9 *ibid*., p. 508
10 *ibid*., p. 508

was decorated with precious stones. She was followed by 'sixe honorable personages on White Palfreis, all appareled in Clothe of Golde', a series of chariots carrying more ladies adorned in various degrees of precious cloth and jewels. The procession made its way to the palace of Westminster, where the preparations had been made for the coronation to be held the following day. Hall's account of this procession on the 23rd June, is as richly detailed as the clothes the participants wore. His love of pageantry and, what we would now call 'pomp and circumstance' is apparent. What is also clear, is the sheer scale of the occasion. Henry and Katherine's coronation appeared to have spared no expense, the scale and majesty of the event seemed to welcome a new age of celebration and gaiety, a feeling reflected by Katherine herself in a letter to her father when she commented 'our time is spent is continuous festival.'[11]

Annette Crosbie as the young Katherine of Aragon in "The Six Wives of Henry VIII" (BBC)

On Sunday 24th June 1509, midsummer's day, Henry VIII and Katherine were crowned at Westminster Abbey. They processed from the palace of Westminster to the Abbey on foot, under a canopy carried by the Barons of the Cinque Ports. They made their way on foot, walking upon a ray cloth. As in previous coronations, including that of Henry's mother Elizabeth of York, as soon as the royal couple had moved on along the cloth, the crowd surged forward hoping to cut off a bit as a memento of the occasion.

According to the *Liber Regalis* the royal couple's coronation begins with the Recognition, a custom which harked back to the days of elected monarchy. Henry and Katherine processed through the Abbey and onto a stage which was erected before the high altar, and to Two thrones covered in cloth of gold which had been placed there. The Archbishop of Canterbury, William Warham, then showed Henry to the four sides of the Abbey and said;

'Sires here present henry rihtfull and undoubted Enheritour by the lawes of god and man to the Coronne and royall dignitie of Englande. With all thinges thereunto annexed and apperteynyng, Elect chosen and required by all the thre estates of this lande to take upon him the seid Coronne and royall dignitee. Whereuppon ye shall understande that this daye is prefixed and appointed by all the pyeres of this lande for the Consecracion enunction and coroncion of the seid mooste excellent prince henry. Will ye here at this tyme and geve your wills and assents to the same Consecracion enunction and Conronacion. Wherunto the people shall sey with a grete voyce, ye, ye, ye. So be it kyng henry, kyng henry.'[12]

The wording of the Recognition places Henry as the people's elect as well as God's chosen. It confirms Henry as the recognised monarch of the

11 David Loades, *Henry VIII: Court, Church and Conflict*, (London, 2009), p. 24

12 Device of kyng henry, quoted in Alice Hunt, *The Drama of Coronation,* p. 25

realm, and asserts his claim and right to the throne. Of course, the reply of 'ye, ye, ye' was the only answer to the Archbishop's question, this is noted in the *Liber Regalis*, which states 'the Bishop addresses the people, who give their consent, as is customary.'[13]

The *Liber Regalis* states that the ritual of coronation takes place within the office of mass, it stipulates that following the Recognition the archbishop should dress himself for mass before the high altar, 'and the king should be brought before the altar where he offers a pall and a pound of gold before lying prostrate upon the floor before the altar "grovelyng" as the Device specifies for Henry… in reverence and humility to God.'[14] The 'Deus humilium', the prayer said over the king, prepares the king for sermon and appeals to the descent of God's grace. We do not know if a sermon was delivered for the coronation of Henry VIII, and if it was by whom, this information was either omitted or simply not reported.[15] The oath-taking comes next, sworn upon the sacrament on the altar, the placement of the oath-taking before the anointing is important. The king cannot be anointed before he has made the oath. Following Henry's oath, he made his pardon; his promise to the church. Henry VIII's Device specified that he was to state that 'with good will and devoute soule I promitte and perfitely graunte that to you and every of you and to all the Churches to you comitted I shall kepe the privileges of the lawe of Canon and of holy Church', sworn upon, 'these holy Evangelistes by me bodily towched uppon this hooly awter.'[16]

Henry and Katherine were then anointed with holy oil and crowned by the Archbishop of Canterbury, 'with other prelates of the realme there present, and the nobility, with a great multitude of Commons of the same.' Despite Hall's often elaborate descriptions of the events of Henry and Katherine's coronation, he doesn't go into detail when discussing the rite itself. He merely states, 'accordyng to the sacred oseruaunce, and auncient custome, his grace with the Quene, were anointed and crouned.'[17] This is probably due to the *Liber Regalis*, because it set forward the exact rites of coronation, Hall did not need to go into detail about the specific rites of the ceremony.

Once the rite was concluded and 'the lords spirituall and te[m]porall, did to hym homage, and returned to Westminster hall,' with the Queen.[18] The king's estate sat on the right side, and the queen's on the left, and the banquet was opened by a procession of dishes, led by the Duke of Buckingham and the Lord Steward on horses trapped with cloth of gold. Hall's description of the food served at the feast once again highlights his passion for pageantry. Once the feasting was over, the company retired to take part in a tournament which lasted until nightfall.

The festivities lasted several days, and included yet more jousting and feasting. The elaborate coronation of Henry and Katherine set the tone for the early years of their reign. The court settled into a pattern of 'revels and disguising, maying, pageants, tilts and jousts.'[19] The coronation had proved a success, kick-starting Henry VIII's reign on a high note, and ensuring Katherine's success in winning the hearts and minds of the nation.

13 The *Liber Regalis*, quoted in Alice Hunt, *The Drama of Coronation,* p. 25
14 Alice Hunt, *The Drama of Coronation,* p. 26
15 *ibid*., p. 26
16 Device of kyng henry, quoted in Alice Hunt, *The Drama of Coronation,* p. 26
17 Hall's Chronicle, p. 509
18 *ibid*., p. 509
19 J. J. Scarisbrick, *Henry VIII,* (New Haven, 2011), p. 18

Primary Sources

Hall's Chronicle containing the history of England, during the reign of Henry the Fourth, and the succeeding monarchs, to the end of the reign of Henry the Eighth, in which are particularly described the manners and customs of those periods. Carefully collated with the editions of 1548 and 1550, (London, 1809)

Secondary Sources

Hunt, Alice, The Drama of Coronation: Medieval Ceremony in Early Modern England, (Cambridge, 2008)
Loades, David, Henry VIII: Court, Church and Conflict, (London, 2009)
Scarisbrick, J. J., Henry VIII, (New Haven, 2011)

The Children of Henry VIII

Edward VI

Monarch from 1547 to 1553

Born at: Hampton Court Palace
Date of Birth: 12th October 1537
Mother: Jane Seymour, Queen of England
Three notable events in his reign: Battle of Pinkie Cleugh (1547)
Publishing of the Book of Common Prayer (1549)
Execution of Edward Seymour, Duke of Somerset (1552)
Death: From natural causes at Greenwich Palace, London, on 6th July 1553
Burial: Westminster Abbey

Mary I

Monarch from 1553 to 1558

Born at: Greenwich Palace
Date of Birth: 18th February 1516
Mother: Katherine of Aragon, Queen of England
Spouse: Philip II, King of Spain
Marriage: Holy Trinity Cathedral, Winchester, 25th July 1554
Titles through marriage: Queen of the Naples and titular Queen of Jerusalem, later Queen of Spain
Three notable events in her reign: Wyatt's Rebellion (1554)
Execution of Lady Jane Grey (1554)
Loss of the Pale of Calais (1558)
Death: From natural causes at Saint James's Palace, London, on 17th November 1558.
Burial: Westminster Abbey

Elizabeth I

Monarch from 1558 to 1603

Born at: Greenwich Palace
Date of Birth: 7th September 1533
Mother: Anne Boleyn, Queen of England and Lady-Marquess of Pembroke
Three notable events in his reign: The Act of Uniformity (1558)
Execution of Mary, Queen of Scots (1587)
Defeat of the Spanish Armada (1588)
Death: From natural causes at Richmond Palace, Surrey, on 24th March 1603
Burial: Westminster Abbey

The Portraiture of Anne Boleyn

by Roland Hui

We are forever fascinated and curious about Anne Boleyn. Who exactly was this most extraordinary woman - one who won a King's heart, transformed the life and faith of a nation, gave birth to its greatest monarch, and who then ended as a disgraced criminal on a bloody scaffold? Do we even know what she looked like?

Was Anne Boleyn 'not one of the handsomest women in the world' with a swarthy complexion, flat chest, and large mouth, as described by a contemporary, or was she the black-haired lady with a swollen neck and six fingers on one hand, as imagined in the reign of her daughter, Elizabeth I? The one consensus - even her enemies had to admit - was that Anne was a stylish and elegant lady. Her most attractive features were her eyes - 'black and beautiful' it was said. Historical descriptions of Anne Boleyn were invariably subjective, depending on where one stood on Henry VIII's Reformation. But can art do better? Can surviving paintings tell more about Anne's actual appearance?

Having failed to secure the Tudor dynasty with a male heir as Queen, Anne Boleyn did likewise with her likeness for posterity. Whereas her rival and successor Jane Seymour was lauded as the mother of the future Edward VI in various images, Anne was absent from the royal picture gallery. After her execution in May 1536, paintings of her were either destroyed or hidden away to be forgotten. This supposes that there were indeed good painted likenesses of Anne as Queen of England. As her biographer Eric Ives wrote, Anne Boleyn was a lady of artistic sensibility, her tastes influenced by her time at the Renaissance courts of the Netherlands and of France. Having absorbed an appreciation for art and for the power it conveys, did Anne herself, when she became Queen, have her picture taken to commemorate her majestic state, one ordained by Heaven no less? As she told a foreign envoy visiting England in 1533, God Himself had inspired the King to marry her.[1]

Naturally, the preeminent artist at Henry VIII's court, Hans Holbein (1497-1543), would have been the best candidate to paint Anne's picture. He had already designed pieces of jewellery for her and the King, a handsome ornamental table fountain, and even a great triumphal arch with Apollo and the Muses at her coronation. But sadly, no such painting survives.

Fig 1. Unknown Woman (by Hans Holbein)

Fig 2. Called 'Anne Boleyn' (by Hans Holbein)

Two sketches by Holbein of two individual sitters said to be of Anne exist, but neither can be confidently said to be of her. The first, a drawing of a lady wearing a gabled English hood (Fig. 1) was only known as Anne when it was engraved as Henry VIII's second wife by the Czech printmaker Wenceslaus Hollar in 1649. Another Holbein, despite it being now officially recognized as Anne by the authorities at The Royal Collection, is equally problematic. The drawing shows the sitter 'Anne Bollein' (Fig. 2) as a blond haired woman (Anne was famously a brunette) in a rather plain dress and cap with a swelling at her neck. In 1983, it was suggested that the depiction of the neck corresponded to a contemporary report of Anne Boleyn's coronation where the Queen 'wore a violet velvet mantle, with a high ruff of gold thread and pearls, which concealed a swelling she has, resembling goitre.'[2] However, the account was obviously hostile and its veracity questionable as it also stated that Anne's dress 'was covered with tongues pierced with nails, to show the treatment which those who spoke against her might expect'.[3] Despite the argument that the inscription 'Anne Bollein Queen' was made by the scholar and statesman Sir John Cheke (1514-1557) who would have been in a good position to identify Holbein's various sitters, it must be kept in mind that in naming at least two other Holbein subjects, Cheke was equally mistaken.[4] Some marks on the back of the drawing seem to infer that Holbein's 'royal' sitter was actually a member of the Wyatt family.

Fig 3. Unknown Woman (attributed to Lucas Horenbout)

If not Holbein, we have to look for another artist working at the court of Henry VIII - Lucas Horenbout (or Horenbolte). Horenbout (c.1490-1544) and his family, his father Gerard and his sister Susannah - all three talented manuscript and book illustrators and designers - had come to England from Ghent to seek work in the royal workshops. By 1531, Lucas was appointed the 'King's Painter', and being continuously employed at court as an illuminator, a painter of miniature portraits, and probably of panel pictures as well, was earning more than Holbein did at court.[5]

As 'King's Painter', Lucas Horenbout would have been the ideal artist to do a depiction of Anne Boleyn. A miniature of a lady of age 25 (or in her 25th year) in The Royal Ontario Museum (Fig. 3), with a copy in Buccleuch Collection, has been suggested to be such a picture. However, it is almost certainly another sitter, perhaps Anne's sister Mary Boleyn.[6] In the past, it was confused with both Katherine of Aragon and with Jane Seymour as well.

Still, Horenbout did paint Anne Boleyn in miniature, though not in the cut-out circular format so familiar to connoisseurs of 'limnings' or paintings in small. In the 1534 *Black Book of the Garter*, a book of the ceremonies of the renowned knightly Order founded by King Edward III in 1348, beautifully designed and illuminated by Horenbout, Anne was shown as 'The Lady of the Garter' (Fig. 4).[7] Rather than depicting Edward III's wife, Philippa of Hainault, Horenbout used the current Queen of England as the illustrious lady who presided over the martial tournaments. Anne is identified by the large medallion that she wears bearing her cipher 'A R' - that is 'Anna Regina' - 'Anne the Queen'. She and her maids of honour wear contemporary dress of the Tudor court. Anne and one of her ladies have on gabled hoods of the 1530's style, while the others show their preference for rounded French caps.

Fig 4. Anne Boleyn as The Lady of the Garter (attributed to Lucas Horenbout)

Fig 5. Anne Boleyn (by an Unknown Artist)

Fig 6. Katherine of Aragon (attributed to Lucas Horenbout)

That Horenbout painted Anne in miniature suggests that he did so in large as well. The popular image of the Queen wearing a 'B' pendant was most likely derived from a lost original by the Flemish master. There are some dozen surviving examples of this portrait type - 'mechanical in quality' as the art historian Roy Strong described them[8] - the most familiar being the one hanging in The National Portrait Gallery in London. In some versions of this portrait type, Anne's hands are shown (Fig. 5).[9] One is held over her bosom, while the other clutches a red rose. This positioning of an English sitter's hands was originally derived from Flemish portraiture, and appears in pictures of Katherine of Aragon and Margaret Pole. The portrait of Queen Katherine (Fig. 6) has her hands similar to Anne's, as does a panel of the Countess Margaret (Fig. 7); both are attributed to Lucas Horenbout.[10]

Fig 7. Margaret Pole, Countess of Salisbury (by 'The Cast Shadow Master')

Fig 8. Anne Boleyn (by an Unknown Artist)

Fig 9. Called 'Anne Boleyn' (by Renold Elstrack)

Despite its popularity, Anne's most famous likeness has not been universally accepted. The curators of the 'Lost Faces: Identity and Discovery in Tudor Royal Portraiture' exhibit organized in 2007, raised concerns that like all posthumous images, it was 'subject to the historical, political, and visual prejudices of those who created and commissioned them'. Anne, they believed, was deliberately shown as a 'dark and vaguely frightening figure', thus removed from reality.[11] Susan James, the respected scholar who is most known for her work on the life and career of Queen Katharine Parr, has also expressed doubt. The lady wearing the 'B' pendant is not Anne Boleyn, she opined, but Mary Tudor, the younger sister of Henry VIII; the 'B' actually stood for 'Brandon', the surname of her second husband Charles Duke of Suffolk.[12] This would not be the only instance of a different sitter confused with Anne. There is one curious picture, a painting of the Queen at Nidd Hall (Fig. 8). However, it may actually be of Jane Seymour. It appears very similar to a print by the engraver Renold Elstrack which misidentified Holbein's Whitehall mural of Jane Seymour as Anne Boleyn (Fig. 9).[13]

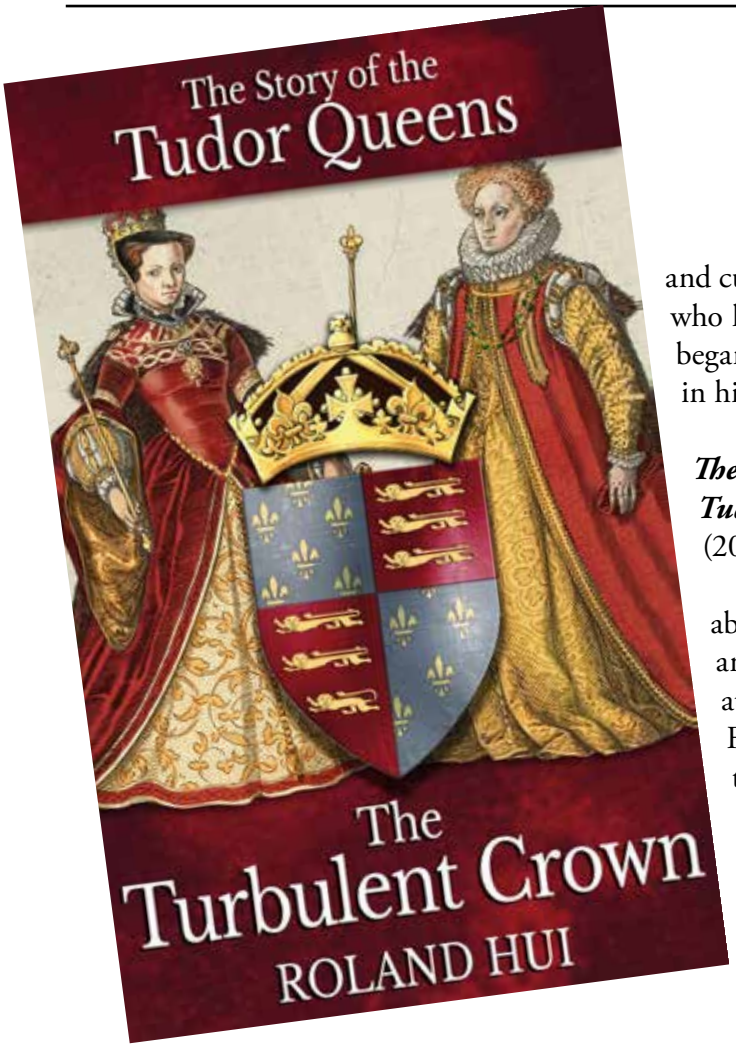
While James is correct that portraits of Tudor sitters were often mislabelled - she herself had successfully re-identified a picture of Lady Jane Grey as actually Katharine Parr - her belief that Anne Boleyn's likeness was based upon Mary Tudor's, has not been widely acknowledged. The academic G.W. Bernard, who has written extensively about Anne Boleyn, has expressed the persuasive opinion that 'it is not that obvious that Mary, as the sister of the king of England and widow of the king of France would have thought it appropriate to identify herself with the no means socially distinguished name of Brandon'.[14]

With doubts surrounding the Holbein sketches, the Horenbout miniature, and the Nidd Hall picture, we are left with the well known 'B' pendant portrait. As Eric Ives had commented, the sitter's features are comparable to the long face and the high cheek bones of a medal of the Queen struck in 1534 (Fig. 10), and to an image of Anne in an Elizabethan portrait ring at Chequers (Fig. 11). Also, the same characteristics can be found in the Lady of the Garter image. As this 'B' pendant picture type was widely circulated - and accepted- in Elizabethan times, there was much to be said about its authenticity as a good representation of the Queen's late mother.

Fig 10. Anne Boleyn's Portrait Medal (by an Unknown Artist)

****

Fig 11. Portrait ring with images of Anne Boleyn and Elizabeth I (by an Unknown Artist)



INTRODUCING ROLAND HUI

Please welcome Roland Hui, who is our new regular arts and culture columnist. He is taking the place of Jane Moulder who has been writing for Tudor Life since the Tudor Society began. Roland is a wonderful historian and is also an artist in his own right.

Roland Hui is the author of ***The Turbulent Crown: The Story of the Tudor Queens*** (2017).

