Tudor Life

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Chief Ministers to the Tudors

Wolsey's Lost Tomb

Lord Burghley

Thomas Cromwell: A Valuable Servant

Francis Walsingham

PLUS

Professional Musicians

AND MUCH MORE

Uncovering Horrid Tudor Pests

By Brigitte Webster

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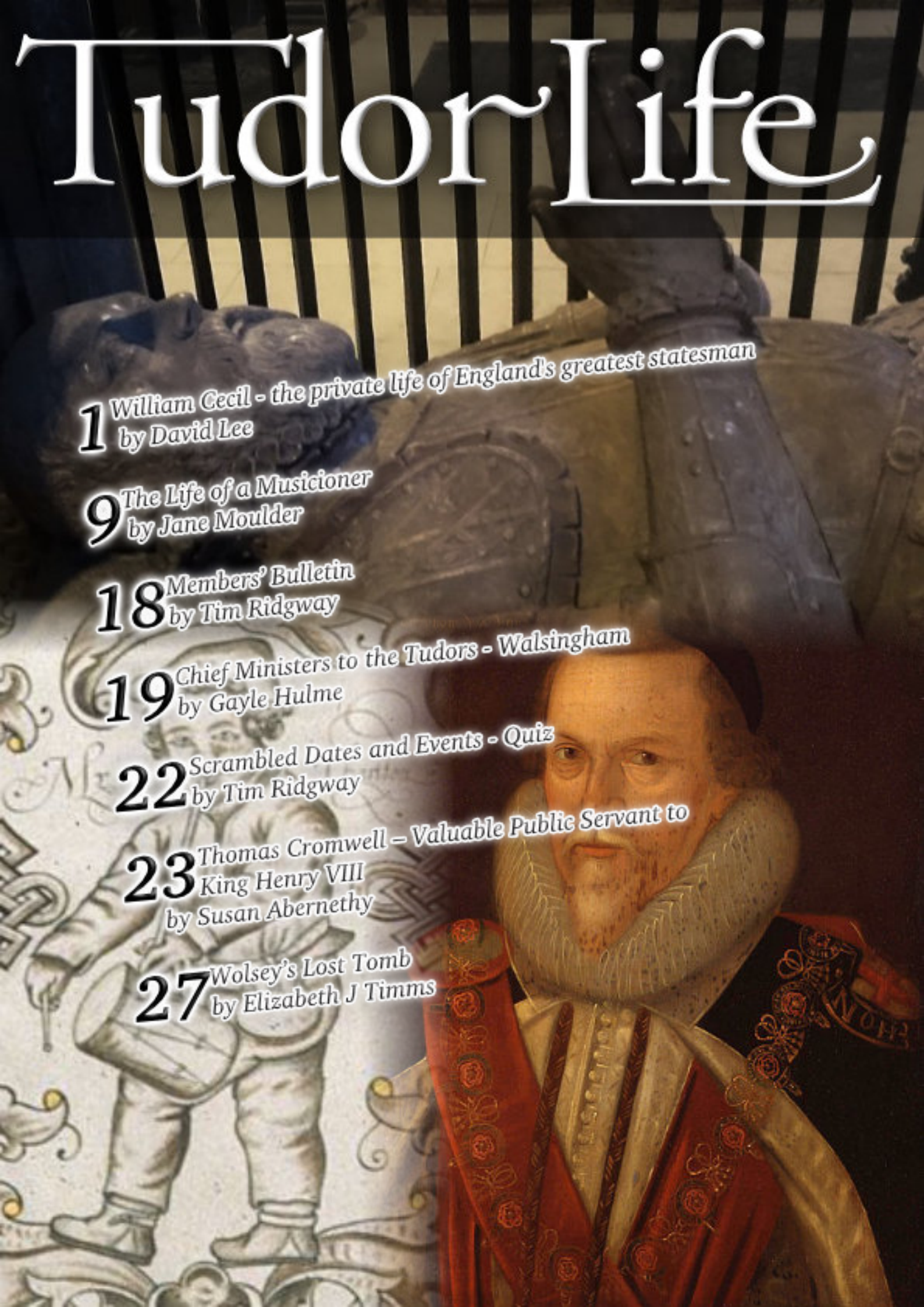
Chief ministers to the Tudors

As Henry VII's chief advisers found out to their peril in the weeks after his death, royal advisers were seldom a popular bunch in Tudor England, Wales, or Ireland. Lord Leonard Grey, for instance, was despised in Ireland for his brutality, yet everything he had done had been in consequence of King Henry VIII's orders, while bishops Stephen Gardiner and Edmund Bonner were blamed by Protestants for the repressions enacted in the reign of Queen Mary I. In this issue of Tudor Life, we look at some of the great, good, bad, and flawed men who advised the Tudor dynasty's monarchs.

GARETH RUSSELL
EDITOR

Tudor Life



APRIL

WILLIAM CECIL - HUSBAND, FATHER AND FAMILY MAN: THE PRIVATE LIFE OF ENGLAND'S GREATEST STATESMAN

by David Lee

William Cecil, Lord Burghley, was Secretary of State, Lord High Treasurer and chief advisor to Elizabeth I during what many would consider England's 'Golden Age'. William, who was born in 1520, was thirteen years Elizabeth's senior. His career spun the tumultuous reigns of four Tudor Monarchs. His hunger for knowledge began during the reign of Henry VIII. His rapid rise to prominence and influence came about under the de facto rule of Edward Seymour, the Lord Protector during the adolescent reign of Edward VI. William navigated and survived the stormy reign of Mary I, who became infamous for the burnings of hundreds of Protestants in her bid to return England to Catholicism. Finally, he again rose to power under the patronage of Elizabeth I – the Virgin Queen.

William is often recognised as the first modern statesman. A man of incomparable genius, loyalty and faith. His relationship with Elizabeth I has remained a topic of discussion for decades. Without William Cecil, Elizabeth I could never have navigated such a perilous journey to the throne, and indeed, may not have stayed on it if it were not for his shrewd nature, razor sharp intellect and vision for a strong, Protestant England as a true European power. He is known for guiding the queen during the darkest days of her long reign – whether it be her scandalous favouritism for Robert Dudley, Earl of Leicester, her refusal to

Portrait of William Cecil,
1st Baron Burghley

marry (to William's dismay), or her conflict with her Catholic cousin, Mary Stuart, Queen of Scots, whose execution brought on a war with Spain.