He blogs about Tudor art and personalities at: Tudor Faces: https://tudorfaces.blogspot.ca

NOTES

1 *Calendar of State Papers, Venetian*, IV, 924.
2 John Rowlands and David Starkey, 'An old tradition reasserted: Holbein's portrait of Queen Anne Boleyn', *The Burlington Magazine*, CXXV [1983], pp. 88-92.
3 *Letters and Papers*, VI, 585.
4 Eric Ives, *Anne Boleyn*, Oxford [1986], p. 53.
5 Roy Strong, *The English Renaissance Miniature*, London [1983], p. 32.
6 Roland Hui, 'A Reassessment of Queen Anne Boleyn's Portraiture' (January 2015, originally published in January 2000), *Tudor Faces: Observations and Musings on Tudor Portraiture and Personalities*: https://tudorfaces.blogspot.ca/2015/01/a-reassessment-of-queen-anne-boleyns.html.
7 Roland Hui, 'Anne Boleyn as 'The Lady of the Garter': A Rediscovered Image of Henry VIII's Second Queen' (April 2017), *Tudor Faces*: https://tudorfaces.blogspot.ca/2017/04/anne-boleyn-as-lady-of-garter.html. Also: Roland Hui, Debating Anne Boleyn as 'The Lady of the Garter' (May 2017), *Tudor Faces*: https://tudorfaces.blogspot.ca/2017/05/debating-anne-boleyn-as-lady-of-garter.html.
8 Roy Strong, *Tudor and Jacobean Portraits*, London [1969], I, p. 6.
9 Hever Castle (Fig. 5) and another in the collection of a Mrs. K. Radclyffe (Roy Strong, *Tudor and Jacobean Portraits*, ibid.). That both are the same picture was incorrectly stated in Bendor Grosvenor (editor), *Lost Faces: Identity and Discovery in Tudor Royal Portraiture*, (London: Philip Mould Ltd.), p 59.
10 Roy Strong, *The English Renaissance Miniature*, London [1983], pp. 42-43. Horenbout may have been the so-called 'Cast Shadow Master', an artist responsible for portraits of Margaret Pole and others having similar characteristics.
11 Bendor Grosvenor (editor), *Lost Faces: Identity and Discovery in Tudor Royal Portraiture*, pp. 58-62.
12 Susan E. James, *The Feminine Dynamic in English Art, 1485-1603 - Women as Consumers, Patrons and Painters*, Burlington [2009], pp. 126-127.
13 Roland Hui, 'A Reassessment of Queen Anne Boleyn's Portraiture' (January 2015, originally January 2000), *Tudor Faces:* https://tudorfaces.blogspot.ca/2015/01/a-reassessment-of-queen-anne-boleyns.html.
14 G. W. Bernard, *Anne Boleyn: Fatal Attractions*, New Haven [2010], p. 199.

DID HENRY VIII HAVE BRAIN DAMAGE?

BY KYRA C. KRAMER

HENRY'S MERCURIAL TEMPERAMENT and near-psychopathic conduct had become extreme by the end of his reign, but few historians who are actually willing to call the king 'mentally unbalanced', let alone the 'batcrap crazy' I suggest he became. Instead, he has usually been described euphemistically, as a "villainously quixotic" monarch who had a "significant shift in personality" due to the fact he was "taking on the lineaments of mature kingship" (Erickson, 1980:253).

Some historians argue that Henry's eventual tyranny is best explained by the fact he became more aware of his power as he grew older (Scarisbrick, 1970; Smith, 1982). Others claim that it was the threats to his rule which pushed him into becoming more ruthless (Starkey, 2008). A few assert that the monster had always been present, but before his attempt to end his marriage to Katherina of Aragon no one had ever really challenged his will on anything important, and thus his true malevolence had lain dormant (Lindsey, 1995). So many reasons for the madness that no one will call madness.

Regardless of the reluctance to call a Henry a lunatic, there is a general consensus among historians that the moodiness, paranoia, and erratic behaviors that he hadn't displayed in his youth became severe in his later middle age. Was there a medical reason for his altered mental state?

One explanation for Henry's behavior that has become increasingly popular is the idea that the king sustained a brain injury which radically altered his personality. Suzannah Lipscomb (2009) suggested Henry's jousting accident in January of 1536 may have caused his traumatic brain injury (TBI). Fewer people remember that in 1952 an English physician named Arthur MacNalty suggested that it was Henry's head injury in 1524 that caused the king's mental changes. Recently, it has been postulated that repeated subconcussive and concussive blows to head during jousting and rigorous equestrian activities may have given Henry chronic traumatic encephalopathy (CTE), the degenerative brain disease that occurs most often as a result of full-contact

sports (Ikram et al., 2016). Repeated shocks that impact the brain, even if there is no obvious injury or concussion, can eventually lead to a breakdown of brain tissue and can result in the same symptoms as a TBI.

Starting with Lipscomb's theory, did the jousting accident of 1536 damage Henry's brain so severely that he became almost a different person? The blow to his head was certainly powerful enough to have caused a TBI. Henry was unhorsed during the mishap and knocked senseless, remaining unconscious for more than two hours. It is possible that striking the back of his skull as he fell could have caused a blood clot in his brain, which in turn would have created intracranial pressure and pushed his brain forward in his skull, mashing his frontal lobe against the inside of his forehead. Although an injury like this would not necessarily impair his motor functions, it could have caused serious psychological problems. Some symptoms of a brain injury are lethargy, difficulty in concentrating, memory issues, bad judgment, depression, irrationally moody behavior, emotional outbursts, insomnia, a low sex drive or importance, and radical personality changes (Cifu and Caruso, 2010:52). The personality changes associated with TBI can be so severe that it is comparable to having schizophrenia, leaving patients with a "Jekyll and Hyde" dual personality or turning them into 'strangers' full of anger and anxiety (Cromer, 2012).

Clearly the TBI theory explains Henry's symptoms -- but the timing of the accident doesn't fit. The king was already exhibiting signs of mental change *before* January 1536. He was definitely becoming irascible as early as 1532 and he started his first judicial killing spree more than six months before his jousting injury, with the execution of three Carthusian priests and a Bridgettine monk in May of 1535. Only a few weeks later, on June 19, he sent three more Carthusians to a hideous death, including one named Sebastian Newdigate, a man who had once been one of Henry's courtiers before he renounced his earthly wealth and joined the religious order (Marshall, 2006:27). Moreover, two of Henry's most famous victims, Bishop John Fisher and Thomas More, were killed in the summer of 1535 as well. Although Henry's injury in 1536 could have made him decidedly *worse*, it cannot explain why he became an unstable despot in the first place.

What about the prior jousting accident? Could Henry's misadventure from 1524 account for his behaviors in 1535? Probably not, since between 1524 and 1532 there were no signs of extreme personality changes in the king. His attempt to nullify his marriage to Katherina of Aragon would have been the only 'odd' thing to have occurred in that time, but rumors that he would put his first wife aside in favor of a new, young, and hopefully son-producing bride were making rounds as early as 1518, so his decision to leave Katherina could hardly be considered a radical and unexpected change in Henry's mental state.

Until the summer of 1532 Henry continued to treat Katherina with the same unstinting courtesy he had shown her during the early, happy days of their marriage. It was only after 1533 that the king became rude to his first wife, and only after 1534 that he became outright cruel. Usually, brain impairment is less progressive than that; it manifests within a week or so after the injury and doesn't slowly go downhill over time. Instead, the undamaged sections of the brain learn to compensate for and assume the 'responsibilities' of the injured area, helping the patient get better – not worse – as the years pass. On average it takes between 10-15 years

for people with severe brain injuries to show marked signs of improvement. In contrast, 10 years after his 1524 jousting accident Henry was only *beginning* to behave like a brute.

Then what about CTE? Could Henry's midlife transformation into a monster be the result of multiple minor jolts jouncing his brain? The shoe certainly fits. CTE would explain the king's memory problems, irritability, fits of rage, impulsiveness, and possibly even have resulted in hypogonadism, which would been the cause of the metabolic syndrome behind Henry's ever-increasing obesity, as well as his impotence. Inasmuch as CTE is a cumulative effect, *when* Henry metamorphosed into a beast is no longer an issue; it could have occurred without any immediate association with a concussive blow to the head. All that was needed was time - time enough for Henry's frontal lobe to waste away and turn him into an ogre.

If Henry VIII's brain was compromised, his reign from 1534 onwards needs to be reevaluated. Historians would no longer need to stretch the bounds of credulity to explain the his inexplicable actions. Rather than been remembered as a fiend who murdered his wives, friends, and family before nearly toppling his kingdom, he could be remembered as a valiant prince who became a villainous autocrat as a result of forces beyond his control. He would be reconceptualized as ailing rather than alienating. He would no longer be seen as a bullying oppressor, the colossal tyrant of history and legend. Henry VIII would simply become another king, one who did the best he could for as long as he was mentally able.

KYRA KRAMER

Sources

Cifu, David X., and Deborah Caruso. 2010. *Traumatic Brain Injury*. Demos Medical Publishing.

Cromer, Janet M. 2012 "After Brain Injury: The Dark Side of Personality Change Part I" *Psychology Today*

Erickson, C. 1980. *Great Harry*. New York: St. Martin's Press

Ikram, Muhammad Qaiser; Saijad, Fazle Hakim; Salardini, Arash. 2016. "The head that wears the crown: Henry VIII and traumatic brain injury". In *Journal of Clinical Neuroscience* 28:16-19.

Lindsey, K. 1995. *Divorced, Beheaded, Survived: A Feminist Reinterpretation of the Wives of Henry VIII*. Reading, Massachusetts: Addison-Wesley Publishing Company.

Lipscomb, Suzannah. 2012. *1536: The Year That Changed Henry VIII*. Lion Books.

MacNalty, Arthure Salusbury. 1952. *Henry VIII: A Difficult Patient.* London: Christopher Johnson Publishers.

Marshall, Peter. 2006. *Religious Identities In Henry VIII's England*. Ashgate Publishing, Ltd.

Scarisbrick, J. J. 1968. *Henry VIII*. University of California Press.

Smith, Lacey Baldwin. 1973. *Henry VIII: The Mask of Royalty*. Panther.

Starkey, David. 2008. *Henry: Virtuous Prince*. Harper Press.

Kyra C Kramer
is the author of "Henry VIII's Health in a Nutshell", "Edward VI in a Nutshell", "Blood will Tell" and also a novel "Mansfield Parsonage". She is a regular contributor to the Tudor Life magazine with her fascinating and convincing view of history.

January's Expert Speaker is **Anne Barnhill** talking about **Tudor Clothing**

HENRY VIII, MRS KELLACHER AND HUGH MCLEOD: AN IMPROBABLE CONSTRUCT

The recurrent fetal and newborn losses visited on Henry VIII's wives and the causes of the king's deteriorating health in later life have long been the subject of speculation by historians and doctors. **Gerald Smith** discusses one particular theory he doesn't believe stands up to scrutiny...

In 2010 the Historical Journal published a paper by Catrina Banks Whitley and Kyra Cornelius Kramer, who attempted to bring many of these problems under one umbrella.[1] They suggested that the doomed pregnancies were due to haemolytic disease of the fetus and newborn (HDFN) resulting from a Kell blood group incompatibility between Henry and his wives, a condition akin to the better-known 'Rhesus' disease. Their proposal would mean that Henry's Kell blood group would necessarily have been Kell(K)-positive. As a corollary, they state '…we posit that he [Henry] consequently developed a disease which is exclusive to Kell-positive individuals: McLeod syndrome.' They go on to draw parallels between some of Henry's disabilities and the symptoms of the McLeod syndrome (MLS).

This neat explanation has so captivated the public imagination that it is now difficult to google any aspect of Henry VIII without being directed to several sites recounting the tale.[2] The idea achieved added prominence following Hilary Mantel's article, Royal Bodies, in which she refers at length

to Whitley and Kramer's paper.[3] Even the medical press revived the spectre of a 'witch hunt' by seeking the genealogy of Henry's postulated Kell(K)-positive blood group gene.[4]

Unfortunately, Whitley and Kramer's argument is based on two fundamental errors. They misunderstood the relationship between MLS and Kell blood groups: MLS is not 'exclusive to Kell positive individuals'. Furthermore, the authors' assumptions about the consequences of Kell blood group incompatibility in pregnancy do not accord with well-established clinical observations relating to HDFN. These errors seriously challenge the authors' conclusions.

In order to put the record straight, it is necessary to outline relevant facts about Kell blood groups and HDFN before considering the likelihood of Henry's families being affected by the condition; then to give a brief account of MLS, its independence of Kell blood groups, and its relevance to Henry's ailments. I am conscious of the fact that many practising doctors, let alone the readership of The Tudor Society, may baulk at the prospect of being presented with a few taxing details about blood groups and rare medical conditions. Be assured that I aim to keep my account as simple and lucid as possible without compromise to the science behind the topics. The relatively recent medical history, though undreamed of by the Tudors, will, I believe, be of interest to The Tudor Society. The simple calculations behind the probabilities quoted are not shown in the text, but are available as an Appendix on request from The Tudor Society.

Henry VIII's Queens and their Pregnancies

Katharine of Aragon (1509-1533)

1. Stillborn daughter, 31 January 1510
2. Henry, 1 January 1511; died aged 7 weeks
3. "Queen with child" (Wolsey, 30 September 1511); miscarriage (?)
4. Son, 17 September 1513; neonatal death
5. Son, November 1514; neonatal death
6. Mary I, 18 February 1516; lived 42 years
7. Miscarriage (?) at 5 months gestation, August 1517
8. Daughter, 10 November 1518; stillbirth at 8 months

Anne Boleyn (1533-1536)

1. Elizabeth I, September 1533; lived 69 years
2. (?) pseudocyesis/(?) miscarriage 1534
3. Miscarriage, 29 January 1536

Jane Seymour (1536-1537)

1. Edward VI, 1537; lived 16 years

The Kell Blood Group System

In 1946, an unusual antibody was found in the blood of a Mrs Kellacher, whose second child was affected by HDFN.[5] The antibody reacted with the red blood cells of her husband and both of her children. The presumption was that the children had inherited a blood group from their father, one that she lacked, and that she had been immunized by fetal red cells during the pregnancies, or by a previous transfusion she had been given of her husband's blood. The antibody reacted with red cells from unrelated individuals in patterns that were distinct from other known blood groups such as Rh ('Rhesus'). This new blood group system was designated Kell. Red cells that reacted with our eponymous heroine's antibody were said to be Kell-positive and those that did not Kell-negative.

As with other genetically controlled characteristics, blood groups are determined by a pair of gene variants (alleles), one acquired from each parent. Initially, it was postulated that an individual's Kell blood group is determined by a pair of alleles, ('big') *K* and ('little') *k*. Further work has

shown that there are at least twenty-six different Kell alleles, but by far the most important in the context of HDFN are *K* and *k*, the two that produce the K and k antigens on the surface of the red blood cells. Kell(K)-positive individuals may be heterozygous Kk (have both the K and k antigens on their red cells) if they inherit a *K* allele from one parent and a *k* allele from the other parent; or homozygous KK if both parents pass on *K*. Kell(K)-negative individuals do not inherit a *K* allele, but inherit a *k* allele from both parents and are homozygous kk. Some 9 per cent of the white English population are K-positive (0.2 per cent KK, 8.8 per cent Kk) and 91 per cent K-negative (kk).[6] K-positive blood, whether from a fetus or a blood transfusion, may, in a minority of cases, immunize a K-negative (kk) recipient such as Mrs Kellacher to produce the antibody anti-K.

HDFN due to anti-K

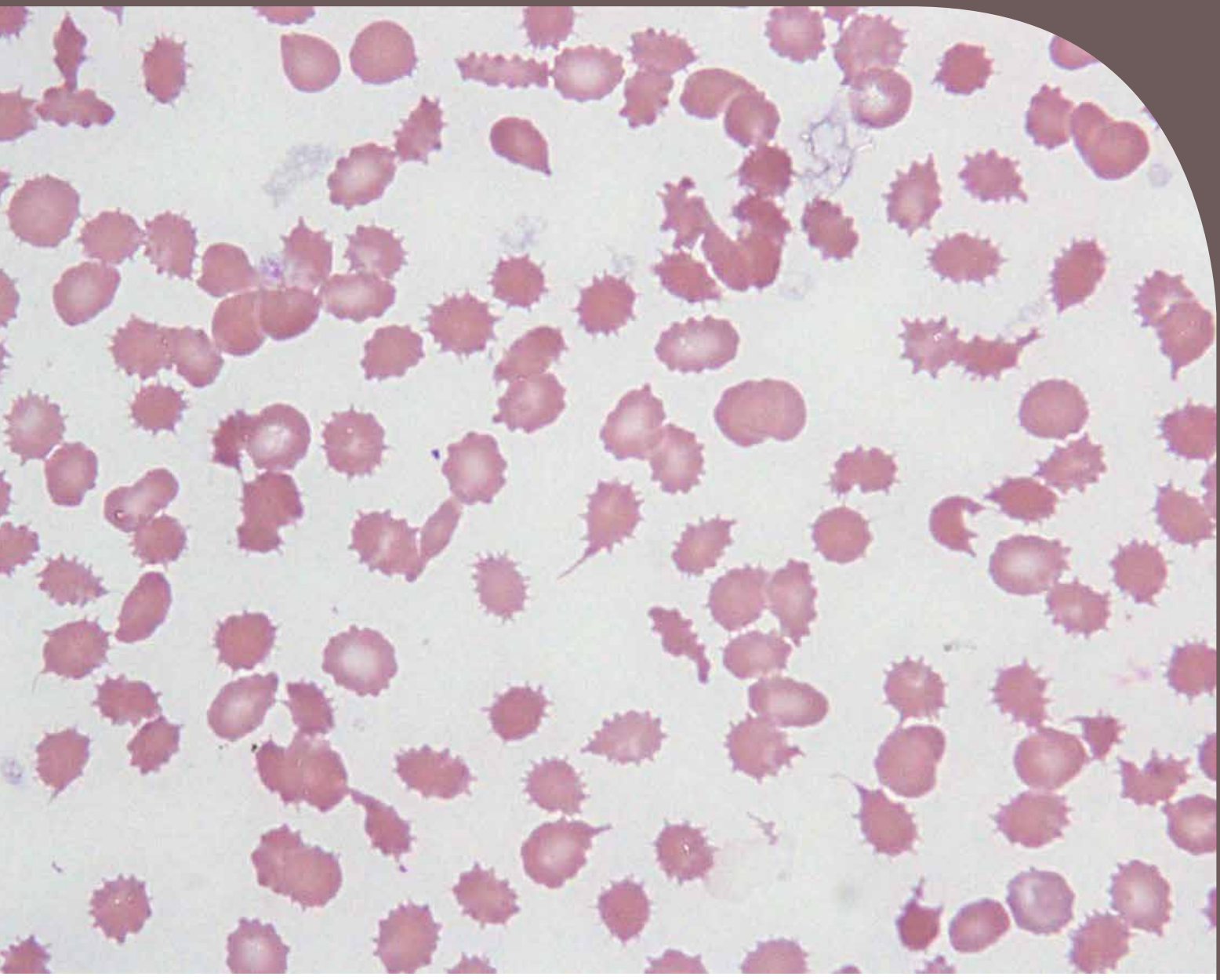
Most cases of HDFN occur when fetal red blood cells cross the placenta and immunize the mother to a fetal red cell antigen inherited from the father, one that she lacks. With feto-maternal K-incompatibility, immunization by the K antigen is an infrequent event. If immunization does occur it usually happens towards the end of the first pregnancy, particularly around the time of delivery, when the amount of fetal red cells escaping to the mother's blood is sufficient to stimulate a primary immune response (this being her first encounter with the 'foreign' antigen, K). With a first K-positive fetus, any anti-K produced by the mother is usually too little and too late to cause significant HDFN. On the other hand, the antibody in an already immunized woman is usually boosted early in a second K-positive pregnancy and may then be sufficient to cause varying degrees of red cell destruction (haemolysis) in the fetus as well as the suppression of its red cell production. The resulting anaemia may be severe enough to cause intrauterine death.

About 8 per cent (1 in 12) of white English families will comprise a K-negative (kk) mother and a K-positive father (KK or, more likely Kk). If it is not known whether the father is homozygous (KK) or heterozygous (Kk), the probability is that 51 per cent of the fetuses in the first pregnancies will be K-positive; for a first and second pregnancy with a K-positive fetus, the figure is 26 percent.

Probability of a K-incompatible Pregnancy Resulting in HDFN

It must be emphasised that only a minority of K-negative individuals exposed to K-positive blood, whether by blood transfusion or pregnancy, will become immunized and produce anti-K. Furthermore, among those individuals who do respond, the quantity and quality of the antibody varies, causing different clinical effects.