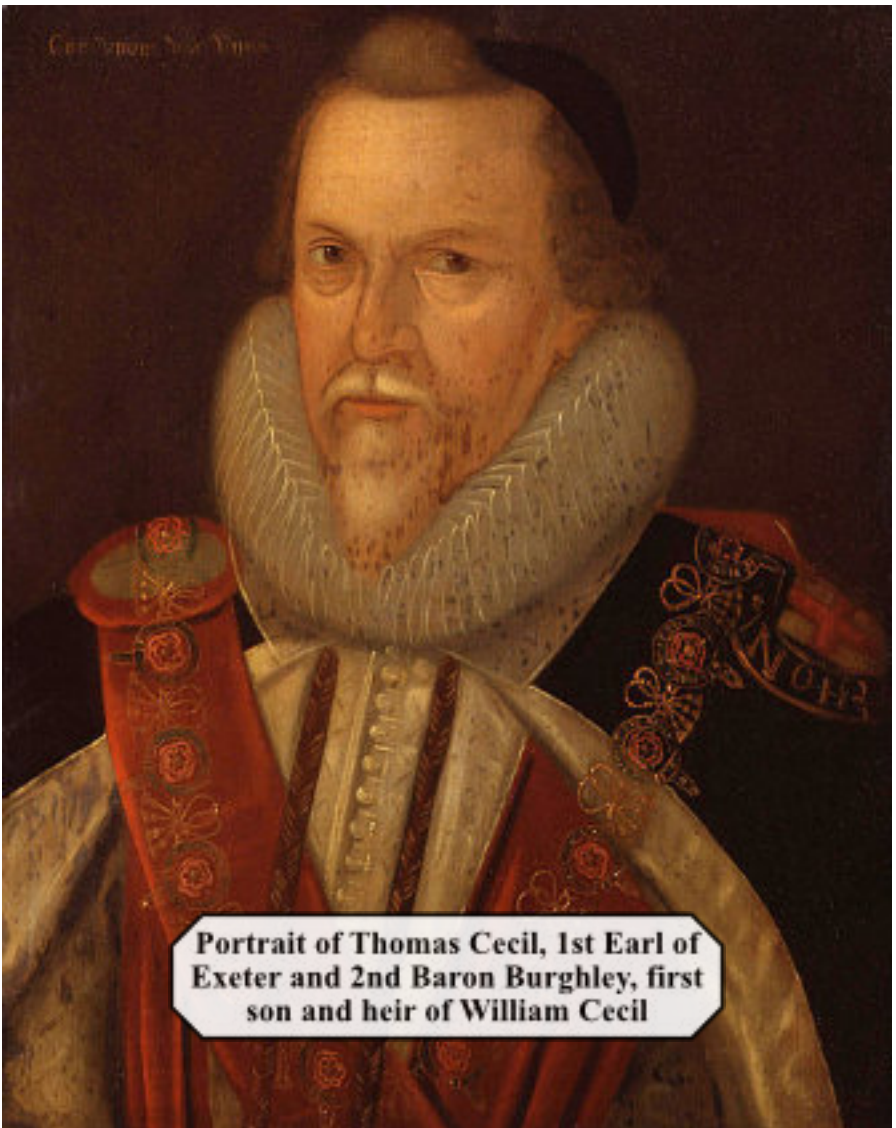
It is perhaps this major conflict of the Elizabethan period - the Spanish Armada, or rather, England's glorious victory over it, which we remember Lord Burghley for the most. Indeed, if it were not for William's diligence as an advisor, his web of informants in every corner of Europe, and his close network of friends, confidants and spies, Elizabeth may never have become 'Gloriana'. Yet we often forget that William Cecil was a real man, with a family, private life, and who suffered numerous hardships. Who was the great Lord Burghley really? What kind of man existed under the outward façade of the Tudor statesman? And what can William Cecil the man, husband, father and grandfather reveal to us about Lord Burghley, Elizabeth's Spirit, Alpha and Omega?

William Cecil's duty to the crown and loyalty to Elizabeth I knew no bounds. His political career and efforts to protect, persevere and promote the Elizabethan Protestant State dominated much of his life. Yet, he married twice, had several children, built extravagant homes and created a family legacy that Henry VIII may have found enviable. This part of William's life – his private life, has been discussed somewhat by a number of historians, but his political career continues to dominate much of the discussion of a much more complex and interesting individual. William's dedication to his family was not unprecedented as he himself had come from a stable, close-knit and warm family unit. He was particularly close to his paternal grandfather David Cecil, and his relationship with his mother Jane Heckington could easily be described as one of the most important of his life. The reality is that many details of William's private life and personal relationships are rarely remarked


Portrait of Mildred Cecil, second wife of William Cecil

upon, simply because they do not fit the typical narrative of him as a rather cold, studious and calculating statesman. Evidence suggesting that he was a much more emotional, caring and benevolent character does exist. One simply has to look for it.

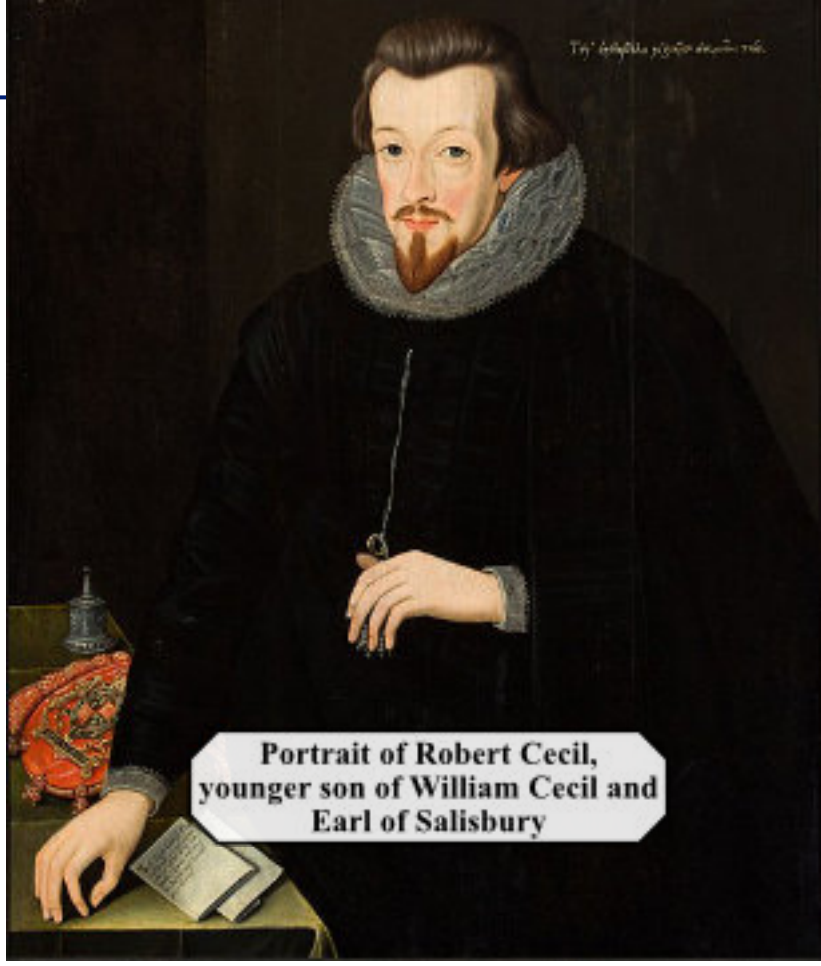
The fact that William Cecil was a methodical, cautious and shrewd politician makes his choice of first wife surprising. Mary Cheke was the sister of his friend and tutor John Cheke. It is likely that the couple came into contact while William was studying at Cambridge and that they formed a close friendship that soon blossomed into love. The pair were married in 1541, despite William's father's objections. That this was a love match is obvious due to the fact that Mary brought no real rank, wealth or grand connections. The marriage produced one son who they named Thomas, but sadly, Mary died not long after in 1543. We do not know for certain of William's reaction to Mary's death, whether he cried, or grieved. However, we can most certainly ascertain that he loved her, as his steadfast determination to marry her despite his family's disapproval suggests. This first marriage reveals more about William Cecil the man than any letter, diary entry or memorandum. Despite his sense of family duty and later reverence for the nobility, he evidently followed his own intuition and heart.