With the Tudors, we are interested in immunization solely as a consequence of pregnancy. Such information has been well documented for HDFN due to Rh incompatibility.[7] By contrast, many pregnant women with anti-K had, until recently, been immunized by blood transfusion, so comparable data have not been so easy to acquire. However, it is known that K-positive red cells are only about one tenth as good at causing primary immunization in a K-negative individual as Rh-positive cells are at immunizing an Rh-negative person.[8] Using this information it is possible to derive estimates for Kell-related immunization due to pregnancy from the Rh data. The following figures relate to second pregnancies with incompatible fetuses because, as indicated above, immunization and significant HDFN in a first incompatible

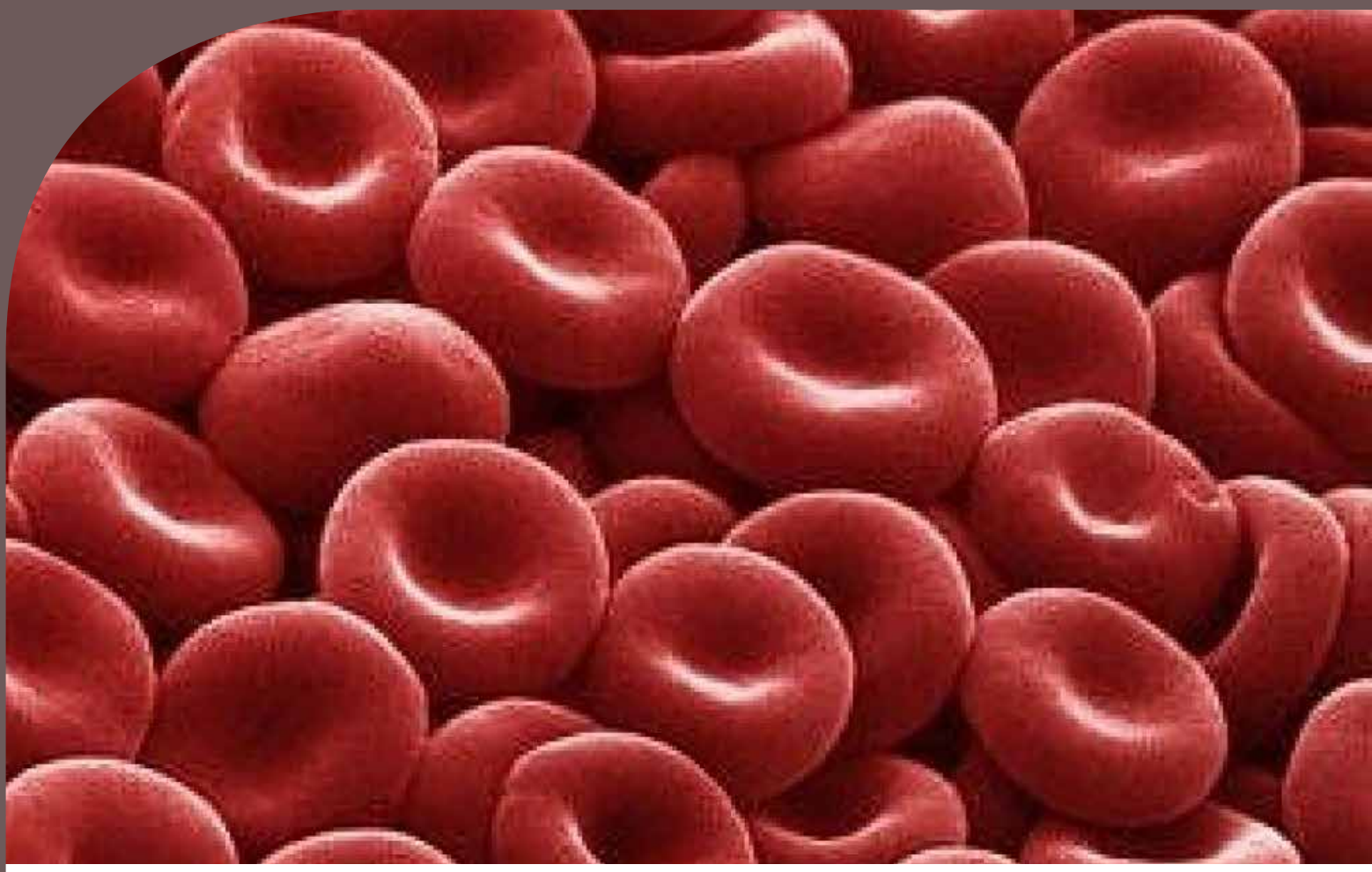


Spur cells in a patient with McLeod Syndrome (Michael Moravek, MD)

pregnancy is uncommon. One can thus deduce that in K-incompatible matings about 1.7 per cent (1 in 59) of K-negative women are likely to have anti-K by the end of their second K-positive pregnancy and that their fetuses might be affected to varying degrees by HDFN**.** Extending these estimates to the English population at large, anti-K and HDFN resulting from pregnancy alone would be found in about 1 in 3,100 second pregnancies. It is interesting to note that the few large studies that have been done to determine the incidence of Kell-related HDFN have found it to be rather less frequent than the above figures would suggest.[9]

The Tudor Wives' Obstetric Histories

Of Henry's six wives only the first three had pregnancies with him (listed in the accompanying Table). When considering the possibility of HDFN, the pregnancies of his first wife, Katharine of Aragon, are the most informative by virtue of their number, possibly as many as eight. Assuming that Henry and Katharine were K-incompatible, the likelihood that she would have produced anti-K during her second K-positive pregnancy and would have had a child affected by HDFN is 1 in 59. Her



first pregnancy produced a stillborn child and the second child lived for seven weeks, both uncommon events in HDFN. In all, Katharine may have had six pregnancies ending in miscarriage or death of the child shortly after birth. Had they been affected by Kell(K)-related HDFN, it is likely that some of the stillborn infants or miscarriages would have had hydrops fetalis, generalised swelling due to fluid retention as a consequence of severe anaemia and cardiac failure. Furthermore, those who lived for a few hours or days would have been noticeably pale (and in the case of Rh incompatibility, deeply jaundiced). All of the Tudor offspring were examined to record their sex. The appearance of a swollen, markedly pale or deeply jaundiced fetus or infant is striking and would not have gone unnoticed, but I am not aware of any record of such observations.

At first sight, the pregnancies of Anne Boleyn, Henry's second wife, might appear to follow a pattern compatible with HDFN, the first immunising pregnancy being unaffected and the following two affected by the disorder. But the same likelihood of immunization and of HDFN (1 in 59) would apply to Anne as it did to Katharine. Moreover, the chance of Henry's having two consecutive wives, both of whose second incompatible pregnancies were affected by HDFN due to anti-K, is about 1 in 4,200.

A few other points must be considered regarding the possibility of Katharine's and Anne's children having HDFN. Could either of the queens have been immunized by pregnancies prior to the ones acknowledged? Katharine denied her marriage to Henry's brother, Arthur, had been consummated. If Henry had have been K-positive, it is possible, though not inevitable, that Arthur also was K-positive. But had there have been a K-incompatible pregnancy with Arthur, it most likely ended with an early miscarriage, which would have been highly unlikely to have immunized Katharine. Regarding Anne's alleged sexual encounters before and after her marriage to Henry, the chances of any of her partners being K-positive is 1 in 10; and again, the likelihood of her being immunized by the miscarriage of a K-positive fetus is very small.

Jane Seymour's single pregnancy and the birth in 1537 of Edward VI, who lived for 16 years, brings nothing to the argument for or against these Tudor families being afflicted with HDFN.

All told, the likelihood of these obstetric histories indicating K-related HDFN is remote. What is indisputable is that having Rh-related

HDFN in Tudor times would have been some 30 times more likely than K-related HDFN, though still improbable in the context of Henry and his wives.

The McLeod Phenomenon and the Kx Blood Group System

In 1961 Hugh McLeod, a medical student, was found to have some unusual results during an exercise in blood group testing.[10] In brief, his red blood cells gave very weak reactions in some of the tests to determine his Kell group. At first it was thought that the atypical results might have revealed a new variant of Kell, requiring a new allele of the Kell blood group system to account for these observations. But the authors did consider an alternative explanation, namely that Hugh McLeod might "lack other genes that determine normal expression of the Kell phenotype", ie some other genetic phenomenon was interfering with his Kell typing tests. In due course, it became clear that the Kell typing anomaly did indeed result from an extremely rare variant allele that was part of a completely different blood group system. Somewhat confusingly, the letter K was retained in naming the new blood group system Kx. (To try and avoid further confusion, I will use a bold font to denote the **Kx** system as a reminder that it is not Kell.) The normal **Kx** gene, ***XK*** (yes, adding to the confusion, the gene really is written this way round), is almost universally present in all of us and produces a cell membrane protein named **Kx** which, *inter alia*, helps the Kell blood group antigens bind to red cells. If the ***XK*** gene, and therefore its membrane protein, are deficient or defective in some way, as in the case of Hugh McLeod, the Kell antigens cannot attach to the red cells normally and the Kell type of the individual appears abnormal, the so-called McLeod phenotype. This is the only known interaction between Kell and **Kx**. Contrary to the claim by Whitley and Kramer that MLS is exclusive to K-positive individuals, it is noteworthy that the Kell groups of Hugh McLeod's parents were tested and both were found to be Kell-negative (kk), indicating that their son would also have a Kell-negative genotype. This was confirmed by the results of Hugh's blood tests: the weak reactions recorded were with anti-('little')k, whereas there was no reaction whatsoever with anti-('big')K because he was genetically Kell-negative (kk).

The genes determining Kell and **Kx** blood groups are carried on different chromosomes, 7q33 and Xp21 respectively, and are therefore inherited independently of each other.[11] Having a particular genetic Kell group is not contingent upon the inheritance of an abnormal ***XK*** gene associated with MLS, nor vice versa. As the ***XK*** gene is carried on the X chromosome (hence the second character of the **Kx** blood group system name), the rare abnormalities manifest almost exclusively in males and follow a so-called sex-linked inheritance. Unlike males, who have only one X chromosome, females have a second X chromosome which will largely compensate for the possible effects of any rare ***XK*** gene variant they might carry.

The McLeod Syndrome

Follow-up studies of Hugh McLeod, our eponymous hero, and others with rare variant ***XK*** alleles revealed other effects in addition to the manifestation in Kell blood grouping tests of the McLeod phenotype described above. These effects include abnormally shaped 'spiky' red blood cells and, of much greater clinical consequence, the development of neurological, muscular and cardiac disorders, usually starting in midlife, and together known as the McLeod syndrome.[12] Although the

array and severity of the symptoms vary, most if not all males with an ***XK*** variant will show some of these features. The variable clinical picture may in part be due to the fact that some 35 abnormal ***XK*** alleles associated with MLS have been described to date.[13] The commonest presenting symptoms are movement disorders such as tics (30 per cent), psychiatric disorders (20 per cent), and seizures (20 per cent), rising to 95 per cent, 80 per cent, and 40 per cent respectively with time. In addition, muscle weakness with wasting develop in 50 per cent of cases as the disorder progresses, and abnormal heart rhythms are a major cause of death. MLS and the associated **Kx** abnormalities are extremely rare; at the time of writing, some 150 cases have been found worldwide since its recognition in 1961.

King Henry's Disabilities

King Henry's health issues have been widely researched by academic historians. They were considered in detail by Whitley and Kramer and have also been reviewed by Chalmers and Chaloner.[14] There are few surviving records from Henry's several physicians, but other court officials, attendants, and visiting ambassadors left short and vivid accounts of their observations on his fitness, his temperament, and his ailments.

There seems little doubt that in his youth Henry was an intelligent, fit, and athletic young man who knew how to charm. But he was also complicit in severe chastisement from the start. As a recently crowned 18 year-old, he approved the dispatch of Sir Richard Empson and Edmund Dudley to their executions. And in the spirit of the time, many imprisonments and deaths – by boiling, burning, barbaric hanging and beheading – were to follow throughout his reign.

Henry's physical attributes were impressive. From his surviving armour, it is estimated that in his twenties he was over 6 feet tall, with a 32 inch waist, 39 inch chest and weighed about 15 stone. He was a big man with prodigious appetites. By the time he was in his fifties his girth had increased to 52 inches and he weighed 28 stone. Nevertheless, he remained sufficiently healthy and active well into his forties to engage in hunting, royal tennis and jousting. Aged forty-five, he fell from his horse while jousting. He suffered concussion ('was 2 hours without speech') and his legs were crushed. The exact nature of the leg injuries is not known, but, possibly as a consequence of a bone fracture and chronic osteomyelitis, his previous tendency to leg ulcers seems to have been exacerbated and continued to afflict him for the rest of his life. Chalmers and Chaloner have pointed out that the crush injury, his obesity and intermittent periods of immobility, in addition to his penchant for garters, would all predispose him to deep venous thrombosis, venous hypertension and ulceration of his legs. It is on record that from time to time the ulcers 'closed', so that instead of draining foul-smelling pus, they became painful abscesses that had to be lanced with red hot pokers. Furthermore, his gross obesity, apart from compromising his mobility, might have induced type II diabetes, which would have exacerbated the chronic leg infections and exposed him to other health risks, such as arterial disease. In the face of these chronic afflictions, one cannot be surprised by tales of Henry's needing on occasion to be hoisted on to his horse, or up stairs, or carried about in a 'tramme'; no need to invoke significant muscle wasting to explain these observations. Nor need one dig deep for obscure psychological reasons to explain why '…he had a mal d'esprit', as noted by the French ambassador.

There are no indications that Henry manifested tics, other movement disorders or seizures, nor any muscular wasting, the hallmarks of MLS. That he had been unpredictable and vindictive from an early age is beyond doubt. And his chronic and debilitating ill health is ample reason for his being depressed and cantankerous in later life. To suggest a diagnosis of clinical paranoia on the grounds of delusions of persecution would seem to miss the point: one way and another, they really were after him and his crown. The remarkable thing is that in spite of his multiple disabilities and the turbulent times, he remained actively engaged with troublesome affairs of state, at home and abroad, including his concerns about securing his successor.

Conclusion

It is not difficult to see how misconceptions linking Kell blood groups and MLS might arise. The experienced blood group serologists who described the McLeod phenotype in 1961 raised the possibility that they might have discovered a new variant of the Kell blood group system. Subsequently, it became necessary to invoke a new blood group system, confusingly named **Kx**, to explain their observations. As described above, the *Kell* and ***Kx*** genes are inherited entirely independently, and the only relevant interaction is the suppression of the phenotypic expression of Kell antigens in Kell typing tests by the action of the few extremely rare variant ***Kx*** alleles. No matter what Henry VIII's Kell group might have been, it would have had no bearing whatsoever on the likelihood of his being afflicted by MLS. While it is impossible to put an accurate figure to the chance of anyone having MLS, it must be 1 in several million.

Perhaps, even in the context of the times, the story of recurrent miscarriages and newborn deaths in Henry's families might be somewhat unusual. Without a belief in divine retribution one is moved to look for other causes. But, for the obstetric and statistical reasons considered above, HDFN, especially due to anti-K, is not a strong contender. Furthermore, an individual with MLS is no more likely to be Kell(K)-positive than anyone else.

It might be argued, and doubtless will be, that probability statistics cannot deny the occurrence of a particular rare event. Nevertheless, once the claimed association of Kell blood groups and MLS, crucial to Whitley and Kramer's unifying argument, is acknowledged as a false premise, each postulated explanation for the Tudors' medical problems – Henry's MLS and his offsprings' HDFN – has to stand or fall by its own improbability. As Lady Bracknell might have put it, "To have one rare disorder may be regarded as a misfortune; to have two looks like carelessness"[15].

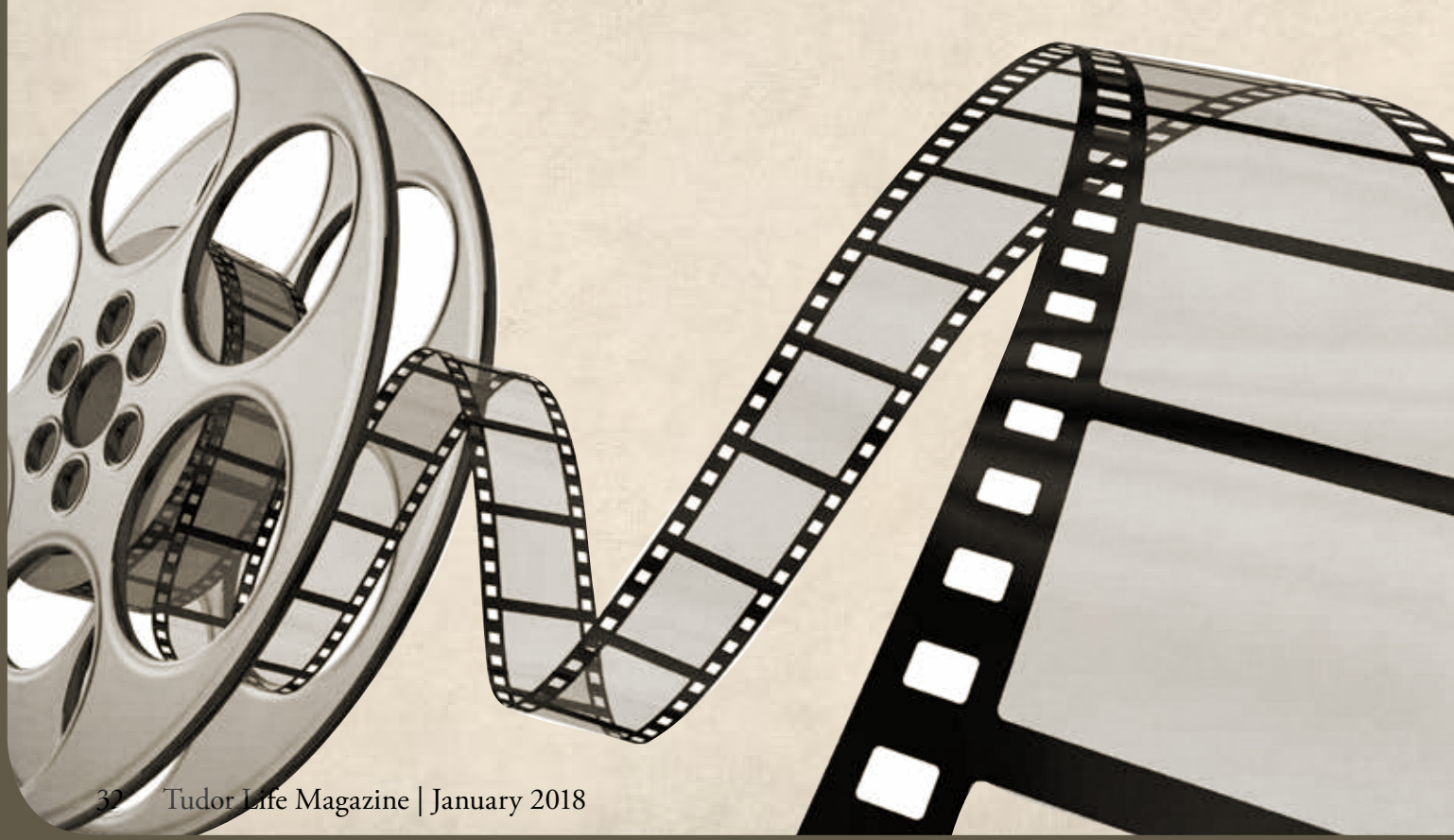
GERALD SMITH

References

1 Whitley CB and Kramer KC. A new explanation for the reproductive woes and midlife decline of Henry VIII. Historical Journal, 2010; 53, pp. 827-48.
2 On the Tudor Trail <onthetudortrail.com>, Jan 22 2011.
The Anne Boleyn Files <theanneboleynfiles.com>, Aug 16 and Aug 20 2012.
Science on NBC News <nbcnews.com>, King Henry VIII's health problems explained, Nov 3 2011.
3 Hilary Mantel. Royal Bodies. The London Review of Books, February 2013; 35 (4), pp. 3-7
4 Strick P and Lopes Floro K. Henry VIII, McLeod syndrome and Jacquetta's curse. J. R. Coll. Physicians Edinb, 2013; 43, pp. 353-60.
5 Coombs RRA, Mourant AE and Race RR. *In-vivo* isosensitization of red cells in babies with haemolytic disease. Lancet, 1946; 1, pp264-66.
6 Race RR and Sanger Ruth. Blood groups in man, 6th edn. Oxford 1975, ch 7, The Kell blood groups, pp. 283-310.
7 Mollison's blood transfusion in clinical medicine. H. G. Klein and D. J. Anstee, eds. 12th edn. Oxford 2014, pp. 507 ff.
8 Ibid. pp. 216 ff.
9 Ibid. pp. 528 ff.
10 Allen FH Jr, Krabbe SM, and Corcoran PA, 'A new phenotype (McLeod) in the Kell blood-group system'. Vox Sang, 1961; 6, pp. 555-60.
11 Reid ME and Lomas-Francis C. The blood group antigen facts book. London 1997, pp. 175 ff. and pp.294 ff.
12 Jung HH, Danek A, Walker RH, Frey BM, and Gassner C. McLeod neuroacanthocytosis Syndrome. Gene reviews, <www,genereviews.org/> 2012 May 17, Seattle (WA): University of Washington, Seattle
13 National Center for Biotechnology Information, Blood group antigen gene mutation database. 2017 Aug 7. 'Alleles of the Kx Blood Group System'.
14 Chalmers CR and Chaloner EJ, 500 years later: Henry VIII, leg ulcers and the course of History. J. R. Soc. Med, 102 (2009), pp. 514-517.
15 Oscar Wilde. The Importance of being Earnest, 1895.