Portrait of Thomas Cecil, 1st Earl of Exeter and 2nd Baron Burghley, first son and heir of William Cecil

Thomas Cecil was at this point an infant, and unfortunately, we would be wrong to think that William found comfort in the heir that Mary provided him with. William's relationship with his son was not close, and the young boy grew up rather lonely and isolated from his father. He did not excel academically as his father wished. As he began to grow into a man, a rebellious streak formed which likely originated from his frustratingly complex relationship with his father and lonely

childhood. William would marry again in 1545, this time to Mildred Cooke. Mildred was a much grander catch than Mary Cheke, and had many connections that would have proven useful to William. She also brought a substantial dowry and the couple were able to set up home in London. This was not a marriage based on love, and it seems that William intended it to be one of practicality rather than romance. Despite this however, their marriage proved to be an incredibly happy one and they no doubt eventually fell in love. In fact, there are so few known letters written between them as they were rarely apart. When they married, Henry VIII was still king and the notion that Elizabeth Tudor would ever inherit the throne and make William her secretary was beyond the couple's imagining.



Portrait of Robert Cecil, younger son of William Cecil and Earl of Salisbury

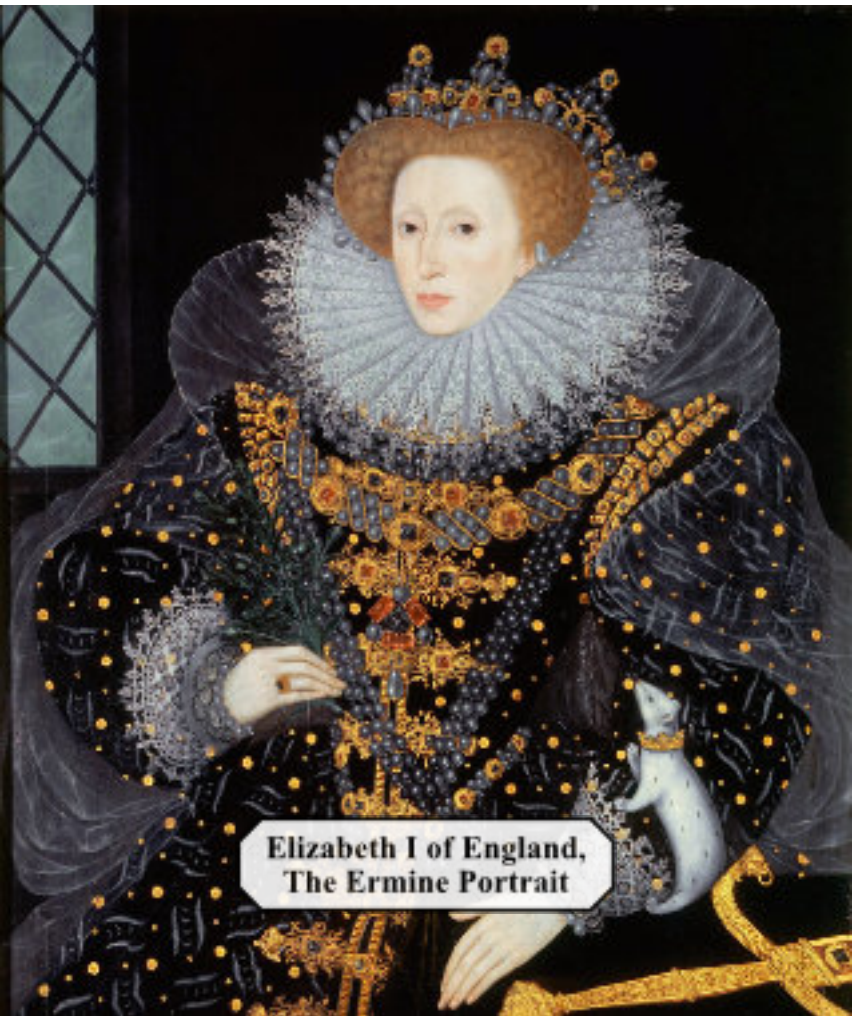
By the time Edward VI became king, his uncle Edward Seymour was busying himself running the kingdom as Lord Protector. William had by then made many connections and was on the rise. When he entered the Protector's household in 1549 – likely as a clerk or lowly secretary of some sort, the Cecil's were able to move into a new home at Wimbledon. In fact, they had already been able to acquire multiple properties including one at Cannon Row in Westminster.

William and Mildred would have several children including a baby girl named Frances who was born in 1556, but sadly died not long after. The couple also lost two sons both named William but had three surviving children – Anne, Robert, and Elizabeth. The latter was likely named for the queen. Mildred was not the warmest woman nor mother in the world. Though Thomas Cecil was later brought up in her household, he found no motherly figure to draw affection from when he likely needed it the most. Despite her severity, Mildred ran a great household, educated her daughters and provided William with the family to secure his own dynasty and legacy.

When Catholic Mary I came to the throne upon the death of her Protestant half-brother Edward

VI, and after the slight glitch where Lady Jane Grey was proclaimed queen – a scheme of which William Cecil was very much a part of and had evidently signed his name to, the Cecil's were in serious trouble. Mary knew that William was a man of great talents, considering his service to the Lord Protector and his replacement, the Duke of Northumberland. So, she decided to show mercy and spare his life, despite him agreeing to Edward VI's device and his staunch Protestantism. She offered him a position to adviser her, but he declined it. Instead of going into exile like many of England's Protestant elite, the Cecil's retired to their country residence. It is this period of William's life that is often overlooked by historians who tend to concentrate on his political beginnings. In fact, the time that the Cecil family took away from court during the Marian reign proved fruitful. Their daughter Anne was born in 1556. During this time, William also formed perhaps his most important relationship outside of his family, as he began to conduct some business on the young Princess Elizabeth's estates. It is believed that this is when the pair formed a bond that would last a lifetime but it is possible that they met even before Mary's accession.

By the time Elizabeth was in the fifth year of her reign, William had risen higher than he ever could have previously expected and became her principal secretary. He also became a father again when Mildred gave birth to Robert Cecil in 1563 and lastly Elizabeth Cecil the following year. The Cecil children born during Elizabeth's reign knew nothing but privilege. Their father was arguably the most powerful man in the kingdom and one of the queen's closest advisors. They were well educated, wanted and needed for nothing, and yet, as they were Cecils, much was expected of them. There is no doubt that William Cecil loved all of his children and attempted to do his best for all of them. However, his domineering



Elizabeth I of England, The Ermine Portrait

presence and controlling nature must have been daunting. When Thomas Cecil finally came of age in the 1560s and was sent to Paris to finish his education, he lost any sense of control. He took a mistress and paid no attention to his studies or making important connections. He greatly disappointed his father, and though he eventually married well, became a great solider and an average politician, William and his eldest son were never extremely close.

Anne Cecil also turned out to be a great disappointment to her father. William's young ward, Edward de Vere, the Earl of Oxford, caught Anne's eye, and it seems that she caught his. To William's surprise, the pair wished to marry and he eventually gave his consent, although it seems that he would have preferred his daughter to wait. The marriage proved fruitful but soon turned sour. Oxford even hinted that Anne had committed adultery and that their first born was not his child. The pair lived apart for many years, and Anne moved in with her parents who begrudgingly supported her to avoid a public scandal. In the end, the couple partially reconciled, but the damage was done and Anne died suddenly while at court in 1588. Her three daughters remained in the Cecil household and were loved and nurtured until they themselves married. Elizabeth Cecil also married, to William Wentworth – the relatively wealthy son of Lord Thomas Wentworth in 1582. The marriage proved happy but short-lived as both had sadly died childless by 1583.

The 1580s in particular were a difficult decade for William. Mary Stuart remained thorn in his side and a threat to the Elizabethan State. Both of his daughters had died young and then, at the moment he should have been celebrating England's victory of the Spanish Armada, he lost his beloved wife of more than forty years. Mildred had never enjoyed court, and preferred to reside in their many London or country homes, but she was a dutiful wife and the couple spent much time together. The loss of his beloved mother that March also crushed him. This relationship is one of the most interesting of William's life, He remained extremely close to his mother and she often visited and resided with the Cecil family when she wasn't living on her own estate.

The most important relationship of William's life however, besides that with the queen, was with his youngest son and political heir – Robert. While Robert could not inherit the title of Lord Burghley, he could and would inherit his father's political legacy. From an early age, Robert proved to emulate his father. He was intelligent,

inquisitive and politically astute. It was said that he was dropped by a nursemaid as an infant, leading to a hunched back. Despite this physical deformity which plagued him throughout his life, he became a successful politician. He was elected to parliament before his twentieth birthday. By the time his father's health was failing in the late 1590's he had already taken on the heavy burden of the many duties to the crown. Indeed, it can be said that Robert's inheritance was much more important than Thomas's in terms of preserving the Cecil legacy, or what many contemporaries called the 'Regnum Cecilianum'.

Few scholars have attempted to mesh together William Cecil the statesman and the family man. Yet neither could have existed without the other, and William certainly needed his family to balance his career. His love for life, knowledge, influence, power and family all contributed to the man he became, and the man we remember. His preoccupation with the preservation of the Elizabethan state not only derived from his duty to the crown, but his wish to preserve his own dynasty. We must take William Cecil the statesman with William Cecil the father, son, husband and grandfather. Failing to do so is to dismiss the epitome of who Lord Burghley really was – a family man.

DAVID LEE

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Author Biography:

David Lee is an Irish historian, who specialises in women's history. He first became interested in the Tudors as a teenager. David's interest in Tudor history, particularly Tudor women's history, attracted him so much that he soon found himself embarking on a path towards a career in the historical profession. David earned a Bachelor of Arts degree in history from Maynooth University and is about to complete a Master's Degree specialising in nineteenth-century women landowners and heiresses. He lives in South Dublin with his husband Victor. David's first non-fiction book, The Queen's Frog Prince: The Courtship of Elizabeth I and the Duke of Anjou should go to publication by the end of 2022. He is currently writing a joint biography of William and Robert Cecil.

The Life of a Musicioner

In the articles I write for Tudor Life, I explore the different ways of music and dance formed an integral part of Tudor society and how they were the backdrop to daily life at all levels of society. But I have not, as yet, explored what it was like for a "jobbing", professional musician in the 16th century and how he (and it was always a 'he'!) would go about learning their craft and earning their living and how they were viewed by others.

By Jane Moulder

As a musician myself, this is an area that fascinates me. But the hard facts are hard to find and it needs a bit of detective work to build up a clear picture. This is because accounts of everyday trades and common folk are rare, other than in court cases, and this is the case with musicians. Where a story or account mentions music, it normally simply states that music was played, or that a dance had taken place (and by default, that would mean music and musicians) but

the musicians themselves or what music they played is never mentioned. If anything was noted, it would be in the dry, dusty financial records where a list of names, and if we're lucky, the instruments that were played, and the monies paid on a certain occasion would be recorded.

Today, it is hard work to be able to earn a stable, full time living from being a musician. The majority have to turn their hand to a range of temporary jobs, be members of more than one group or take on private pupils in order to earn a decent wage. And what's clear is that nothing has changed in 500 years! In the 16th century there were few opportunities to secure a steady job with a reliable income. There were a number of musicians who were permanently employed by the royal courts and some of the very wealthiest of courtiers could afford to employ their own musicians (but this is the exception rather than the rule) and also a number of musicians managed to find permanent employment by their city – the civic musicians, commonly known as Waits. But all of these added together, total just a small proportion of the number of working musicians of the period, there were thousands of other musicians up and down the country who were freelance and it is those that I am going to look at here.

Musicians providing the music for a dance. Artist unknown but possibly by Marcus Gheeraets / French Valois School, c1580 Penshurst Place, Kent.

As today, standards of musicianship varied. There were some who were highly skilled and well respected locally to the extent that they had become freemen of their town and others who would have been classed as vagabonds, who survived on little

musical ability but more on petty crime. But the majority fell in the middle. Some clearly would simply play when required at local fairs and events, perhaps only a few times a year, yet others worked hard, offering themselves for hire to both the townsfolk and landed gentry, offering a variety of musical services.

Musicians playing for a performance of a masque for a private patron. Detail from the portrait of Sir Henry Unton, c1596, National Portrait Gallery, London.