BLUFF KING HAL
HOW CULTURE SHAPED THE PORTRAYAL OF KING HENRY VIII

By Emma Elizabeth Taylor



King Henry VIII is, without a doubt, one of the most famous kings in world history. Widely known as the red-headed, larger-than-life tyrant who beheaded two of his wives, the public persona of this infamous king has outpaced even the most accurate of accounts of his true personality. This fascination with King Henry has lasted well into the 20th and 21st Century, with many novels, movies and television shows using Henry's story as fodder for stories of court drama, religious strife, sex, and intrigue, with Henry himself played by numerous actors both young and old. In this article, I will be looking at some modern presentations of Henry in both television and film, in an attempt to examine what these presentations of Henry tell us about his lasting legacy, and examine how our culture and media shape our portrayals of this infamous man.

Initially, it is interesting to look at the 1933 film *The Private Life of Henry VIII* and the 1969 film *Anne of the Thousand Days. The Private Life of Henry VIII* marked one of the earliest portrayals of Henry on film. Charles Laughton played the title role in this film, which focuses on the last four marriages of the King. Laughton won an Oscar for his performance, and this presentation has been described by film critic Michael Koresky as one of the most "culturally definitive versions of Henry VIII". The Henry of the 1930s is aggressively masculine, swigging mead from tankards, ripping meat apart to eat with his hands, and stripping down to his undergarments to wrestle another man in a show of strength. In *Anne of a Thousand Days*, Henry is played by the legendary stage and screen actor, Richard Burton, and it covers a different period of Henry's life, looking at his relationship with his second wife Anne Boleyn, rather than his later wives – in contrast to *Private Life*, which sets its opening scene on the day of Anne Boleyn's execution. Both Laughton and Burton are significantly older than the actors that would follow in their footsteps to play Henry, and both displayed a somewhat old-school version of hyper-masculinity that is evident in their performances. While these performances are, without a doubt, culturally definitive, and influential in shaping the public perception of Henry, they also speak of a lack of characterisation and a reliance on masculine tropes to present Henry as a dominant, all-powerful male figure, without any apparent attempt to explore the psychology or wider influences of Henry's behaviour.

However, more modern versions of Henry have presented this king in an entirely different manner. Moving into the 21st Century, we have two very different presentations of Henry: Johnathan Rhys Meyers' Henry VIII in the Showtime TV series *The Tudors*, and Eric Bana's portrayal of Henry in *The Other Boleyn Girl.* Johnathan Rhys Meyers was around 30 when he began playing Henry in *The Tudors*, and many critics commented that Meyer's portrayal of Henry was almost unrecognisable from the real historical figure. Meyers is around 5ft10, with dark hair and a slim frame, totally unlike Henry's 6ft2 frame and red-gold hair. *The Tudors*, while it was a success, relied heavily on sex and scandal to retain viewership, and as a result, often elaborated on or entirely omitted real historical events. There seems to have been little effort to retain a sense of historical accuracy, with Henry frequently looking and behaving more like a contemporary rock star than a Tudor monarch. Meyers plays Henry until his death in the series, but does not gain any weight, or even look significantly older. As the show relies heavily on "sexposition" and romance, it seems that the production made the decision to retain Henry's attractiveness and youthful good looks as a tac-

Charles Laughton and Binnie Barnes as Henry VIII and Catherine Howard

tic to ensure viewers remained interested in his countless relationships with women. If the earlier versions of Henry, particularly Laughton's, perhaps suffered a lack of meaningful characterisation through an over-reliance on masculine tropes, the later versions suffered from an attempt to ensure that Henry looked good and stayed relevant as a romantic interest. In a similar vein, *The Other Boleyn Girl* portrays Henry as a darkly handsome, quiet, contemplative man, who broods more than he speaks but seems to have little regard for religious reform or affairs of state. One could argue that this is because the focus of the film lies with the Boleyn sisters, yet this portrayal, and the imbalanced focus placed on sex and romance, is similar in theme to *The Tudors*. The Henry of the 21st Century isn't the powerful, masculine older male of the 20th century, but a more modern romantic anti-hero of sorts: darkly handsome, seductive and young. It is a far cry from the "Bluff King Hal" of history.

However, one modern portrayal has been praised as both accurate and complex. Henry as played by Damian Lewis in the 6-part BBC Drama series *Wolf Hall*, which aired in 2015, was widely praised by viewers and critics alike. Based on Hilary Mantel's award-winning novel, *Wolf Hall* follows the story of Thomas Cromwell's meteoric rise to fame as Henry VIII's chief minister, and follows him as he navigates power struggles and religious strife in Henry's court. While Henry is not the main character of this adaption, he does play a large role, and Lewis performs the role admirably. The series was widely praised for its almost obsessive accu-

racy and attention to detail; both of which are also evident in Lewis's performance. Physically, the resemblance to the real Henry VIII is striking; Lewis, who was 44 at the time of filming, plays a 38-year-old Henry. He stands around 6ft1, similarly to the real Henry, and has the Tudor red-hair and beard. At 38, Henry had not yet begun the physical decline into obesity that marked his later years, and was still physically fit, participating in jousting, hunting and tennis frequently. When casting a character as infamous and recognisable as Henry VIII, it seems sensible to adhere to a certain degree of physical accuracy to ensure audiences do not have to suspend their disbelief to any great extent. This is certainly the case with Lewis, who is one of the closest physical matches to Henry that is present in any mainstream production. *Wolf Hall* also benefits from a storyline and a script that places more emphasis on the political and religious upheaval of Henry's reign, as opposed to focusing on the bed-hopping and sexual exploits of the Tudor Court - a trap that many films and TV shows tend to fall into. Lewis plays a spoiled but

Richard Burton and Genevieve Bujold's Oscar-nominated portrayals of Henry VIII and Anne Boleyn (BBC)

A brooding but sluggish Henry, played by Eric Bana, in "The Other Boleyn Girl" (Entertainment Weekly)

shrewd Henry, a king who is at once charming and dangerous, and ever-aware of his power. He is opulent, larger than life, and capricious, with a genuine sense of danger. Lewis was nominated for an Emmy and a Golden Globe for his role as Henry, and widely critically acclaimed for his performance in the role, and it is easy to see why. The portrayal of Henry as a complex man, at once charming and dangerous, is largely considered one of the most successful and accurate depictions of Henry, and is a far cry from the masculine tyrant or dangerous lover that Henry has so often been portrayed as.

TV and film, as with everything else, is a product of the time in which it was produced. The older depictions of Henry came at a time when masculinity was power, before focus had begun to shift to grittier portrayals of historical figures. The dark, brooding romantic version of Henry in *The Tudors* came at a time when sex sold; television and cinema were profiting from bodice rippers, handsome leading men and tragic romances; societal attitudes towards sex and history were changing and this was then reflected in the popular media. *Wolf Hall*, one would hope, marks the beginning of a new era of television and film about the Tudors; examine politics and power, and looking back at historical documents and facts in an attempt to show history how it really happened. This is, of course, presented through the eyes of many different people, and a TV series cannot hope to present history entirely without the lens of modernity obscuring at least some of the view. One can, however, hope that in the coming years, our portrayals of Henry in popular media show us the complex man that he was; not simply in black or white, but in many shades of grey.

EMMA TAYLOR

Richard Burton and Genevieve Bujold's Oscar-nominated portrayals of Henry VIII and Anne Boleyn (BBC)

ALL ABOUT KATHERINE PARR

by
Kirsty Saul

With stunning photos from Sudeley Castle, **Kirsty Saul** fills us in on the details of the sixth wife of Henry VIII, a fascinating woman in her own right...

Divorced, beheaded, died, divorced, beheaded, survived, we all know the rhyme that people use to remember the order of Henry VIII's six wives. Katherine Parr, of course, is the one who survived, outliving Henry. She has often been portrayed as a nursemaid to Henry in his old age and not nearly as interesting as some of his other wives. Another assumption, made by many, is that she went on to live happily ever after. There is far more to her story than that.

Katherine Parr was born to Thomas Parr, a courtier, and Maud Green, lady in waiting to Catherine of Aragon. She had two siblings, William and Anne. Katherine (believed to be named after the Queen, who also possibly stood as her godmother) was probably born in August 1512 in Blackfriars. Katherine was well educated, learning languages such as Latin and French. She could hunt; play chess and loved music and dancing. Katherine's father died when her mother was

twenty five years old. Maud didn't remarry and this left her in a strong position, being able to afford to be single and run her own life. Katherine would have seen that being female didn't equal weakness, something she took on board later in her own life.

As Katherine was a fine young lady of good standing she had to marry advantageously. The search for her first husband began when she was eleven years old. In 1529 Katherine married Edward Borough, eldest son of Sir Tomas Borough, a distant relative of the Parr family. Katherine moved to the Borough family home of Gainsborough Old Hall in Lincolnshire. In 1533, though, Katherine was widowed, for the first time.

The next suitable husband for Katherine was found by the summer of 1534, John Neville, Lord Latimer. He was twice widowed, and resided in Snape Castle, North Yorkshire. Latimer had two children, a son, John aged fourteen, and a daughter, Margaret aged nine. So on marrying Lord Latimer not only did Katherine gain the title of Lady Latimer, but she also became a stepmother, at the age of twenty two. Katherine developed a great fondness for her second husband, and although her stepson was a difficult child, she had a close relationship with her stepdaughter.

During this second marriage the country was going through a period of religious reform. The uprising against it, known as the Pilgrimage of Grace, took place in 1536. Latimer supported the rebellion. He was possibly forced to do so when Katherine was held hostage at Snape Castle. The uprising ultimately failed. Latimer, though, was not executed as he had important and influential friends and relatives including his wife's family who were loyal to the King.

As a result of this episode the couple moved back to London and ingratiated themselves into court life. Katherine was reunited with her brother and sister, who were both prominent at court, and she found herself serving Mary, the King's daughter.

Latimer's health started to decline and he died in 1543. He left Katherine with a reasonable income and that gave her the prospect of choosing her husband and not having the choice thrust upon her. At court a mutual affection began between Katherine and Thomas Seymour, Jane Seymour's brother and uncle to the future Edward VI. Thomas Seymour was quite the ladies' man, very ambitious and not to be trusted. Up until this time what we know of Katherine Parr is that she is prudent, sensible and steadfast, when she became deeply attracted to Thomas aspects of her character were altered. Meanwhile at court someone else had taken notice of Lord Latimer's widow, and that was the King, Henry VIII. After the disastrous marriage to Katherine Howard, time enough had passed in which to make Henry lonely and want a new wife and one who had a different temperament to his previous one. We don't know why he took a shine to Katherine Parr, maybe it was because she seemed of a caring and gentle temperament, and that she was also cultured, older, interested in religious debate and he could have intelligent discussions with her. One thing he wasn't after was a nurse, he wanted a wife and Katherine appeared to fit the requirements. When Henry proposed to her, Thomas Seymour had the sense to know that he had to step away and he was later sent away on a diplomatic posting. If one was to be cynical it might be thought that gaining a higher position and having an element of power may have swayed her decision to marry, but many believe it was her desire to drive Protestantism forward and to try and persuade the king to make greater changes that made up her mind to marry. In other words, she was doing God's work. They married in July 1543 at Hampton Court Palace.

Queen Katherine was hugely successful in her role and took very well to royal life intellectually as well as enjoying the more superficial aspects. The Queen was very fashionable, crimson being her favourite colour. She had the finest clothes and in

the first year of marriage she acquired over a hundred pairs of shoes. She made good relationships with her royal stepchildren and she brought them more into court life, the girls in particular. In 1544 Katherine was appointed regent whilst the king was away in France, his last campaign there. Previously, the only other one of Henry's queens to be entrusted as regent had been Catherine of Aragon. Katherine Parr was a very successful regent. Her use of power influenced her stepdaughter Elizabeth, the future queen. Elizabeth saw how a woman could rule and be obeyed by men, much as Katherine had learnt a similar lesson from Maud.

Religion was of the greatest importance to Katherine, her interest leading her to study books on the subject which were banned. Katherine wanted to spread the word and compiled her first book, Prayers or Meditations, which included five original prayers written by the Queen and was published in 1545. It was the first book to be published in English by a woman under her own name and it became a great success. In November 1547 she had another book printed, The Lamentation of a Sinner, this was after the king's death. Unlike her first book this was entirely her own work.

It was always still possible to raise the ire of Henry no matter how well you were doing and Katherine came close to losing her head because of her desire to lead the King towards greater reforms in the church. Discussions about such things with his wife had entertained the King for a long time, but by 1546 he was no longer the doting husband and found her opinions too radical. He complained about being lectured by her and spoke of his grievances to, amongst others, Bishop Stephen Gardiner. The King was persuaded to have her arrested, the aforementioned banned literature that she had acquired was used as evidence against her and meant an arrest warrant could be drawn up. Luckily for Katherine she was made aware of the warrant before it was officially served. With this knowledge Katherine was full of anguish, understandably so, and the King, hearing she was unwell, went to her. The Queen was able to make the case that by debating with him she had been trying to take his mind off his painful leg and to also learn from him, thus flattering the King and making him look on his dutiful wife kindly once more.

Henry died in January 1547 leaving Katherine a very wealthy woman but not regent to the new King, Edward VI, much to her displeasure. Now though she at last was able to return to Thomas Seymour and the courtship resumed in secrecy. It was discovered, thus creating a scandal as the Dowager Queen should have been in mourning. The couple did go on to marry, the precise date is unknown but, depending on which historian you believe, probably somewhere between two and four months after Henry VIII's death. Katherine sought permission from the young King after the secret event, manipulating his admiration and love for her, and then admitted they were in fact already married. One could be cynical about Thomas and view his marriage as a calculation to marry someone rich and with a high standing but there seems to be a genuine fondness, even love on Thomas' part. Katherine was very much in love and presumably full of high hopes for their future.

They began married life living in Katherine's house in Chelsea, which became known for hosting many debates on protestant reform. Also living with Katherine and Thomas in 1547 were future queens, Lady Elizabeth and Lady Jane Grey, another great believer in reforming the church. The latter was now the ward of Seymour, he had paid £2000 for this privilege, giving him control of a girl with a claim to the throne as well as the possibility of arranging a marriage to the young King at some point in the future.

Thomas Seymour appears to have been unable to resist the young Elizabeth, someone he had designs on marrying prior to Katherine

Parr. There are accounts from Kat Ashley, who served Elizabeth, of Thomas going into the future queen's bedroom before she was up 'and strike her upon the back or on the buttocks familiarly', 'and she would go further into the bed, so that he could not come to her'. Katherine Parr is said to have become involved in some of the 'horseplay'; one incident involved Thomas cutting Elizabeth's dress whilst she was wearing it and Katherine holding the girl as it was done. Understandably, Katherine would have been hurt by what her husband was getting up to and maybe she believed that joining in might help calm things and make it stop. Who knows? What we do know is that ultimately Elizabeth was sent away from Katherine's Chelsea home in May 1548. There was rumour about what went on but no actual full blown scandal. Elizabeth did continue to correspond with Katherine but never saw her again.

Katherine, by the time of Elizabeth's banishment, was now well into her pregnancy and Thomas moved the family to one of his properties, Sudeley Castle in Gloucestershire, a beautiful and comfortable place for the birth of what Thomas was convinced would be his son and heir. Lady Jane Grey also accompanied them to Sudeley Castle, a place given to Thomas Seymour by his nephew Edward VI. Many illustrious names had previously owned Sudeley including Edward IV, Richard III, Henry VII and another of Katherine's husbands, Henry VIII. In the future both of her royal stepdaughters would have a connection with Sudeley Castle, Mary, as Queen, would own it and Elizabeth would visit it three times during her own reign bankrupting the owner, Lord Chandos, in the process.

Katherine prepared for the birth and on August 30th was delivered of a girl, who they named Mary. Within a short time, Katherine became dangerously ill with puerperal fever and died on September 5th 1548 aged thirty six. She was wrapped in layers of cere cloth to preserve the body and put in a lead coffin. The funeral was held in the chapel at Sudeley Castle and conducted by Katherine's almoner, Miles Coverdale. Lady Jane Grey was the chief


HERE LYETH

mourner, Thomas went back to London and did not attend the service. He was executed six months later charged with thirty three counts of treason. Their daughter Mary was made a ward of Katherine Brandon, née Willoughby, Dowager Duchess of Suffolk. Mary Seymour disappears from records at around the age of two leading to the presumption by many that she died around that time. Katherine's funeral service was simple and is said to have been the first protestant burial of an English queen, quite fitting for the reformer that she was. She can also lay claim to the fact that she is the only queen to be buried in a private chapel in England.

Her story does not end there. Sudeley Castle and the chapel were destroyed during the Civil Wars. The owner Lord Chandos, being a royalist, was on the wrong side. In 1782 two lady sightseers rediscovered Katherine Parr's coffin, quite by accident. Upon opening it they found the Queen perfectly preserved. The story of the find soon spread. It's said that the frequent reopening of the coffin to look at her and to take souvenirs resulted in her body turning to dust. During the nineteenth century the castle was bought by two brothers, John and William Dent, and restored. In 1861 Katherine was finally laid to rest and a tomb made that was appropriate for a queen. Many people flock to her resting place and you will often see a flower placed between her hands by an anonymous visitor.

Katherine Parr is known for surviving Henry VIII, but she deserves to be remembered for far more than just that. She lived life to the full, she faced danger at times and also achieved much. What always drove her on was her religious conviction. This influenced many around her, including Elizabeth who would become a strong determined queen and protestant reformer; characteristics she shared with her stepmother and mentor, Katherine Parr.

KIRSTY SAUL

Set against the backdrop of the Cotswold hills in an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, Sudeley Castle & Gardens has played an important role in England's history, boasting royal connections that stretch back over 1,000 years.

Sudeley Castle & Gardens is the only private castle in England to have a queen buried within the grounds. Th e last of Henry VIII's six wives, Catherine Parr, lived and died in the castle. She is now entombed in a beautiful 15th century church found within the award winning gardens.

A highlight for Tudor lovers is the collection of artefacts and works of art of great historical importance from this era, which includes Catherine Parr's love letters, lacework reputedly made by Anne Boleyn, and the Book of Hours from the Royal Library of Henry VIII.

Sudeley Castle's magnificent gardens are world-renowned, providing variety and colour from spring through to autumn.

The centrepiece is the Queens Garden, so named because four of England's Tudor queens – Anne Boleyn, Catherine Parr, Lady JaneGrey and Elizabeth I – once admired the hundreds of varieties of roses found in the garden.

St Mary's Church is bordered by the White Garden, rich with peonies, clematis, roses and tulips, where Catherine Parr and her companion, Lady Jane Grey, would have entered the church for daily prayers.

The Knot Garden is based on a dress pattern worn by Elizabeth I in a portrait that hangs in the castle and a tranquil carp pond is set opposite the ruins of the 15th century tithe barn.

http://www.sudeleycastle.co.uk/

CHILDREN IN TUDOR TIMES

AN INTERVIEW WITH WILLIAM

Have you ever wondered how children lived 500 years ago in London England during the Tudor period? Children's book illustrator **Alan Wybrow** asks us to imagine that we have a travel machine and have transported ourselves back to that time. Here is an interview with a young boy named William of Hampton Court...

Author: Hello William! We've travelled back from the future to find out what life was like here in London England during the Tudor period.

William: That's most interesting! I'm happy to meet you and to answer all your questions.

Author: Smashing! That is an interesting outfit that you are wearing.