Firstly, I think it's worth considering exactly what was meant by being a musician. The term "wandering minstrel" is often used and it conjures up a picture of a happy musician, travelling up and down the land, entertaining folk on his way. Nothing could be further from the truth! For one thing, a minstrel (or any musician for that matter) unless playing in a formal parade or procession, did not generally walk and play at the same time. It's actually quite a hard thing to do – I know, I've tried! There is also a distinction to be made between what was a minstrel and what was a musician.

Who was a minstrel and what differentiated him from a musician? It's not as though minstrel was a term for a "lower class" person as there are "*mynstrels*" employed at the court of Henry VII and Henry VIII. There was no doubt though, that as the 16th century progressed, the term "minstrel" began to be a pejorative term rather than as a descriptor of trade or skill. Slowly the word "musician" or "musicioner" became more prevalent, most likely as an attempt to elevate status. This was clearly exemplified in Thomas Whythorne's autobiography, written in 1576. He stated: *"Then for such as served for private recreation in houses, which were for the nobility and worshipful, these were no less esteemed than the others, till time that the rascal and offscum of that profession, who be, or ought to be called minstrels (although nowadays many do name themselves musicians) these I say did and do make it common by offering it to very*

jack, going about every place and county for the same purpose".

In medieval times, minstrel was often the term used for an entertainer, one of whose skills included not only music, but some other craft such as singing, juggling or dancing. Over the years, specialisation of skills took over and the term minstrel became more associated with that of a music-maker and generally one that was of a lower social status. Generally, it is assumed that a minstrel was a performer who did not specialise in one particular instrument and could, for example be someone who played fiddle and sang and this could explain the employment of 'mynstells' at the Tudor court. Musicians were also marked out and named by the instrument they played, such as *'pipers'*, *'trumpeters'*, *'violers'*, and *'taborers'*.

By the 1560's the term *'musicioner'* was being used for anyone who was deemed to be musically literate, or someone who was a professional, a civic wait, for example. It appears that skilled musicians were keen to adopt this new term and they did what they could to avoid being seen as a minstrel. This was especially the case after the enactment of the Statute of Vagabonds in 1572, which was to have a major impact on the life of both minstrels and musicians. It is clear that after this date, there are numerous occasions when a performer who would fit into the classification of "minstrel" (or even rogue and charlatan!) would claim that they were, in fact, "a musicioner" in order to escape penalty.

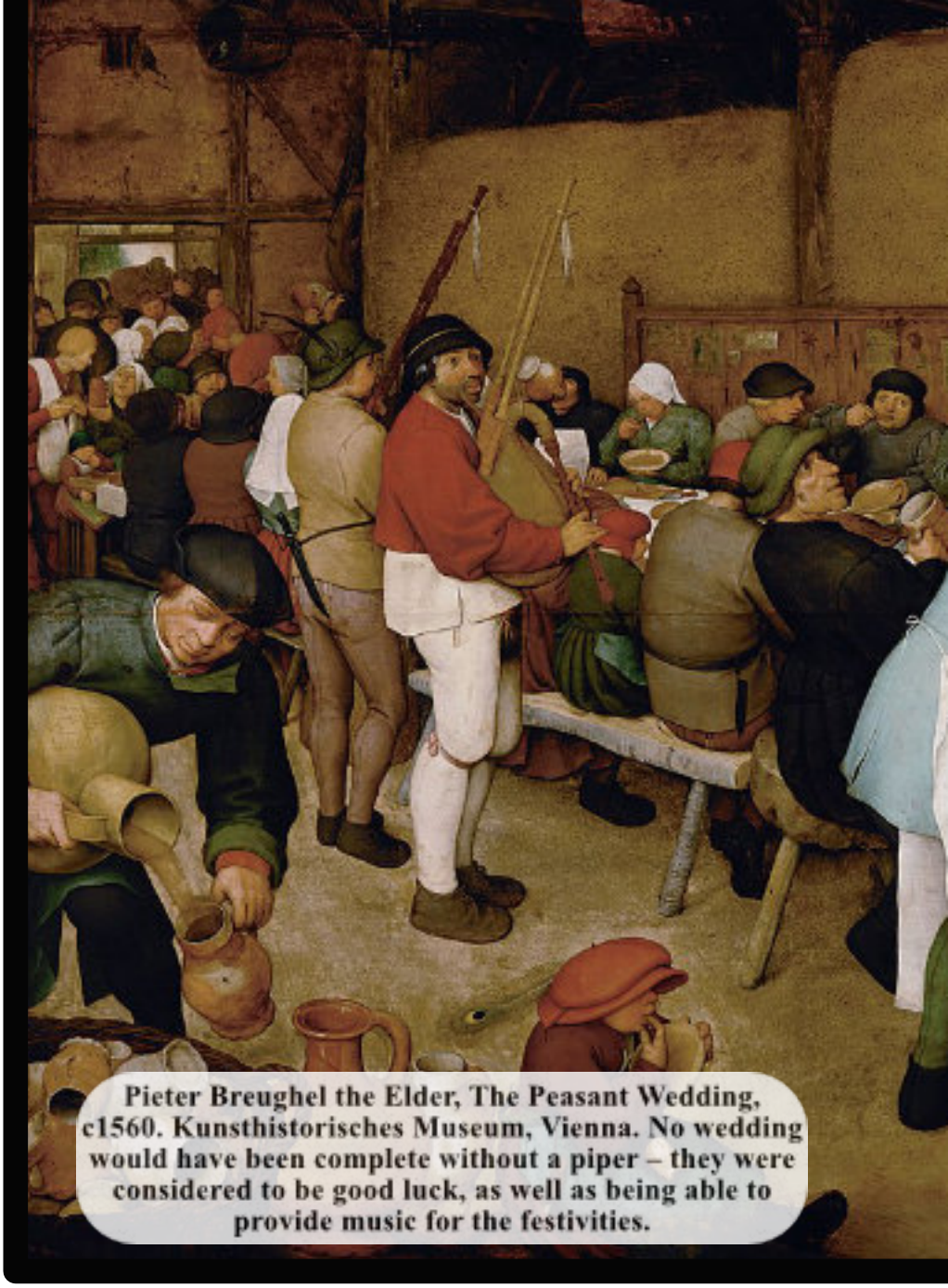
By the end of the 16th century, 'musicioner' is the accepted term for a performer on any type of musical instrument and a 'minstrel' is definitely someone down at heal.

Here are some disparaging words from a lutenist, circa 1570, bemoaning the 'competition'.

"In times past, music was chiefly maintained by cathedral churches, abbeys, colleges, guilds, etc. but then the abbeys and colleges were suppressed, then went music to decay. Diverse noblemen and women, in time past, imitating the prince, would have organists and singingmen to serve God after the manner of that time, with music in their private chapels. But that imitation is also left. Then for such as served for private recreation in houses, which were for the nobility and worshipful, these were no less esteemed than the others, till time that the rascall and offscum of that profession, who be, or ought to be called minstrels (although now a days man do name them musicians).