William: Yes. This is my court uniform as page to the king. Green is the court colours of Henry VIII and the rose badge is the Tudor family symbol.

Author: You mentioned that you are a page to the king here at Hampton Court. What is your role exactly and how did you acquire this position?

William: As personal page to the king, I assist him by delivering papers, messages or other items as needed. I may assist him in his travels and in his general duties here at Court. I was promoted to this position from my kitchen duties as spit boy when I rescued the king from drowning in a creek during a hunting expedition. You can read all about that adventure in my first story book.

Author: What was your life like before coming to Hampton Court?

William: My early life was a wretched one. I was like many

poor children in Tudor times being abandoned to the streets of London by my parents who could no longer care for me. Families had an average of 7 to 8 children with 25% of these dying before they reached their first birthday. Diseases such as bubonic plague, smallpox, measles, influenza, scarlet fever, pneumonia, and whooping cough killed 30% of all children by the age of 15! London with a population of 60,000 was a deadly environment for children because of the squalid conditions and the hordes of rats that swarmed through the streets.
The streets were very narrow and dirty. The upper floors of the houses over hung the streets and people would dump their refuse onto the streets.
The streets were also very dangerous as many of the poor turned to crime as the only way to survive. Townspeople disliked the poor and the beggars and treated them harshly.
This was the environment that many children like me grew up in and tried to survive the best they could.

Author: That's terrible! How many children ended up on the streets?

William: Hundreds of children were left to forage for themselves. A few were lucky to find a position as an apprentice to a tradesman but even large numbers of these were killed or hurt by the dangers in crafts such as tanning, blacksmithing or service on ships . Chemical poisonings, fires, and war injuries were frequent occurrences.
The treatment of their injuries often proved fatal as there were no hospitals and only the very wealthy could afford the services of a university trained physician.
The mortality rate for treatments of children's injuries was about 30%!

Family, friends, and neighbours provided the medical assistance as well as the local blacksmith who for a fee would reset broken bones. Imagine…all with no pain relievers!

Author: In spite of all these hardships, did children have time to play?

William: Yes there was a little time to play. The wealthy children played with toys like pewter dolls, lead soldiers, little cups and saucers and sledding and skating in winter on skates made from animal bones.
The poorer children played games in the streets such as football, dancing and a skills game using cherry stones.
I had no time for play as I spent my time foraging in the woods for faggots of wood to sell on the streets for kindling. The few pennies that I made provided for a crust of bread to survive another day.

Author: What food was eaten by children?

William: Most of the poor and poorer labourers ate pottage …a cabbage soup made with a little oats. The rich of course ate staggering amounts of meats and fowl. The meals in the Great Hall at Hampton Court were of such quantity that most poorer folks would never imagine.
Many of the poor adults and children would gather daily at the gates of Hampton Court to beg for the food scraps left over from these meals.
Many times I waited in the rain for hours hoping to have scraps only to be told there were none to be had that day.

Author: What educational opportunities existed for children?

William: Only the rich and well off children received any education. The poorer children went to work as soon as they were able…about 7 or 8 years of age. Many of the middle class children went into the service working as maids, page boys or to be sent to a trade as an apprentice at the age of 14.
If you were fortunate enough to go to school, a child spent the first 3 years at a nursery school while the next 7 years would be at a grammar school. They only had Sundays off and received two weeks vacation a year…one week at Christmas and one week at Easter.
The school day started at 6AM and ended at 5PM. Lessons included writing, reading. Religious studies and Latin studies. If a child did not do well in his studies, he would be

whipped by the teacher!
I however like so many of the other poor children had to survive on the streets without the benefit of any education.

Author: So William how did you become a page at Hampton Court?

William: My story is in the first storybook telling how as I was selling my faggots of wood, a kind cook by the name of Edmund in the kitchens of Hampton Court took pity on me and offered me a job in the kitchens as a spit boy.

Author: What is it like being a page to King Henry V111?

William: The king is very kind and generous to me. He treats me like a son and spends evenings teaching me music, chess reading, writing and studies in Latin.
I am very fortunate to have both Edmund and King Henry in my life.

Author: What adventures are coming in the near future?

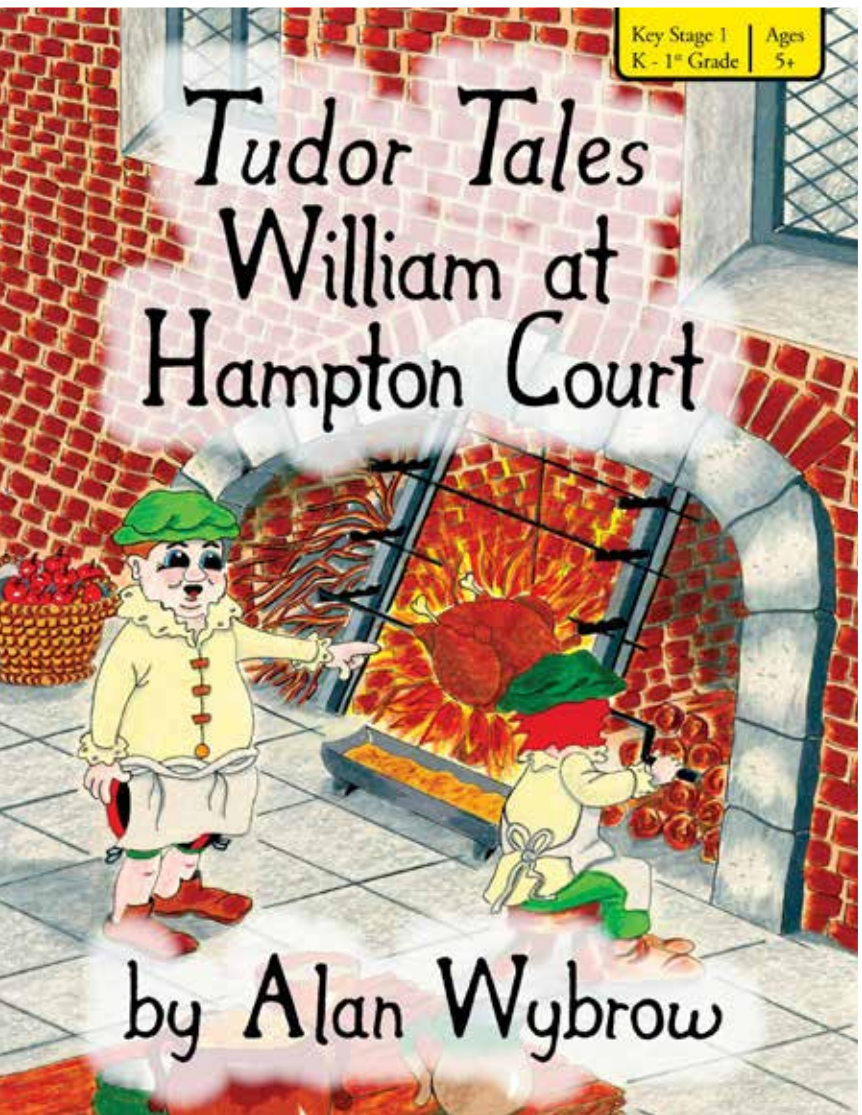
William: The story of my adventure with King Henry's two favourite dogs Cut and Ball and the nasty trick the hunting dogs played on them. It will be out soon.

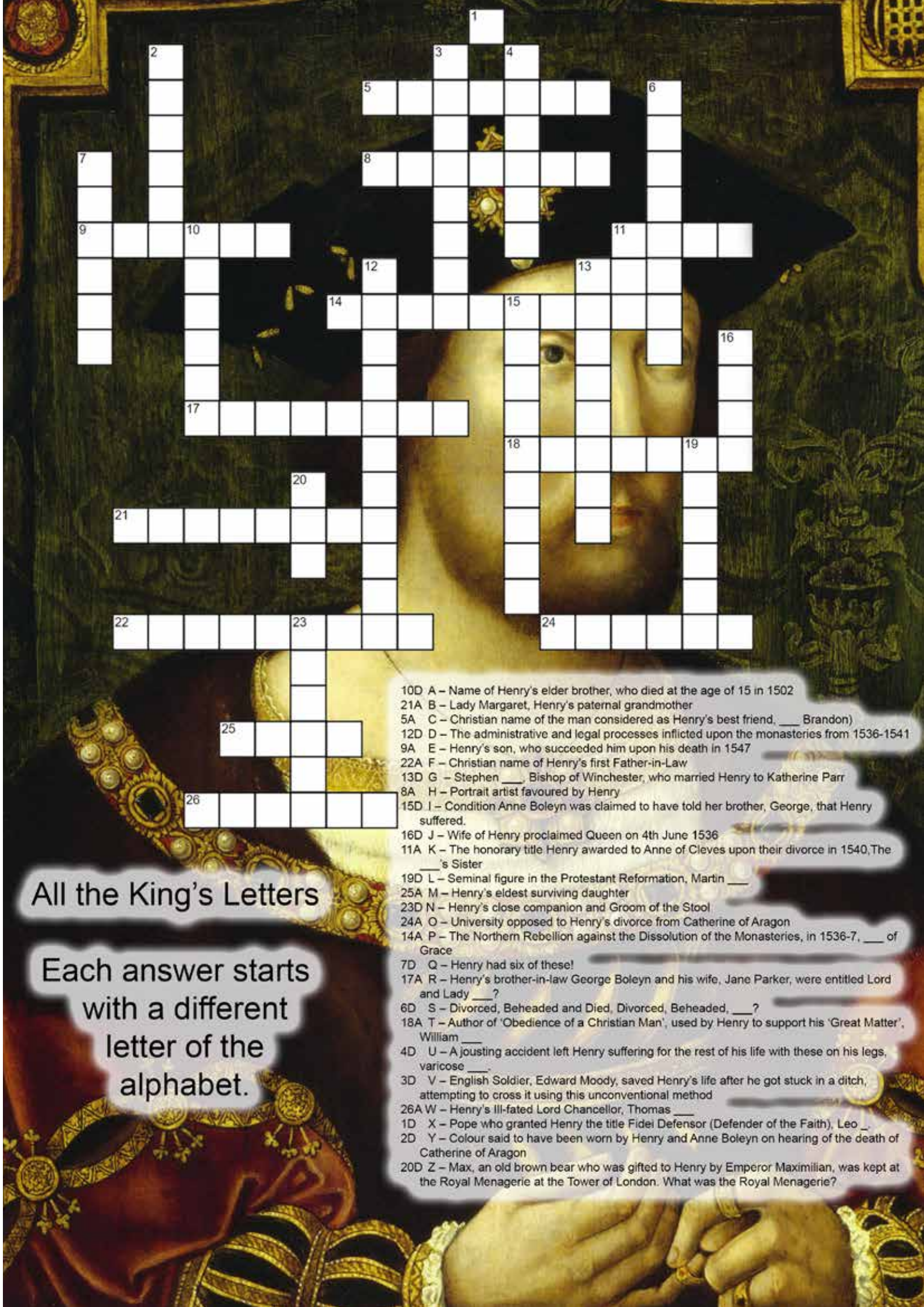
Author: We look forward to reading this new adventure. However, we must get back to the future William. We appreciate you giving us this glimpse of the plight of children in Tudor times. We look forward to reading more adventures of William of Hampton Court.

William: You are most welcome! Cheers.

Well here we are back in the 21st century. We can now appreciate our lives better and the modern conveniences health and educational opportunities that we enjoy today….or would you prefer to live in Tudor times?!

ALAN WYBROW





All the King's Letters

Each answer starts with a different letter of the alphabet.

10D A – Name of Henry's elder brother, who died at the age of 15 in 1502
21A B – Lady Margaret, Henry's paternal grandmother
5A C – Christian name of the man considered as Henry's best friend, ___ Brandon)
12D D – The administrative and legal processes inflicted upon the monasteries from 1536-1541
9A E – Henry's son, who succeeded him upon his death in 1547
22A F – Christian name of Henry's first Father-in-Law
13D G – Stephen ___, Bishop of Winchester, who married Henry to Katherine Parr
8A H – Portrait artist favoured by Henry
15D I – Condition Anne Boleyn was claimed to have told her brother, George, that Henry suffered.
16D J – Wife of Henry proclaimed Queen on 4th June 1536
11A K – The honorary title Henry awarded to Anne of Cleves upon their divorce in 1540,The ___'s Sister
19D L – Seminal figure in the Protestant Reformation, Martin ___
25A M – Henry's eldest surviving daughter
23D N – Henry's close companion and Groom of the Stool
24A O – University opposed to Henry's divorce from Catherine of Aragon
14A P – The Northern Rebellion against the Dissolution of the Monasteries, in 1536-7, ___ of Grace
7D Q – Henry had six of these!
17A R – Henry's brother-in-law George Boleyn and his wife, Jane Parker, were entitled Lord and Lady ___?
6D S – Divorced, Beheaded and Died, Divorced, Beheaded, ___?
18A T – Author of 'Obedience of a Christian Man', used by Henry to support his 'Great Matter', William ___
4D U – A jousting accident left Henry suffering for the rest of his life with these on his legs, varicose ___.
3D V – English Soldier, Edward Moody, saved Henry's life after he got stuck in a ditch, attempting to cross it using this unconventional method
26A W – Henry's Ill-fated Lord Chancellor, Thomas ___
1D X – Pope who granted Henry the title Fidei Defensor (Defender of the Faith), Leo _.
2D Y – Colour said to have been worn by Henry and Anne Boleyn on hearing of the death of Catherine of Aragon
20D Z – Max, an old brown bear who was gifted to Henry by Emperor Maximilian, was kept at the Royal Menagerie at the Tower of London. What was the Royal Menagerie?

WHAT IS IT LIKE ACTUALLY *BEING* HENRY VIII

In a light-hearted discussion,
Good King Hal tells us the kinds of
questions he is asked while being
Henry VIII for various groups...

How do you get to be Henry VIII? This is a question I am frequently asked. My usual answer is it's because I look like *this*. I did try being Harry Styles, but I starved. I had always enjoyed performing and was fixated on history, so this is my dream job. I have been touring rounds schools, castles and museums for the past 14 years as Henry VIII, throughout both the UK and Europe, visiting well over 2,000 schools and naturally, in that time, one or two other questions keep cropping up from children I meet when doing my shows. Here are some of the best and my stock answers:

Do you live in a castle/palace?

Funnily enough, I don't, much as I would love to. However, my biggest fear, if I did, would be coming home late at night, in thick fog, and falling in the moat.

Are you REALLY wearing tights?

Well, yes, I am. For the main reason being that I am supposed to be Henry VIII and he, and pretty much everyone else in Tudor times wore tights. Even the professional wrestlers, but don't let them know I told you that.

Are all your jewels real?

No, of course they're not, but I sorely wish they were. If I could afford this number of real jewels I wouldn't be at your primary school at 9 am on a November Tuesday morning. I would be at another primary school, but preferably in St Tropez or the Seychelles.

Can you chop my head off?

Well, I could but I don't think your teachers or your parents would be terribly happy about it, and, quite honestly, what would you do after I had done it?

Can I touch your dagger?

I refer you to the answer I gave above about chopping off heads. The dagger is real, it is sharp and, let's face it, after my Tudor show where would you rather go? Home or the local A&E department?

Here, Henry! Where's all your wives?

They're all at home with the mother-in-law. And if you ever wondered why Henry was so famously bad-tempered when he got older, just remember – SIX mothers-in-laws.

Are you hot in that outfit?

Me? Hot? Whatever gave you that idea? The fact I am wearing the clothing equivalent of a wardrobe, covered in about four layers and smothered in fur, and I am standing indoors at a school with the central heating on full blast in a room full of children acting as small heating units – well, no! I am quite chilly. I can assure you, regardless of what time of year it is, I am always roasting in my Henry outfit.

Was that you in "Horrible Histories"?

No, it wasn't. I AM funny.

Are you with us ALL day?

Yes, I am. Unless of course your school was incredibly silly and only booked me for a half day. I need all day to get everything in, from the story of Henry's life, right through to the exciting Jousting Tournament that finishes the day.

Will we be using real horses in the jousting?

Much as I would like to, the answer sadly is no. I simply cannot fit four Spanish Stallions in my Nissan Qashqai, and if we did a full jousting session in your school hall with real horses, your caretaker would try and kill me for playing merry hell with his flooring. No amount of buffing is going to remove those marks.

Do you enjoy being Henry?

I can honestly tell you, it is the greatest job in the World. I wouldn't change it for anything. A chance to combine my two favourite things in the world – History and Showing Off – who could ask for anything more!

What has been your favourite school to visit?

They're all good, in different ways. Some are better than others, but I would never say that. Most of the children I meet are just so into the idea of meeting Henry, learning about the Tudors and having a laugh as well, that they just make my job very easy. I do meet the occasional Monkey who thinks he or she is cleverer or funnier than Henry, but I soon put them straight on the matter.

If you could be on any TV series, what would it be?

Easy! Doctor Who, without a doubt. I was nearly on it once, sort of… If you ever get a chance, ask me about it.

Will you still be doing this in 10 year's time?

Probably, just slightly more haggard, balder and greyer. And if the schools and the children still want to learn about Henry and the Tudors.

You can Visit Hal's webpage at: goodkinghal.blogspot.com

Can you come back next year?

I would love to, but it is purely up to your teachers who decide whether I visit a school or not. I can't just stride up to the gates of a school and DEMAND that they let me in to do a Henry show.

Why are you so fat?

Because that is how most people remember Henry VIII. If I was the same shape as Kate Moss or Lily Cole I don't think too many people would be offering me work as Henry.

How do you know so much about Henry VIII?

I read. A lot. Never stop reading, never stop learning. You can always learn more. Anyone can, and it is such fun finding out. I tend to find out new things about Henry on an almost daily basis. Mostly from books, but sometimes from people who see my shows and talk to me afterwards. And I get to learn great stuff from children at schools – even if they get it slightly wrong. One little girl told me quite solemnly that Henry VIII wrote "Greenpeace", which was nice. Another child told me that Henry had died because he had a large "Abbess" on his knee. I had no idea he was so fond of large Nuns.

What have been your largest and smallest audiences?

I have done a few shows at schools where we have barely had 10 children altogether, and that makes my job very hard. I like a larger crowd to try and whip up some atmosphere and enthusiasm. Most children I have done in a school in one go was at a school in Cornwall once where I did the ENTIRE school in a morning and performed to just short of 400 pupils. Outside of schools I once appeared at Leeds Castle in Kent at one of their outdoor summer Proms Concerts, and that was in front of about 7,000 people.

So, basically, being Henry is fantastic. I can't recommend it highly enough. If performing isn't your thing, but you still fancy a career in history there are a multitude of ways you can get into it. But always make sure you read up, learn as much as you can, watch plenty of good TV documentaries, and be prepared to be asked lots of silly questions!

GOOD KING HAL

THE LAST DAYS OF HENRY VIII

Conor Byrne looks at the final part of Henry's life..

After his death in 1547 Henry VIII was buried under the Quire at St. George's Chapel, Windsor, in the company of his third consort Jane Seymour, who had died ten years previously. The tomb is marked by a black marble slab commissioned in the reign of William IV. Unlike his brother Arthur, Prince of Wales, or his son Edward VI, both of whom died in their teenage years, Henry lived to what was perceived to be a good age in Tudor England. His brother, the firstborn son of Henry VII, had died at the age of fifteen, and his son Edward would also not live to see his sixteenth birthday. However, Henry VIII's final years were plagued by rumours of ill health. At the time of his marriage to Katherine Parr in 1543, the king was reputedly 'so stout that such a man has never been seen. Three of the biggest men that could be found could get inside his doublet.'

In the spring of 1545, when he was nearing his fifty-fourth birthday, Henry reportedly suffered 'a burning fever for several days, and subsequently the malady attacked the leg'. Bishop Gardiner acknowledged that Henry might die before 'my Lord Prince [Edward] may come to man's estate'. The previous year, on 18 May, the ambassador Chapuys had opined that the king 'has the worst legs in the

world' and would not be able to pursue war 'without danger of his life'. That Henry was set upon war, regardless of his physical ailments, continued to be reported by resident ambassadors at court as late as January 1547. As Lacey Baldwin Smith suggests, 'what emerges is not the picture of a careful ruler preparing his kingdom for a new reign but the image of an obstinate old man who had no intention whatsoever of dying on the prescribed date.' In September 1546, rumours circulated that the king was once more ill, although the earl of Southampton responded by acknowledging that, while Henry had suffered from a cold, he had since recovered. The king fell ill again in December; shortly after meeting with him, the Imperial ambassador reported that his health had subsequently been restored. It was probably the precarious nature of his health that led Henry to draw up his final will and testament, which was 'signed… with our hand, in our Palace of Westminster, the 30th day December' 1546. The ambassador Odet de Selve opined that Henry seemed 'now fairly well' on 16 January, but ten days later it was apparent that the time of death was drawing ever closer.

Two days after the king's will had been signed, in fact, the French ambassadors recorded that the king had once more been stricken with a fever, and Henry's condition rapidly deteriorated. Even at the last, however, Henry continued to set out his wishes regarding foreign policy, as were for example communicated to William Paget on 22 January. The lodgings of his wife, Katherine Parr, were prepared at Whitehall Palace, but it is unclear whether she visited her husband in the days before his death; she was not present on his deathbed. Biographer Antonia Fraser romantically speculates that 'King Henry may perhaps, as consciousness failed too, have called for an earlier wife, the dream-wife, the mother of his son, Queen Jane Seymour, or as the memoirs of vigorous youth sometimes return at the last he may even have imagined himself still married to Catherine of Aragon, who had been his spouse seven times as long as any other wife.' In the early hours of 28 January, Archbishop Cranmer beseeched the king to provide him with a sign that he trusted in God; in response, Henry 'holding him with his hand, did wring his hand in his as hard as he could'. He died not long afterwards, at the age of fifty-five. The unknown author of the *Chronicle of Henry VIII* asserted, probably incorrectly, that the king's eldest daughter Mary visited her father on his deathbed and was entreated by the king to 'try to be a mother to thy brother, for look, he is very little yet.' As Suzannah Lipscomb points out: 'There is a strange symmetry to the dates. The founder of the Tudor dynasty, Henry VII, was born in obscurity on 28 January 1457; his famous, infamous, son died in the profound darkness of a winter's night on the same day ninety years later.'

The king's death was subsequently kept secret for three days. Thomas Howard, duke of Norfolk, had been due to suffer execution on the very day of Henry's death, but the king's demise meant that Norfolk's life was spared, although the duke was only released from captivity six years later. On the night of 8 February, a solemn Dirge was held in every parish church in the kingdom and bells were tolled. Requiem Masses were offered for the king's soul the following morning. The embalmed body was transported towards Windsor on 14 February; it rested that night at Syon and arrived in Windsor the following day. Bishop Gardiner celebrated the funeral Mass on 16 February at St. George's Chapel. Amidst a fanfare of trumpets, the king's corpse was buried between the stalls and the altar. Henry's will had stipulated that he should lie beside Jane in Henry VII's Lady Chapel at Westminster Abbey, but the costly tomb which he had anticipated as his final resting place was never completed.

J. J. Scarisbrick, the king's biographer, notes that Henry 'had survived pretenders, excommunication, rebellion and threats of invasion, died in his bed and passed his throne peacefully to his heir.' The monumental religious, political, administrative and legal developments that took place during Henry's reign means that his tenure as king arguably 'left a deeper mark on the mind, heart and face of England than did any event in English history between the coming of the Normans and the coming of the factory.' The scholar William Thomas contended that Henry 'was undoubtedly the rarest man that lived in his time.'

CONOR BYRNE

20 Surprising Facts about William Shakespeare You (Probably) Don't Know

by **Cassidy Cash**

William Shakespeare is known the world over as contributing more than perhaps any other writer in history to writing, theater, and indeed the English language itself. Having created on his own more than 3,000 English words and penned some of the most powerful works of artistic theater known today, William Shakespeare is easily one of, if not the, most famous historical figure in modernity. His plays are used by world leaders in multiple countries to inspire patriotism. The words he wrote for the characters of Romeo and Juliet are almost ubiquitous with expressions of love and romance. Despite his familiarity as a historical figure, and his powerful infusion into our colloquialisms and traditions culturally, there is surprisingly little known about his personal life. What we do know about the man himself paints Shakespeare as being just as human as the characters he portrays in his plays. As as way of bolstering the human aspect of William Shakespeare in order that his life might take a prominent place at the forefront of his legend as a playwright, here are 20 facts about the bard you probably don't know.

1

He may have written with the same kind of pencil you used in grammar school
Graphite pencils came into popularity in London while Shakespeare was writing his plays. Some scholars believe Shakespeare could have written with a pencil as well as a quill pen.

2

He was originally memorialized as an agriculturalist instead of a writer
Shakespeare's memorial at Holy Trinity Church in Stratford was originally done with Shakespeare holding a sack of grain. The quill pen he holds today was added later.

3

His family were closeted catholics in a time of a protestant Queen
Shakespeare's father, John Shakespeare, was arrested on charges of keeping illegal catholic documents in his house.

4

Really weird food was served at the dinners he attended while at court
The eel like fish lamprey was a popular food served at royal court banquets similar to the banquets where Shakespeare performed before Queen Elizabeth I.

5

You can visit parts of the palaces where he performed some of his plays
The Banqueting House of the original Whitehall Palace where Shakespeare performed The Tempest in 1611 is still standing and a place you can visit in London.

6

He only had three children and only the daughters lived to old age
Shakespeare's first daughter was named Susanna. She and Shakespeare's second daughter, Judith, were the only ones to reach adulthood.

7

He named his twins after his neighbors in Stratford
Shakespeare's twins, Judith and Hamnet, were named after Shakespeare's neighbors and good friends, Hamnet and Judith Sadler.

8

Shakespeare's family were suspected as criminals
Shakespeare's extended family was implicated in the Gunpowder Plot that tried to kill James I.

9

The plays he wrote were successful due, in large part, to Richard Burbage's acting skills
Shakespeare wrote many of the big roles like King Lear and Hamlet specifically for his good friend, Richard Burbage, who was the star of Shakespeare's acting company. Richard was such a prominent celebrity his death overshadowed that of Queen Anne who died at the same time.

10

Bubonic Plague didn't stop this entrepreneur Shakespeare wrote his sonnets during periods of London history when the government shutdown playhouses due to plague.

11

Shakespeare's company would often travel to perform plays The Lord Chamberlain's Men would sometimes travel around to various towns and cities to perform their plays when there was a city wide closing of the theaters.

12

Macbeth was an intentional propaganda piece. Shakespeare wrote The Scottish Play, Macbeth, as a way to prove his loyalty to the newly crowned King from Scotland, James I.

13

Writing Plays and Sonnets Wasn't The Only Way Shakespeare Made Money Shakespeare was a businessman in addition to being a playwright. There are surviving documents detailing where Shakespeare would purchase grain and then markup the sale of that food to his neighbors, at a sizable profit.

14

It's possible Shakespeare studied at a library. Shakespeare's life saw the beginning of the The Golden Age of Libraries. In addition to the famous Oxford University Library called The Bodelain, there were several private and public libraries started during Shakespeare's life.

15

The Queen never came to the theater. Queen Elizabeth never came to The Globe theater to see plays performed, but Shakespeare did present her majesty with plays at several banquets at court.

16

There are no surviving relatives of Shakespeare. Shakespeare does not have any descendants. Susanna and Judith both had children, but only Shakespeare's granddaughter and Susanna's only child, Elizabeth, lived to old age. Elizabeth did not have any children of her own and Shakespeare's lineage ended with her.

17

Shakespeare's plays weren't designed to be read like a book. Many of Shakespeare's plays and sonnets were never published until after his death in 1616. He did not write down the plays, but instead actors would perform them from cue cards. His plays were designed to be spoken out loud, not read in a book.

18

Many major renaissance figures were active in Shakespeare's lifetime. William Shakespeare was a contemporary of other great Renaissance minds like Descartes, Nostradamus, and Oliver Cromwell.

18

Shakespeare lived at the same time as Galileo. Shakespeare and Galileo were born the same year. Galileo outlived Shakespeare by almost 30 years.

20

Shakespeare was an entrepreneur. The humanist movement was popular among professionals, and writers in particular, during the 16-17th centuries. Shakespeare and his contemporaries were motivated by humanist ideals to be independent, many moving to London to start their own careers out of the belief that humans could do anything they set their mind to accomplish; not unlike modern entrepreneurs today.

Cassidy Cash is That Shakespeare Girl. She produces a weekly video series on the life and times of William Shakespeare, believing that knowledge of the man himself is essential for the study of Shakespeare's plays. You can download a free 2018 Shakespeare Wall Calendar from Cassidy when you join her newsletter. Connect with Cassidy on Twitter @thatshakespeare, and visit her website to learn more. www.cassidycash.com

THE "CRAZY PERIOD" IN MEDIEVAL ENGLAND AND THE LOW COUNTRIES

by Debra Bayani

Saint Nicholas Feast by Jan Steen 1665-1668

Daily life in late medieval and 16th Century Netherlands or the Low Countries centred on the ever-present background of the Catholic faith. The struggles and pressure of social rank were alleviated in the celebrations to do with feast days, especially during Carnival, also known as the Crazy Period, and the Feast of Purification. For a short time, rules were forgotten, and everything was turned on its head. During this time, the role of king or priest was given to an idiot or criminal who ruled over the country. In order to prevent problems, the clergy itself also took part in these pranks in the church. Both in England as in the Low Countries, a Lord of Misrule was appointed during Christmastide and presided over the "Crazy Period". The Lord of Misrule was generally a peasant or sub-deacon appointed to be in charge of Christmas merriments, which often included drunkenness and wild partying.

But this way of feasting and celebrating feasts was not only for the peasants. At King Richard III's court during the Christmas period of 1483 it was reported by the *Crowland Chronicle Continuations* that the Christmas festivities were "shameful" and "during this Christmas festival, too much attention was paid to singing and dancing and to vain exchanges of clothing to Queen Anne and the Lady Elizabeth."

The Church itself held a similar festival involving a boy bishop. This custom in England was abolished by Henry VIII in 1541, restored by his daughter, the Catholic Queen Mary I and again abolished by his other daughter, the Protestant Elizabeth I.

Shrove Tuesday, the forerunner of the current Carnival was the most important event during the late middle ages and the conclusion of the events around the so-called "Crazy Period". These festivities took place between the Feast of St. Martin (11th of November) and Easter, and focussed on overcoming the cold and dark winter period. All these feasts included fertility elements, disguise and role plays, music, loud noises, overeating and drinking.

St. Martin's Day (11th November)

St Martin's Day is the feast of Martin of Tours who was a 4th Century bishop of Tours and one of the most popular saints of the middle ages. St Martin's feast was until the 20th Century seen as a beggars' feast, a celebration for the poor. Martin was born in Hungary and according to tradition became a soldier at a young age. When he was travelling to France, he met a beggar at the city gate of Amiens. He cut his cloak in half and gave half to the beggar. The goose became a symbol of St. Martin of Tours because of a legend that Martin did not find himself worthy enough to be ordained as a bishop and tried to avoid it by hiding in a goose run, where he was betrayed by the cackling of the geese. St. Martin's Day was an important medieval autumn feast, when autumn wheat seeding was completed, and the annual slaughter of fattened geese and cattle produced "Martinmas" meat.

St. Martin's Feast is much like the American Thanksgiving - a celebration of mother earth's rewards, but it is also known as Old Halloween or Hallowmas Eve. In some countries, children carry lanterns in the streets at nightfall, singing songs for which they are rewarded with sweets. Because it also comes before the penitential season of Advent, it is seen as a mini "carnival", with all the feasting and bonfires.

St. Nicholas' Day (5th /6th December)

St Nicholas' Day is the feast day of St Nicholas, a 4th Century bishop of Myra (modern-day Turkey). Because of the many miracles attributed to his intercession, he is also known as Nikolaos the Wonderworker. St Nicholas is in various countries around Europe the patron saint of merchants, remorseful thieves, children, brewers, sailors, students etc. His reputation developed among the faithful, and his legendary habit of secret gift-giving gave rise to the traditional prototype of Santa Claus. Celebrating his name day started

in the 13th Century and in late medieval England, on St Nicholas' Day, parishes held Yuletide «boy bishop" celebrations. As part of this celebration, a child bishop was chosen, who, with his friends and classmates made a procession to the church to be officially initiated as a bishop, wearing a mitre and holding a sceptre in his hands. The child-bishop performed the functions of priests and bishops and exercised rule over their elders. The boy kept this symbolic position until Childermas.

It was from the 15th Century that this feast was celebrated the way it still is today

Carnival: The King Drinks by David Teniers 1690

in the Netherlands. A man dresses up as the saint alongside his helpers who carry bags full of gifts and treats for the children. The modern-day Christmas celebration with Santa Claus derives originally from Saint Nicholas, whose modern American name comes from the Dutch "Sinterklaas", When the Dutch originally came to America and established the colony of New Amsterdam, they brought along the legend and traditions of Sinterklaas. The New Amsterdam Dutch later turned "Sinterklaas" into "Santa Claus".

It is an old tradition that has been immortalised in many old illustrations and

The Wine of Saint Martin's Day
by Pieter Brueghel the Elder 1565-1568

paintings, including one by the famous 17th Century Dutch master Jan Steen called The Feast of Saint Nicholas. It shows the feast being celebrated in a homey atmosphere on Saint Nicholas Eve (5th December) just as it is still celebrated nowadays with sweets and presents. According to the tradition, children who had behaved well all year long received gifts, but those who had not, like the crying boy in the painting, received a piece of straw in his shoe. Of course, it was the parents who actually gave the gifts to their children. The children would put a shoe in front of the fireplace before going to sleep and the parents would put in sweets or a present, or, in this case, a piece of straw if they had not behaved well or had not done well at school. This way, parents used the tradition to make sure that their children obeyed them.

Christmas (24th/25th December)

During the Early Middle Ages, Christmas became one of the most important days in the Christian year.

The feast of Christmas also started incorporating other pagan ceremonies and practices, especially those from the Germanic peoples. Some Christians were openly resentful of these practices, complaining that during the Christmas season people were singing and dancing in the streets in the pagan style, screaming acclamations and blasphemous songs, and continuously overindulging in food and drinks. Meanwhile, other spiritual leaders adapted or tolerated some of these practices, and gradually they became part of the standard religious celebrations.

To add to the importance of Christmas masses, visual images were added, such as presenting a crib in the church to symbolise

the place where Jesus was born, and dramatic Biblical scenes were performed.

Most people believe that the Christmas tree is a modern tradition, but the, in fact, the tree was an important symbol in various nonreligious cultures. Pine trees and other evergreens symbolised the promised return of life during springtime. Though the trees remained outside, in the Middle Ages, the Church would decorate trees with apples on Christmas Eve. The 16th-century London historian John Stow refers to an account from 1444 which reported that "a standard of tree being set up in the midst of the pavement (in the London neighbourhood of Cornhill) fast in the ground, nailed full of holme and ivie, for disport of Christmas to the people." He further explained that in his city, "every man's house and also his parish church was decorated with holme, ivie, bayes, and whatever the season of the year afforded to be green."

Although gift-giving at Christmas was temporarily banned by the Catholic Church in the Middle Ages due to its suspected nonreligious origins, it was soon popular again as it became a time of excess dominated by a great feast, gifts for rich and poor and the general indulgence in eating, drinking, dancing and singing.

In some areas in medieval times, gifts were money, and the money was given in a hollow clay pot with a slit in the top which had to be smashed for the money to be taken out. These small clay pots were nicknamed "piggies", and so became the first version of today's piggy banks.

Childermas or the Feast of the Holy Innocents (28th December)

Childermas was the renowned occasion to symbolically undermine the social hierarchy where officials could, without risk, be put on the pillory. On this day, youthful candidate monks took over power in the monasteries in which they lived, a practice which extended to schools in towns. In households, it was also common practice for the youngest children of a family to be put in charge of what to eat and what to do on this day.

Epiphany (6th January)

As we can see in another painting by Jan Steen, on the Feast of Epiphany or Three Kings' Day, a role-play was performed in a household and a king was chosen by drawing straws, as well as other "court members". It again included lots of drinking, overindulging, loud noises and singing.

Candlemas (2nd February)

From ancient times to the Middle Ages, bears were an object of worship. Germans and Scandinavians and, to a lesser extent, the Celts celebrated the end of hibernation of the bears at the end of January and beginning of February. This was around the time when the bears would leave their dens and see if the weather was mild. This festival was characterised by the wearing of bear costumes or disguises, and the more bizarre pretence of sexual assault and the kidnapping of young girls.

For a long time, the Catholic Church sought to get rid of these pagan practices. To do this, it instituted the Feast of the Presentation of Jesus at the Temple which is celebrated on 2nd February, which corresponds to the Feast of the Purification of the Virgin Mary.

However, the celebrations of the bear and the return of light continued, with bonfires and torchlight processions.

DEBRA BAYANI

Poisons in the Tudor period

by Peter Macinnis

Expert on poisons and poisoning, **Peter Macinnis** takes us through some of the more gruesome ways to be killed in Tudor times...

WHEN THE FUTURE Henry VIII's older brother Arthur, Prince of Wales, died in 1502 the gossips whispered about poison, but bubonic plague and tuberculosis are better candidates. The gossips were more certain Edward VI died of poison, but tuberculosis or pneumonia could have carried him off. In those days, diagnosis was neither an art nor a science.

I am somewhat inexpert around diseases, but while I know quite a bit about poisons, I tend not to mention it too much. I learned long ago how in *Little Women*, Jo March wanted to be a writer, and to augment her limited experience of life, used research, and "…excited the suspicions of public librarians by asking for works on poisons".

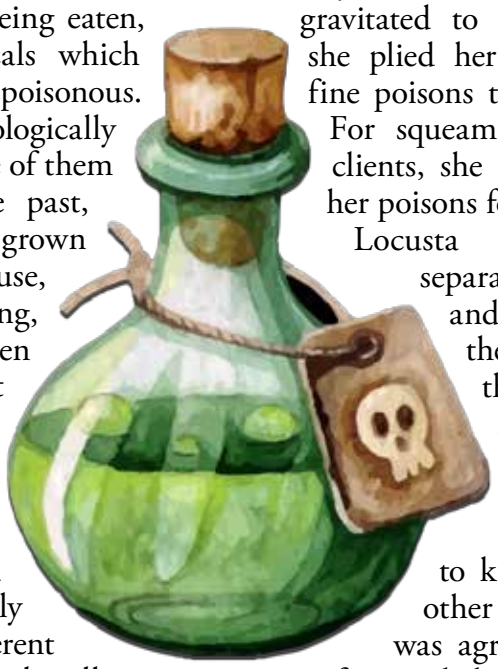
Being known to have an interest in poisons draws emails seeking advice on

how to find "a poison that looks like diabetes" — or some such. The writers all claim to be writing murder mysteries, but like Jo's librarians, I harbour suspicions. Against that, I have also been known to excite the occasional suspicion.

Ten years back, I was in London and called in at the Chelsea Physic Garden where I asked to see their poison beds. Luckily, the stern and suspicious guardian I spoke to had read my book on poisons and poisoners, and I was allowed to admire their small grove of murderous herbs, free of invigilation.

Paracelsus would have known why gentle Chelsea shelters a large collection of deadly plants: they have kinder uses. He wrote "the dose makes the poison", but he said it in Latin: *sola dosis facit venenum*. Humans have a long history of using carefully measured doses of poison, sufficient to kill a disease while leaving us alive.

Plants need to avoid being eaten, and many make chemicals which taste bad or which are poisonous. These chemicals are "biologically active", so we can use some of them to treat illnesses. In the past, selected poison plants were grown in the kitchen garden because, while men did the fighting, women did the curing, when they could — and that excited suspicion.



In days of old, knights may have been bold, but they were also just a little bit scared. In a world where men are generally larger and more belligerent than women, better able to handle weapons, poison was a weapon the weak could use against the strong, something women could use just as well as men.

Best of all, poison left no bleeding and gaping holes, if you selected the dose thoughtfully, and poison was less messy on the stage. Shakespeare's characters found poison variously in their ears, their food, a chalice, a potion, or on the blade of a weapon.

Whatever the poison used, the big plus was and is the way poison levels the playing field. Brains could beat brawn and with care, the poisoner had every chance of getting away with it. This makes poison something for men to fear and women, by virtue of their knowledge excited suspicion and accusations of witchcraft.

Humans were all just a bit fascinated by poisons — and perhaps we still are. We remember the Borgias who poisoned a few rivals and forget the many others of their era who relied on stiletto, rapier, or cudgel-wielding thugs to kill as many or more.