If not engaged to play for a town, city or wealthy nobility, then life could be tough for an independent musician. Despite the monopolies that some towns invoked allowing only their own civic

waits to play within the boundary, there were still a number of outlets and opportunities for work. Someone who was a resident of a town would usually be able to find freelance opportunities and be able to practice their trade, even if a monopoly was in place. However, for a musician travelling to look for work in a new town, then life could certainly be tough. York, in 1561, issued the edict that *"it is ordeyned, enacted and established that noo maner of fforeyner of whatever condicion he be occupie any minstrelsye, syngyng or playing upon any instrument within any pariche within this Citie"*. In addition to such edicts, after 1579 and the introduction of the Statute of Vagabonds, strict restrictions on travel outside of one's own parish were enacted making it even harder to find freelance work unless one had a wealthy patron who would vouch for them and thus allow passage.



Pieter Breughel the Elder, The Peasant Wedding, c1560. Kunsthistorisches Museum, Vienna. No wedding would have been complete without a piper – they were considered to be good luck, as well as being able to provide music for the festivities.

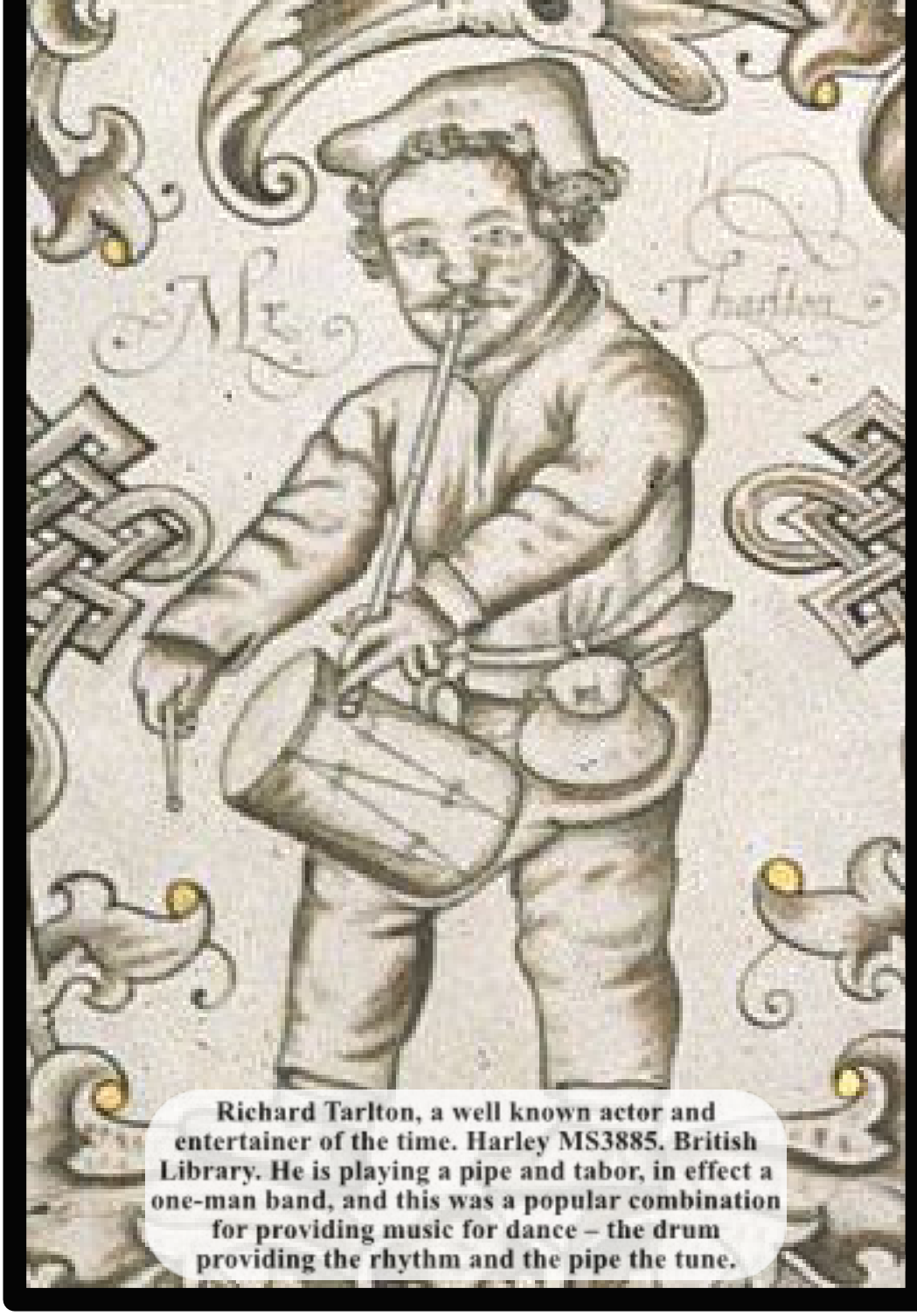
The Statute of Vagabonds in 1572 prohibited people from leaving their home parish without proper authority and many towns and cities had introduced local bylaws, often encouraged by local musicians and their guilds, preventing the playing of music in the street by non-professionals or unlicensed musicians. In 1599 three men came into Winchester carrying musical instruments but before they even started playing, they were arrested and put in prison. Their professions were a shoemaker, a tailor and a sailor but they all claimed that they were also musicians. They said that they had come into the

town for *"no other errand but use there minstrelsy and to make merry and to get some watt if they could"*, in other words, they wanted to earn some money. Their early arrest, however, probably saved them from being flogged for unlicensed playing. They may also have been saved by the sailor who claimed that he was away at sea when the law was passed preventing music from being played in the street. Fortunately for them, they were released after two days under oath that they would not do the same again

Musicians could be guaranteed to find work playing at weddings and other celebratory occasions but also for providing the music for dancing. In fact, it is due to this that we have been able to build up a picture of recreational music making in England. As the 16th century progressed, dancing on a Sunday (the only day off in the working week for common folk) became more and more frowned upon and consequently the musicians providing the music would be prosecuted or changed by the town or church courts. As a result, the surviving court records provide us with a vital link to the past as they show that most townsfolk and villagers were prepared to break the rules, and employed a musician to provide music for dancing to on their much anticipated 'day of rest'.

Whilst some freelance music opportunities were filled by the local waits, they couldn't necessarily fulfil all the requirements demanded by the local population. It is clear that more and more people

wanted music for entertainment and dancing. With some towns only being able to afford one or two waits, additional musicians were always in demand to play at banquets and functions. Also, with a healthy delight in beer and time spent in the alehouse, entertainment and music was always required in the local taverns and inns. Stephen Gosson wrote in 1579, *"London is so full of unprofitable Pipers and Fiddlers that a man no sooner enter a tavern, but two or three caste of them hang at his heels to give him a daunce before he departe"*. In order to attract and retain customers, an enterprising inn keeper in Bristol took on three apprentices in 1550, specifically as train as musicians and he even bought them the shawms, doucaines, viols and rebecs to play on.