It was always like that around Borgia territory. Locusta, a lady of Gaul, gravitated to Imperial Rome where she plied her trade as purveyor of fine poisons to the selected nobility. For squeamish and inexperienced clients, she might even administer her poisons for them.

Locusta is credited with separating both Claudius and Germanicus from their families, and in the end, Galba had her killed when he became emperor but the Roman tradition of poisons was harder to kill off in the minds of other nations. After all, it was agreed that poison was a foreign habit, whether the use was political, economic or even medical.

In 2697 BC, a Chinese scholar named Huang Ti claimed that "…the treatment with poison medicines comes from the West" but in China's far west, in the world of classical Greece and Rome, the Persians

were seen as the most fearful poisoners. Around the Mediterranean poisons were an Eastern habit that came from anywhere but here…

Primitive societies and until recently even many advanced societies liked to blame deaths, especially sudden deaths, on the actions of a poisoner. It was a step up from blaming witches and sorcerers, but only a small one.

Travellers assumed that all "natives", being both foreign, cowardly and savage, used poison arrows. In an unhygienic era, no doubt many wounds turned septic, confirming their fears. Richard the Lionheart died of septicaemia from an arrow wound, and many arrow-free deaths in Tudor times were also caused by the poisons of bacteria in a wound, a pimple, an insect bite or an abscess.

Anybody who has had septicaemia can tell you that even today when we know it will be stopped by antibiotics, it is terrifying, and I imagine it was as terrifying to see it running through to its fatal conclusion at any time before the 1940s. No reasonable judge could have concluded that this death was anything other than poisoning.

In England, people who had seen death by natural food or blood poisoning, and who had heard how Renaissance Rome emulated Nero's Rome, blithely assumed these caddish foreigners would use their knavish tricks against the flower of English chivalry.

To be fair, some of the foreign tales may have come from gossip and the spite of enemies. Lucrezia Borgia's court was a civilised place, home to writers like Ariosto, and artists like Titian. All the Borgias were said to be murderers, but was this justified? We may never know but we know Henry VIII took poisoning seriously — or appeared to do so.

…this yere was a coke boylyd in a cauderne in Smythfeld for he wolde a powsynd the byshoppe of Rochester Fycher with dyvers of hys servanttes, and he was lockyd in a chayne and pullyd up and downe with a gybbyt at dyvers tymes tyll he was dede.
— Chronicle of the Grey friars of London, 1532.

John Fisher, the bishop of Rochester, was a strong defender of Catherine of Aragon so Anne Boleyn and Henry VIII might well have wanted him dead: Henry certainly had him executed in 1535, after Roose's 1531 attempt was bungled. The attempt has curious parallels in the successful assassination of Kim Jong Un's half-brother in early 2017, where the assassins claimed to have thought their actions were part of a joke.

Richard Roose claimed he was the patsy who was persuaded by an unknown person to place "laxatives" in the bishop's food, but the compound was in fact a poison. Roose placed this poison in the common pot but the bishop wasn't hungry, so the rest of the household ate the food and two died, while the rest were said to be never the same.

The king arranged for Roose to be condemned by attainder without a trial, but while it was almost seven weeks before he was executed by a new method, boiling

alive, Roose never said who provided the poison. The gossips said he was threatened with a dire fate for his family if he spoke out, and the suspicion was that the king wanted Roose silenced.

After the Reformation, there was serious bloodletting during the reigns of Henry VIII and Queen Mary. Two main things were feared: the Catholics (especially those in Spain and France) and poisons. Any suspected combination of poisons and Catholicism was even more frightening.

The Cardinal of Lorraine, uncle of Mary Queen of Scots, died in France, allegedly after handling some gold coins smeared with poison. His death was probably caused by pleurisy, but poison was more exciting, gold made it better, and there was money in poison tales.

The rich paid out for antidotes like *glossopetrae* which came from the island of Malta. Pliny said these had fallen from the sky during lunar eclipses but others called them the tongues of serpents turned to stone by Saint Paul when he was shipwrecked on Malta in AD 59, and *glossopetra* means tongue stone.

Even into the 1600s, there was a thriving trade in tongue stones which were sold as antidotes for poison. Dip one in a glass of poisoned wine, buyers were told, and the poison will be detoxified. Rich buyers swallowed this and paid well for a tongue stone amulet that could be dunked in any suspect glass of wine. They may not have worked very well, since they were fossilised shark teeth.

An inventory of the possessions of Mary Queen of Scots in 1586 showed that she owned a little silver bottle containing "a stone medicinable against poison", probably a bezoar (or "stone", meaning a stony calculus from an animal's stomach). Bezoar stones were of absolutely no use at all in warding off the effects of poison but their popularity tells us the fear of poison was there…

So in English minds at least, there was good reason for Elizabeth's court to fear poison and they firmly believed there had been several Spanish plots (or plot attempts) including one case where an opium-based poison was to be smeared on the queen's saddle pommel.

Paul Hentzner saw the poison fears in Elizabeth's court. This German lawyer was the tutor of a Silesian nobleman who visited England in 1599 and Hentzner later described how the Queen's food was served...

… when they had waited there a little while, the yeomen of the guards entered, bareheaded, clothed in scarlet, with a golden rose upon their backs, bringing in at each turn a course of twenty-four dishes, served in plate, most of it gilt; these dishes were received by a gentleman in the same order they were brought, and placed upon the table, while the lady taster gave to each of the guard a mouthful to eat of the particular dish he had brought, for fear of any poison.

If Good Queen Bess had died of blood poisoning, a number of those at court would have been tortured and executed for their role in an alleged Poison Plot. Foreigners like Hentzner and his pupil would probably have been swept up with the other usual suspects.

Mind you, Queen Bess's court ladies probably had their own supply of poisons, in the make-up of the day. The eyes would be outlined with kohl (powdered antimony sulfide), and the eyes treated with atropine- containing belladonna:

BELLADONNA, n. In Italian a beautiful lady; in English a deadly poison. A striking example of the essential identity of the two tongues.
— Ambrose Bierce, The Devil's Dictionary, 1906.

If you look at Tudor portraits, they are equally toxic. The pigments were all mineral, for the good reason that vegetable dyes fade, so artists used orpiment (arsenic sulfide), vermilion (mercuric sulfide), red lead (lead oxide), ceruse (lead carbonate), lead-tin yellow and azurite (basic copper carbonate). There were no shops, so artists had to grind their own pigments, which were mostly toxic. An artist's life may have been merry, but it was probably brief.

The printing press came in just before Henry VII took the throne, and that would have protected educated people from poison, because most of the colour in the books of pre-press times involved toxic minerals. Don't lick your finger before turning the page…

Back to the make-up, the red colours in the ladies' cheeks were mainly vermilion, and a few dubious sources say their lips were painted with madder, cochineal *and* vermilion, but I doubt the vermilion. Still, skin blemishes were treated with ceruse, and litharge of gold (lead oxide). The fashionable pale and interesting skin of the Elizabeth's court came from a mixture of ceruse and vinegar, which meant some soluble lead acetate was about — and I know something of that compound, as I will explain after a quick look at the medicines of the time, as seen by somebody who knew, about 1400, about food poisoning:

Arsenyk, sal armonyak,
and brymstoon;
And herbes koude I telle
eek many oon…
— Geoffrey Chaucer, 'The Canon's Yeoman's Tale', The Canterbury Tales.

The alchemist's bag of tricks was chock-full of poisons, and the Canon's Yeoman lists many poisonous items. Orpiment, quicksilver, realgar (another arsenic sulfide) and "green of brass" (verdigris) were all on his list, and these were likely to be used in medicine, on the general principle that anything related to making gold has to be good. Medicine was no science, then.

The main poisons in the medical bag of tricks were toxic herbs like aconite, belladonna and colocynth. Remedies used against poisons were often themselves poisonous. John Gerard's 1597 *Herball* recommends the juice of "Henbane of Peru" (tobacco) as an antidote. Some of the antidotes, being poisonous, may have provoked vomiting, and saved the victims from milder ingested poisons.

Now back to lead acetate: I excited the suspicions of a pharmacist when, as a 12-year-old, I tried to buy lead acetate under the common name "sugar of lead", in order to test a recipe for water-proofing a tent. I showed him the recipe and he sold me the desired compound. It didn't work on the tent, but I got curious about the chemical in question, and so an interest grew…

According to the surviving enemies of Pope Alexander VI, the father of Lucrezia Borgia, Alexander himself died from lead acetate when he drank wine from the wrong bottle, laced with his son Cesare's "secret" white powder, while Cesare was trying to poison Cardinal Corneto who drank the safe wine. Cesare also drank the poisoned wine and became ill.

The Borgias' suffering may simply have been malaria, but poison is more exciting. There are only a few poisons that can remain unnoticed in wine, but lead acetate would certainly be among them, making it likely that this was what they used.

Perhaps this is the origin of the old chemists' saying — "he who acetates is lost". Then again, like so much of the story of poisons, somebody may just have made that up.

PETER MACINNIS

More reading

Leonardo Fioravanti, *A Short Discours* (trans. John Hester), 1580, https://books.google.com.au/books?id=hf81AQAAMAAJ

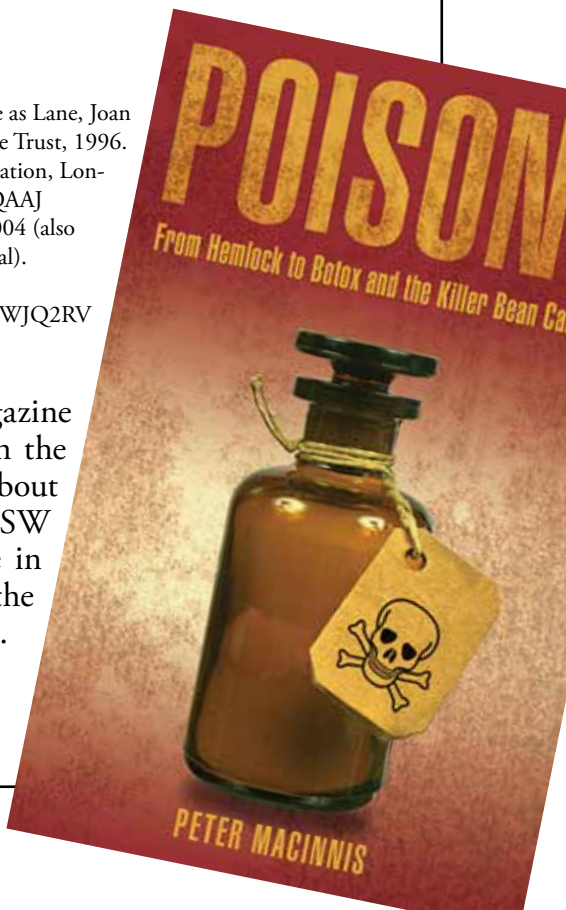
John Gerard, *The Herball or General Historie of Plantes*, 1597. https://books.google.com.au/books?id=pgZfAAAAcAAJ

John Hall, *Select Observations on English Bodies*, 1657 (published posthumously). Available as Lane, Joan (ed.), *John Hall and His Patients*. Stratford-upon-Avon: The Shakespeare Birthplace Trust, 1996.

Paul Hentzner, *Travels in England during the reign of Queen Elizabeth*, 1599. English translation, London: Edward Jeffery, 1797, https://books.google.com.au/books?id=HE0HAAAAQAAJ

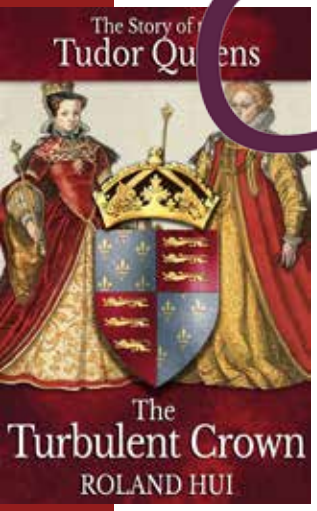
Peter Macinnis, *The Killer Bean of Calabar and Other Stories*. Sydney, Allen and Unwin, 2004 (also *Poisons*, New York: Arcade Books, 2005: a dumbed-down palimpsest of the original).

Peter Macinnis, *Not Your Usual Treatments: how medicine got better*, Kindle e-book. https://www.amazon.com/Not-Your-Usual-Treatments-medicine-ebook/dp/B06XWJQ2RV



About Peter Macinnis

Peter Macinnis lives in Australia. He writes books, magazine articles and occasional radio talks, most of which turn up on the ABC radio program, *Ockham's Razor*. He usually writes about science, or history or both. He was shortlisted for the NSW Premier's History Awards, and Young People's History Prize in 2007. Once a bureaucrat, often a teacher, he now holds all of the papers needed to prove that he is retired, but he refuses to stop.



Charlie on Books

THE TURBULENT CROWN

by Roland Hui

Over the years, history books have often separated the queens of England into two categories, regnant and consort. However, sometimes we need to evaluate both types of queens in one period because only then can we see the similarities and overlaps between the two roles and how the public reacted to both forms of female authority. Roland Hui manages that in *The Turbulent* Crown, a compelling account of the queens regnant and consort from Elizabeth of York to Elizabeth I.

Despite the book starting with Henry VII's queen, Hui briefly covers the events of the Wars of the Roses first. He does not dwell too much on this, which has often been a problem for historians, but gives enough detail for the reader to understand Elizabeth of York's story. He also starts with Richard II, as historians are slowly starting to acknowledge that the Wars truly started with his deposition.

I am glad that Hui mentions Queen Matilda in relation to Henry VIII's doubts about Princess Mary being his successor. A female had not been able to rule before and anarchy had ensued in the 12th century because of this:

> *'Unlike France for example, which followed the Salic Law disbarring of a Queen Regnant, although such an event had yet to occur. The closest the country came to having a female monarch was the twelfth-century Empress Maud (or Matilda), the daughter of Henry I... Maud might have worn the crown if not for her countrymen's prejudice against a female ruler, and the opposition of her cousin Stephen.'*

However, this was problematic as this had been different to Katherine of Aragon's experience, where her mother had ruled in her own right. Hui shows that Henry was slowly resigning himself to this, but changed his mind once he was convinced his marriage was unlawful, sometime after the birth of Henry Fitzroy.

There are several interesting facts in this book that are often not mentioned elsewhere, yet are well-referenced and supported by Hui. For example, he says that Henry had not deserted Anne Boleyn despite her giving birth to a daughter, and that, in fact, he was even more loving. He would *'rather beg from door to door, he was heard to say, than to forsake her'*. He also tells us of a particularly revealing comment about her after her death by Cromwell:

> *'Anne Boleyn's grave in the Tower of London bore no epitaph, but perhaps the most fitting tribute came from Thomas Cromwell. Shortly after her death, the secretary, in conversation with the Imperial ambassador, could not help but commend the late Queen, praising Anne 'beyond measure' for her 'sense, wit, and courage.'*

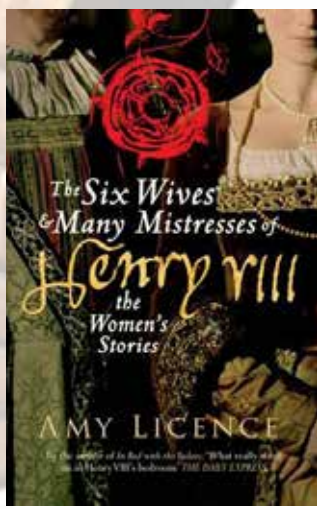
The Turbulent Crown is very readable, despite it being non-fiction it reads almost like a novel, and yet it is still very well researched. It is a great read and even has some information that isn't often mentioned in other books on the subject. I would recommend this book to anyone wanting to learn about the Tudor queens, both those new to the subject and those who have some background knowledge.

THE SIX WIVES AND MANY MISTRESESS OF HENRY VIII

by Amy Licence

Amy Licence has written many books on the royal family, with a specific focus on royal women in general, and so, naturally, her next step was to write on the women in Henry VIII's life. Instead of following others and focusing specifically on his wives, she has written one on both his wives and mistresses. The book has separate sections on each of the queens, making it easy to navigate, as well as a section on his mistresses while married to Katherine of Aragon, although Bessie Blount and Mary Boleyn are given their own individual sections due to how well-known they are. In a recent talk, Amy Licence stated that they were the only mistresses we could be a hundred percent certain about.

Licence provides good accounts on each of the wives, something that can be hard to do when you only have 400 pages to play with. She includes things like a good account of Catherine's household as well, including the number of ladies (160), palaces she owned etc. This makes the book a very useful resource as a combined account on each of the wives individually, as well as their interaction with his mistresses. For Anne Boleyn, she addresses the vital question as to whether Henry's advances were unwanted, which is most likely and in modern terms would mean sexual harassment.



The author also talks about possible royal bastards during the years he was waiting for his divorce from Katherine of Aragon, a subject that many books on the wives and mistresses skip, choosing just to focus on Anne herself:

> *'If we reject the premise that Henry was chaste for seven years, then he had to be sleeping with someone. Given his romantic devotion to Anne and his intention to make her his wife, it is likely that he did exactly what many noblemen of his day did and sought physical relationships on a one-off basis with women of the lower classes. It is likely that he would not have wanted Anne to be aware of this, so such encounters would have taken place either while they were apart, on occasions when she was at Hever, or when he was a guest in the houses of courtiers or friends.'*

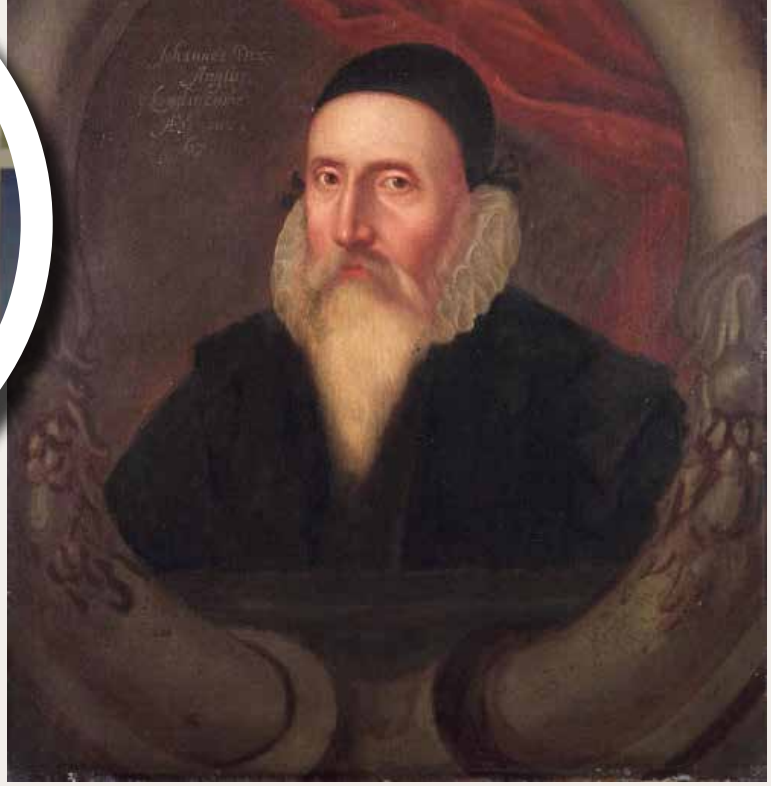
Most imply that Henry was chaste for those years, which is an unlikely prospect but may have been part of the romantic image the public has of Henry and Anne as a couple.

Licence goes with the theory that Anne's fall was all down to Henry. However, she takes it a step further. She states that his favourites were playthings and once he got tired/they didn't give him what he wanted, he had to make them suffer. It doesn't sound as convincing, as it seems Henry was pretty removed from Anne's fall and did not take a personal role in it, leaving it down to Cromwell, however some elements ring true, such as the treatment of other favourites:

> *'His treatment of Catherine, Wolsey, More and Cromwell, show a similar behavioural pattern. Once-beloved favourites were rejected suddenly, almost overnight, being sent away from court with little warning, never to be seen again. Once he had made up his mind, he never went back.'*

This is a valuable addition to the long list of books on Henry VIII's wives, yet it has an extra edge over them in that it combines his wives and his mistresses into one handy guide. As always, Licence has an engaging style that makes the book a delight to read, without forsaking her well-known dedication to accuracy. I would recommend this book to anyone who enjoyed her previous books, those new to the subject or just those wanting a good read.

CHARLIE FENTON



Dr John Dee Queen Elizabeth's Magician

With the 20th anniversary of the publication of J. K. Rowling's *Harry Potter and the Philosopher's Stone* [or *Harry Potter and the Sorcerer's Stone* in the US] fresh in our minds, I thought an article about Tudor attitudes to magic might be timely. The sixteenth century was a period when people were interested in such matters as alchemy, astrology and witchcraft. Even monarchs were concerned about foretelling the future, warding off evil and – as many then believed – the possibility of turning base metals into gold, using the Philosopher's Stone to replenish the royal treasury. In 1597, Queen Elizabeth's cousin, James VI, King of Scots, wrote a book on witchcraft called *Demonology*, warning his subjects of the dangers, how to recognise witches as the Devil's associates and defend against their wicked ways. James was convinced there was a conspiracy of witchcraft against him but his book includes all kinds of other horrors too, from bad fairies to were-wolves.

A Welshman, John Dee [1527-1609], also had no doubts about the existence of magical powers and wanted to put them to good use. He was a keen scholar at Cambridge, claiming he studied for eighteen hours a day, receiving his Masters Degree when he was twenty-one. He didn't get his doctorate in medicine until 1585 from the University of Prague but seems to have given himself the title 'Dr' long before that. He was a brilliant mathematician and collected a huge library of thousands of manuscripts and books at a time when a dozen volumes were considered a notable collection.

Dr Dee first came to the notice of royalty in 1551 when Sir William Cecil recommended him to King Edward VI who, upon receiving two astronomical texts that Dee had written and dedicated to the young monarch, awarded him a sizeable annual pension of 100 crowns. But after Edward's death two years later, his Catholic half-sister, Queen Mary Tudor, had no use for Dee. In fact, in 1555, Mary had Dee arrested. He was charged with having drawn up the horoscopes of the queen, her husband Philip, King of Spain, and Princess Elizabeth, Mary's heir, in order to foretell their futures. This was a treasonous activity: attempting to discover when a monarch would die. He was also accused of

'conspiring by enchantments to destroy Queen Mary'. Whether he calculated her date of death or not, it was probably fortunate that Mary died before any serious actions were taken against him, although he was questioned closely by the Bishop of London concerning his religious beliefs. These were dangerous times and a man questioned with Dr Dee was not so lucky and burned at the stake.

Perhaps in casting Princess Elizabeth's horoscope Dee had foreseen a long reign and better success for himself. Elizabeth's reign began very well for Dee when Robert Dudley, the queen's favourite, summoned him to court, to study the star charts and determine the most propitious date for the queen's coronation. She promised him an even better pension saying 'Where my brother [Edward VI] hath given him a crown [5 shillings] I will give him a noble [6 shillings and 8 pence]' although Dee never received any regular payments from her, just an occasional handout and the title of 'Queen's Magician'.

By 1564, Dee had a large house at Mortlake in Surrey, a wife and an ever-expanding library. He earned his living as a tutor of mathematics and by writing books on mathematics and navigation. He was an expert on navigation without ever having captained a ship but he was closely involved in the search for new sea routes to India and China via the fabled North-East passage to the north of Russia or, failing that, the North-West passage through northern Canada. With the increasing English interest in colonising North America, the question arose of Elizabeth's claims on that continent and Dee was required to draw up the documents to support England's rights to the new lands there. He investigated the matter all the way back to King Arthur's day, drawing a map to show that Newfoundland and other parts of the eastern coast of America had been colonised by King Arthur's people so, obviously, Elizabeth had a rightful claim to sovereignty there as a descendant of Arthur. No doubt the queen was delighted to realise her prerogative and Dee was honoured with two audiences with her, as he recorded in his diary.

In the 1580s, Dee travelled in Europe, taking his wife and family and an 'associate' Edward Kelley and his wife. Dee was always interested in foretelling the future, whether by horoscopes, crystal balls or consulting the spirit world but, apart from astrology, he couldn't do these things himself but Kelley claimed he could. For years, Dee depended on Kelley 'conjuring angels' and performing all kinds of rituals according to angelic instructions. Kelley even told Dee that the angels required that they should 'swap' wives. He also said that the angels predicted that their secret experiments in alchemy were on the verge of producing the Philosopher's Stone and, since they were in the lands of the Holy Roman Emperor, Rudolf II, at the time, Kelley persuaded Dee to inform the emperor they would shortly be able to produce as much gold as he wanted. Rudolf was intrigued and equipped a laboratory where Dee and Kelley could work. Kelley was soon, supposedly, turning lengths of wire into gold rings, claiming that one was worth £4,000 but since it was so easy to do, he gave the ring away to a lowly servant – so he said. Rudolf saw no reason to employ Dee when Kelley performed the magic alone so Dee returned to England, leaving Kelley to fill the emperor's coffers with gold.

Spies had been reporting the goings-on at Rudolf's court to Sir William Cecil who was keen to have Kelley perform his tricks for Queen Elizabeth's benefit. But then Kelley was arrested, accused of trying to poison the emperor. He was soon released and it seems likely that Rudolf had grown tired of supporting the man when no gold was ever forthcoming and Kelley faded from the records.

Dr Dee was unable to make use of Kelley's discoveries and could no longer consult the angels without him. His library had been ransacked while he was abroad and he now lived in poverty. His wife was dead and he had to sell his fine house in Mortlake. He lived on into the reign of the queen's successor, King James, author of *Demonology.* Dee claimed to be a 'sworn servant' of the new king but must have been concerned as to James's opinions on his past activities. Not surprisingly, the Queen's Magician kept a low profile and died a poor man, even his date of death being uncertain but probably in the spring of 1609.

Toni Mount

Medieval COURSES

Toni Mount's
THE ROLES OF MEDIEVAL AND TUDOR WOMEN

73

ON ALMOND MILK

When I opened my very first medieval cookbook, which just happened to be *The Closet of the Eminently Learned Sir Kenelm Digby, KT Opened*[1], I was confronted by an ingredient called almond milk (or alymond mylk). Being the utter newbie that I was back then, I had no idea what it was, or how it was used. But now that I've been a "Kitchen Autocrat" for close to a quarter of a century, I have a somewhat better idea of what it is.

Almond milk isn't a new food; in fact, it is something of a dietary staple that was well known in both the Islamic world and in Christendom.

In Persian cuisine, almond milk was used to create a rather special dessert reserved for Ramadan called *harireh badam*.[2] *Harireh badam*, also known by the slightly unappetizing name of almond gruel, is made by blending rice flour and almond milk, with sugar and water and was used to nourish and sustain the faithful during their Fast.[3]

In the Christian world, almond milk had the advantage of being suitable for consumption during Lenten days, when all dairy and meat products would otherwise be prohibited. The Catholic and English churches had very strict rules and ideas about which days of the week a person could actually eat 'flesh'. The term 'flesh' referred to any item of food that came from a warm-blooded animal. Amongst the list of prohibited items were all meats, eggs, milk and dairy products. As a result, the average observant medieval person spent the better portion of their lives eating a vast quantity of fish, and shellfish. It would have been a sad thing indeed to have an allergy to fish or shellfish! Incidentally, owing to the high fat content, almonds could also be made into almond butter (think of it as the medieval forebear of peanut butter), or almond cheese by the addition of a little whey (achieved by adding something like nettle-based rennet to the left over almond meal pulp and a small amount of freshly made, warm almond milk and allowing it to stand overnight).

Almond milk also had the advantage of being a milk (albeit of plant based origins) that could be kept relatively fresh in the average medieval kitchen. Cow's, goat's or sheep's milk could not be stored for long periods of time without running the risk of souring or unintentionally becoming cheese or yoghurt. Even buying milk each day at the local market provided no assurance that the milk was actually fresh, or hadn't been watered down by an unethical dairymaid.

However, making almond milk by hand is a rather arduous procedure and that led to it being quite expensive and thus only something that relatively well-off households could afford to make in bulk. So how did the average medieval or Tudor housewife go about making almond milk?

There are a number of basic recipes for almond milk, but almost all of them go something like this: *"Take peeled almonds, crush very well in a mortar, steep in water boiled and cooled to lukewarm, strain through cheesecloth and boil your almond milk on a few coals for an instant or two".*[4]

---

1 Digby, K., *The Closet of the Eminently Learned Sir Kenelm Digby, KT, Opened*, London, 1669

2 Karizaki, V. M., *Ethnic and Traditional Iranian Rice-based Foods*, in *Journal of Ethnic Foods*, Vol 3(2016), p133.

3 Karizaki, ibid, pg 129

4 Prescott, J., *Le Viandier de Taillevent,* http://www.telusplanet.net/public/prescotj/data/viandier/viandier459.html#viandier *(*recipe 192)

This recipe originates from *Le Viandier de Taillevent* and refers specifically to the making of *Lenten Slices* (Recipe 192). Like almost all medieval recipes, I would love to know what length of time is meant by 'an instant or two"; medieval cooking times are the very bane of the modern medievalist!

Traditionally, the good medieval housewife would crush almond kernels in a mortar and pestle to a fine meal. If she got a little too carried away, almond butter would be the result. At this point, the flour would be put through a silk or fine horsehair sieve to remove the coarser pieces, and to remove the outer membrane of unblanched almonds. The standard ratio of almond meal to water as used by modern medievalists is 2:1; so for every two cups of lukewarm boiled water, add one cup of almond meal, and allow it to steep for between 10 to 15 minutes. The resulting slurry is then put through a cheesecloth or piece of fine muslin and allowed to drain. Then comes the "boil your almond milk on a few coals for an instant or two". Essentially, the longer you heat it for, the thicker (and creamier) it becomes. This is why freshly made almond milk was frequently added to an otherwise thin vegetable soup or pottage in order to thicken it up as it cooked. Incidentally, some recipes also called for honey, salt and white wine to be added to the almond meal. This would have resulted in a sweeter milk (in keeping with the very sweet palate our medieval forebears).

So now that you've made your first batch of almond milk, how do you to use it? Firstly, I wouldn't recommend drinking it, as it is grittier than modern mass-produced variety. Try using it in one of the recipes shown here, all of which are favourites of mine:

ALMOND PUDDING

"Almond Pudding (To make a Leach of Almonds)[5]
- 15th Century English.
Take halfe a pound of sweet Almonds, and beat them in a mortar; then strain them with a pint of sweet milke from the cow; then put to it one graine of musk, 2 spoonfuls of Rose-water, two ounces of fine sugar, the weight of 3 whole shillings of isinglass that is very white, and so boyle them; and let all run thorow a strainer: then may you slice the same, and so serve it."

5 Plat, H., *Delights for Ladies to Adorn Their Persons, Tables, Closets, and Distillatories, with Beauties, Banquets, Perfumes, and Waters*, London, 1644

And here is the modern medievalist redaction:

1 Cup almond milk
1 ½ tbsp caster sugar
¼ Cup double cream
½ tbsp rose water or orange water
½ tbsp unflavoured gelatin

Heat almond milk over a low heat and add in the cream. When the liquid reaches a gentle simmer, add the caster sugar and rose or orange water. When the mixture again reaches a gentle simmer, whisk in the gelatin. When thoroughly combined, pour into dessert glasses and refrigerate for roughly 4 hours. The pudding will be thin in comparison to the consistency of a 'modern' pudding. Sprinkle with a little extra sugar, crystallized violets or candied rose petals.

Mulled Bastard[6] – 16th Century English

No, I'm not being vulgar, just humorous. *Mulled Bastard* simply refers to a mulled wine, which has an almond milk base. You could equally call it *Mulled Maulmsie* (aka Malmsey), but I personally think Mulled Bastard sounds just that bit more interesting!!!

"Take blanched Almonds and bray them smal, then with faire water draw them through a strainer, and make them not too thin nor too thick, and then put them into a pot with a quarter of a pound of sugar and let them boile over the fire, and when they boyle take them from the fire, then take a manchet loaf and cut it in thin peeces, steep it in a pinte of White wine, as Bastard, Tire, or Maulmsie, then cast it into Almond Milk and dresse it in fair dishes, and so serve it foorth."

6 *A Book of Cookrye - Very Necessary For All Such As Delight Therin*, gathered by "A. W." London, 1591

Frumente[7] - Early Norman to late Tudor

Frumente is an ancient dish, and as I think I might have mentioned is one of my all time favourites. Typically, it was served during Twelfth Night Feasts (early January) to symbolise the imminent return of Spring. However it can be a little heavy in Southern Hemisphere Summers, so it is often served during modern medievalist mid-Winter feasts.

"Tak clene whete & braye yt wel in a morter tyl the holes gon of; seethe it til it breste in water. Nym it up & lat it cole. Tak good & swete mylk of almand & tempere it therwith. Nym yelkes of eyren rawe & saffroun & cast therto; salt it: lat it naught boyle after the etren ben cast therinne. Messe it forth."

And here is the modern medievalist redaction:

Cracked bulgur wheat
Ale
1-2 handfuls of currants
A generous pinch of cinnamon and nutmeg, saffron and ginger
Almond milk sweetened with either honey or white wine
An egg
A jug of water to top up with during cooking

Add the cracked wheat, ale, almond milk and spices to a heavy-based pot, and set the pot on the stove for a few hours to cook. Stir occasionally, and add more water to prevent the grains from catching. When the wheat is soft, add the currants and an egg as it will add extra richness. Remove from the heat and spoon into individual serving bowls and serve hot. You may choose to add in a little full-fat double cream if you want to create a devilishly unctuous dish, one that the Pope would most assuredly not approve of.

7 C. Hieatt, S. Butler Curye on Inglysch: English Culinary Manuscripts of the Fourteenth Century, London, 1985

RIOGHNACH O'GERAGHTY

THE TUDOR SOCIETY

MEMBERS' BULLETIN

A HAPPY 2018 to all our members!

What a year 2017 was, with the introduction of our paper quarterly journals and a complete re-launch of what we do. 2018 promises to be just as action-packed ... who would have guessed that a love of 500 year old history would be so exciting?

We've been asked several times about back issues for the printed quarterly journal. This is something we're working on but it's taking rather a long time! We will let all members know when the shop is up-and-running.

Finally, we wanted to give a HUGE thank you to Jane Moulder for her amazing work over the years for this magazine. Jane has decided to step back for a while to focus on her other historical projects. We wish her every success with what she does, and will be badgering her to write more articles for Tudor Life when she can. THANK YOU JANE!

Please share the word about The Tudor Society

WE RELY ON YOUR ACTIVE MEMBERSHIP TO MAKE THE SOCIETY THE BEST IT CAN BE!

JANUARY'S ON THIS

1 January 1514
Death of **Louis XII** of France, less than three months after his marriage to **Mary Tudor**, the sister of **Henry VIII**.

2 January 1492
King Boabdil surrendered Granada to the forces of **Ferdinand II** of Aragon and **Isabella I** of Castile.

3 January 1540
Official reception of **Anne of Cleves** at Greenwich Palace.

4 January 1493
Christopher Columbus left the New World on return from his first voyage.

5 Janurary 1511
Baptism of **Henry, Duke of Cornwall**, son of **Henry VIII** and **Catherine of Aragon.**

10 January 1603
Probable date of death of **Arthur Dent**, religious writer and Church of England clergyman, from a fever.

11 January 1591
Birth of **Robert Devereux**, 3rd Earl of Essex, son of **Elizabeth I**'s favourite, **Robert Devereux.**

12 January 1510
Henry VIII jousted for the first time as King. The joust was a private one, and took place at Richmond Park.

Thomas Wyatt the Elder

16 January 1558
Death of **Thomas Alsop**, Chief Apothecary to Henry VIII. He was buried in St Mary Woolchurch.

17 January 1541
Sir **Thomas Wyatt the Elder**, courtier, diplomat and poet, was arrested and sent to the Tower of London after being accused of corresponding with **Cardinal Pole**, and referring to the prospect of **Henry VIII**'s death.

21 January 1542
Bill of Attainder passed against **Catherine Howard**, **Henry VIII**'s fifth wife.

22 January 1528
Henry VIII and **Francis I** declared war on **Charles V**, Holy Roman Emperor.

23 January 1570
Assassination of **James Stewart**, 1st Earl of Moray, illegitimate son of **James V**.

24 January 1536
The forty-four year-old King **Henry VIII** had a serious jousting accident at Greenwich Palace.

25 January 1533
According to **Thomas Cranmer**, **Henry VIII** married **Anne Boleyn**.

28 January 1547
Death of **Henry VIII** and accession of **Edward VI**.

29 January 1547
Edward Seymour and **Anthony Denny** informed the young **Edward VI** that his father, **Henry VIII**, had died the day before.

30 January 1554
Rebel **Thomas Wyatt** the Younger and his men besieged Cooling Castle, owned by George Brooke.

31 January 1547
Thomas Wriothesley announced the death of **Henry VIII** to Parliament.

Background image: The Adoration of the Magi by El Greco

DAY IN TUDOR HISTORY

6 January 1540
Henry VIII married **Anne of Cleves**, or Anna von Jülich-Kleve-Berg. The King was wearing "a gowne of ryche Tyssue [cloth of gold] lyned with Crymosyn".

7 January 1536
At two o'clock in the afternoon, **Catherine of Aragon** died at Kimbolton Castle. She had been ill for a few months.

8 January 1543
Burial of King **James V** of Scotland at Holyrood Abbey, Edinburgh.

9 January 1539
Executions of **Henry Pole**, 1st Baron Montagu, and **Henry Courtenay**, Marquis of Exeter, on Tower Hill.

13 January 1593
Death of Sir **Henry Neville**, Groom of **Henry VIII**'s Privy Chamber. He was buried at Waltham St Lawrence.

14 January 1515
Charles Brandon, Duke of Suffolk, was sent to France to bring back **Henry VIII**'s sister, **Mary Tudor**, Queen of France.

15 January 1535
Henry VIII declared himself head of the Church in England.


Queen Elizabeth I by Marcus Gheeraerts

18 January 1486
Twenty-nine year-old **Henry VII** married the twenty year-old **Elizabeth of York**.

19 January 1636
Death of **Marcus Gheeraerts,** painter, in London. He is known for his "Ditchley" portrait of Elizabeth I.

20 January 1569
Bible translator and Bishop of Exeter, **Miles Coverdale** died.

26 January 1533
Henry VIII appointed **Thomas Audley** as Lord Chancellor to replace Sir **Thomas More**, who had resigned the previous year. Audley had actually been carrying out the duties of Lord Chancellor since May 1532.

27 January 1541
The parsonage, lands and right to appoint clergy in Haverhill, Suffolk, were granted to **Anne of Cleves**. Her marriage to **Henry VIII** had been annulled in the previous July.

TUDOR FEAST DAYS

1 January - New Year's Day
1 January - Feast of the Circumcision of Christ
6 January - Epiphany
7 January - St Distaff's Day
13 January - Feast of the Conversion of St Paul

Tudor Life

NEXT MONTH IN YOUR REGULAR

Tudor Life

Royal Mothers-in-Law

LAUREN BROWNE
Elizabeth Boleyn

SUSAN ABERNATHY
Owen Tudor

CLAIRE RIDGWAY
Margaret Beaufort

DEBRA BAYANI
Mothers of the Tudor Dynasty

ROBERT STEADALL
Henry, Lord Darnley

+ MUCH MORE

We have an EXPERT VIDEO every month for FULL MEMBERS. Do you watch them?

REGULAR CONTRIBUTORS

Charlie Fenton
Conor Byrne
Emma Taylor
Kyra Kramer
Riognarch O'Geraghty
Lauren Browne
Roland Hui
Toni Mount
Debra Bayani

LAYOUT Tim Ridgway

VIDEOGRAPHER Tim Ridgway

MAGAZINE EDITOR

Gareth Russell
info@tudorsociety.com

CONTACT

info@tudorsociety.com
Calle Sargento Galera, 3
Lucar 04887
Almeria
Spain

ONLINE

www.TudorSociety.com

Copyright © 2018
All Rights Reserved

Tudor Life Magazine takes constant care to make sure that content is accurate on the date of publication. The views expressed in the articles reflect the author(s) opinions and are not necessarily are the views of the publisher and editor. The published material, adverts, editorials and all other content is published in a good faith. Tudor Life Magazine cannot guarantee, and accepts no liability for, any loss or damage of any kind, caused by this publication or errors herein, nor for the accuracy of claims made by any contributors. Photos are open source, unless specifically mentioned. All rights reserved. No part of this magazine can be partially, or in whole, reprinted or reproduced without written consent.