Richard Tarlton, a well known actor and entertainer of the time. Harley MS3885. British Library. He is playing a pipe and tabor, in effect a one-man band, and this was a popular combination for providing music for dance – the drum providing the rhythm and the pipe the tune.

Large cities would, of course, offer more playing opportunities and the university towns of Oxford and Cambridge were no exception. The various colleges provided ample employment for the independent musician, not only through banquets, entertainments but they also staged plays and dances. Universities were also a good source of wealthy, young elite who wanted to be able to learn the art of playing music and singing as the books of manners of the time dictated. They also wanted to learn to dance, so this was another money making venture for the oppor-

tunistic musician. Money was also to be made by teaching music to wealthy patrons and the aspiring middle classes. From the middle of the 16th century, the ability to play an instrument was considered to be an essential social skill and so there was a burgeoning demand for tuition from those wanting to climb the ladder and appear educated and sophisticated and a local musician would have been the ideal teacher.

The popular view that rich and wealthy households retained their own musicians is a somewhat misguided one. Courtiers did employ their own musicians but not to the level as sometimes depicted as it was far easier and cheaper to employ them on an "as need basis". Music was, of course, essential when hosting dinners, entertainments and banquets. Also, music was required, on various holidays, such as Christmas, and other special occasions.

But how did the musicians themselves learn their craft? No doubt the local or village musician would have been self taught – an ear for music and musical ability is not a gift for the educated or wealthy – and they would have picked up the skill without any need for training. But for professional musicians, needing to play in an ensemble, read and write music (or pricksong as it was known) and play a variety of instruments to a very high level, then proper training would have been required. It is likely that most of the professional musicians of the period would have learnt their craft by fulfilling some form of apprenticeship. An apprenticeship would give them not only a grounding in the rules of music and the ability to play various instruments, but it also gave them their freeman status – a valuable commodity in Tudor England. The taking on of an apprentice was also valuable to a freeman musician as it would bring free labour into the household. In theory, in order to keep standards high, the musicians' guilds of the time decreed that an apprenticed musician could not take on a professional engagement but there's no doubt that this rule would have been broken, thus bringing in extra income to their master.

There is little or no surviving evidence to indicate how apprentices were trained in the art of playing music but the likelihood is that whilst they would have learnt to read music the majority of their teaching would have been by ear. There are clear records that show that the Norwich musicians were taught and skilled in the "art of pricksong" as they received a grant from the town in 1533 to help fund this tuition.

Like other trades of the time, the period of apprenticeship was seven years, plenty of time to thoroughly learn and become adept at their craft. The musicians' guild's role was to ensure that standards were maintained and they

had the power to override a master's view of when the apprentice was proficient enough to play in public. The apprentice was required to play in front of a panel of guild members so that they could be sure that he had the necessary skills. Once the guild had heard an apprentice play and was thoroughly tested in the art of music and playing, he would have been granted his freedom. However, this graduation ordeal was not sufficient for the guild, and established musicians were required to undergo a regular re-testing or assessment so that high professional standards could be maintained. Reassuring for their patrons, no doubt, as there would be nothing worse than having hired an ensemble to play for dancing one's honoured guests only to find them severely lacking in skill!

Whilst today we can be in awe of a great musician and hold them in high esteem, the one thing that is clear from the various accounts, is that in the Tudor period, musicians were not treated as anything special. A professional musician was seen as just another servant in someone's retinue as much a commodity as the cook, the baker or the groom. Tudor society was extremely hierarchical and it seems that musicians were well down the pecking order in terms of status. When studying estate household books, where payments of staff and servants were usually noted in descending order of importance, it's not very reassuring to see that musicians usually rank just above footmen and gardeners! But at least they weren't at the bottom. Equally, in terms of ranking the Musicians' Guild was one of the poorer ones. There's no doubt that whilst the courtiers and patrons required and demanded the skills of the musicians to impress, to teach and to entertain, they would never have enjoyed an intimacy with them – they were just another servant. And, ultimately, this is why so little is known about them.

JANE MOULDER

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THE TUDOR SOCIETY

Members' Bulletin

What a month February was worldwide, with war raising its ugly head in Europe. Who knows which way things will turn and what long-term consequences it will all have. And, as you know, events always make me think back to the history of the Tudors.

At the very start of the Tudor period we had the bloody civil war – the Wars of the Roses – where the differing sides of the House of York and the House of Lancaster were battling for over 30 years. Richard III was killed in the Battle of Bosworth in 1485 and Henry Tudor began the Tudor Dynasty. As in all wars, the people caught up in the battles were just ordinary people trying to get on with their own lives.

About 10 years ago, Claire and I were at Bosworth with a group of Tudor enthusiasts. We learned how the armies of both sides grew in numbers as both kings and their supporters slowly made their way towards the final conflict. Farmers, people in their homes and towns were conscripted as the forces moved. We were told that people were given the choice – come with us now or die now. So the normal folk were hastily turned into an army of sorts, bringing their farming implements and whatever armour they owned with them.

BritishBattles says that estimates put casualties at 1000 for Richard III's army and 200 for Henry Tudor's army. The clash was over incredibly quickly and Richard's army quickly fled when the news of the king's death spread. I really don't blame them, given that only days before they had been working on their land!

Of course this was just the first battle of the Tudor period. There were many others including Flodden, Dussindale, The Pilgrimage of Grace and battles on the continent too. It was a turbulent time, just as it seems to be now.

Whatever your beliefs and understanding, war has always had far reaching consequences. Please spare a thought for anyone caught up in battles and conflict at the moment as we continue to study those of the past with our fascination for the Tudor period.

TIM RIDGWAY

Chief Ministers to the Tudors - Walsingham

Gayle Hulme investigates a man born at the height of religious upheaval during King Henry VIII's reign.

The image of the Tudor minister Sir Francis Walsingham from print and screen is that of a staunchly Protestant man who was wholeheartedly committed to preserving the safety of his sovereign. We will discover here how a man born at the height of religious upheaval during King Henry VIII's (r1509-1547) reign rose to the rank of 'ambassador, principal secretary and chief of security (Cooper 2011) to Henry's daughter Queen Elizabeth I (r.1558-1603). During his service to the crown he co-ordinated an extensive network of spies and code breakers who foiled plots against England and he is probably most well-remembered for the decisive role he played in the downfall and execution of Mary Queen of Scots.

William and Joyce Walsingham's (nee Denny) only son, Francis Walsingham was born in circa 1532, at the family's manor, Foot's Cray, Chisleworth, Kent and in an age where access to the court and personal contact with the monarch was usually through familial preferment it seems improbable that Francis, as the son of a lawyer would have ended up as a linchpin in Elizabeth I's council. However humble the Walsinghams' beginnings seem on the surface a little further attention reveals a different account. According to John Cooper in his book *The Queen's Agent* Francis's paternal Grandfather, James Walsingham had served King Henry VII (r.1485-1509) as the Sheriff of Kent and in 1520 he accompanied Henry VIII to the spectacular Field of Cloth of Gold as part of his honour guard.

Impressive though these royal connections are, we must look to the brothers of both his parents for the most influential and prestigious royal appointments. Francis's paternal uncle was Sir Edmund Walsingham who at the time of Francis's birth was lieutenant of the Tower of London. In 1535 he was responsible for escorting Sir Thomas More to the scaffold and he received Queen Anne Boleyn at the Queen's stairs when she was committed to the Tower in May 1536. We can assume that a man trusted with such high profile state prisoners was held in high esteem by the king.

There is no doubt that having one well position relative brought advantages, but perhaps in this case Francis's maternal uncle, Anthony Denny is the key to his nephew's rise. The Groom of the Stool was the most intimate personal body servant to the king, and personal proximity to the sovereign in Tudor England meant power and influence. Their responsibilities included managing the king's daily ablutions and he carried a blue ribbon around his neck with the key to the king's private chambers. More importantly in Denny's case as the king's health declined he was entrusted with physical possession of a dry stamp which was used to sign documents when the king was too unwell to do so. It was Denny who with much trepidation told the king that he was nearing the end of

his life. Speaking of or predicting the monarch's death was High Treason so the bearer of the news had to be someone with whom the king had unimpeachable trust. With the death of his father and his uncle's position secure under the more militant religious reforms of King Edward VI and his uncle the Duke of Somerset (r.1547-1553), likely, their relationship coupled with the religious practices in England throughout Francis's youth had a lasting effect on the development of his character.

Francis's religious convictions were probably further consolidated through his years at King's College Cambridge which at the time was the 'most ardently Protestant and reformist colleges' at the University. (Budiansky 2011). The provost of the college during Walsingham's tenure was the Protestant scholar John Cheke who was also a tutor to Edward VI. After completing two years at Cambridge, Walsingham followed in the footsteps of royal servants Sir Edmund Dudley and Thomas Cromwell at Gray's Inn which of all the Inns of Court 'attracted the brighter and more ambitious students.

However, circumstances for Protestants in Tudor England were about to take a dramatic turn. With the premature death of Edward VI and the eventual succession of his Catholic half-sister Mary I (r. 1553-1553), the religious climate swung quickly back in favour of Catholicism and the restoration of the Pope's authority in England. For Walsingham and his Protestant contemporaries, the choice was clear: they could '..resist […] compromise or go into European exile' (Cooper 2011). After dissent over the queen's Spanish marriage and the executions that followed the Wyatt rebellion, Walsingham and others choose European exile rather than risk the consequences of paying lip service to religious practices they found abhorrent.

Walsingham first escaped to Basel which was part of the Swiss Confederacy. Basel was seen as one of the main centres in Europe for the Protestant Reformation. John Calvin wrote his initial version of the *Institutes of the Christian Religion* (1536) while there and Walsingham almost certainly rubbed shoulders with John Foxe and the Scottish Protestant firebrand John Knox during his three years there. The young Walsingham then continue his studies at Padua University in Italy 'wherein 1555, his fellow classmates elected him to the governing body'

On the death of Mary I and the succession of Elizabeth it now became safe for Protestants in self-imposed exile to return to England. The first appearance of Walsingham during Elizabeth's reign was in January 1559 when he sat as a member of parliament for the small and insignificant hamlet of Bossiney in Cornwall.

Slowly but surely through hard work, patronage and recommendation, Walsingham made his way into the orbit of Sir William Cecil who began to assign him clandestine tasks which proved to be the beginning of his talent for espionage and in 1570 the queen appointed him her Ambassador to France. It was during his incumbency that he witnessed first-hand the barbaric Massacre of St. Bartholomew's Day. For some time the French king, Charles IX had been involved in a factional court dispute with the Protestant Huguenots and on the 23rd and 24th of August 1572 it boiled over into a bloody state-endorsed slaughter. What Walsingham saw from the English embassy was mob violence at its very worst. More than 3,000 Parisians were killed and an estimated 70,000 lost their lives all over France. His dealings with the French and in particular Catherine de Medici led to Walsingham's poor opinion of the French. He wrote to Cecil after the

massacre that 'I think it less peril to live with them as enemies, than as friends.'

Once recalled to England in 1573 he was appointed to the privy council and named principal secretary. It was in this position that Walsingham began to turn his attention to the thorny issue of persuading Elizabeth about the dangers of allowing the Scottish Queen to go on plotting against her. Mary Queen of Scots had been under house arrest in England since fleeing Scotland in May 1568. The question of what to do about her 'dear sister' was complex. Mary was not only her cousin, but she was also, as Elizabeth was herself a god anointed queen regnant. Elizabeth feared that if the nobility in Scotland were allowed to get away with displacing a hereditary queen, what was to stop the English nobility from attempting to remove her.. Walsingham's point of view was that the queen's throne would never be safe while Catholics in England had a replacement who had the Catholic king of Spain as a supporter.

For years Walsingham had been developing a web of agents, double agents, agent provocateurs and code breakers all of Europe in a bid to expose Mary Queen of Scot's direct involvement in treasonous plots of kill and supplant Elizabeth. Even the Bond of Association designed to confine Mary and the catholic population's involvement in schemes to raise Mary to the crown of England could not curtail her desperate attempts to be free. Walsingham turned up the pressure by replacing Mary's previously convivial jailers with his Puritan friend Sir Amyas Paulet. She was to be allowed no private contact with her servants, no correspondence with the outside world and these new restrictions lead her to try more desperate methods.

The end of Mary's machinations came with her correspondence to Antony Babington. On 6th July 1586, Babington wrote to Mary concerning the 'dispatch of her usurping competitor' aka Elizabeth I and when Mary responded on 17th the die was cast. Both letters were intercepted, copied and Mary's accomplices were executed at St Giles' Fields just two months later. Despite Mary's valiant pleas that all the documents submitted as evidence at her October trial were fake and that the court had no jurisdiction over her, she could not refute the evidence that Walsingham had been carefully collating against her. Mary Queen of Scots was executed at Fotheringhay Castle on the 8th of February 1569 and even though Walsingham had used the signed death warrant without the express permission of Elizabeth he had rid England of the biggest threat to date.

Sir Francis Walsingham continued to serve Elizabeth through miserable ill health and died at his home in London on 6 April 1590. He was buried at the old St Paul's Cathedral.

GAYLE HULME

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Scrambled Dates and Events

by Tim Kidgway

Can you match up the dates and the events listed below?

1486	1537	1566
1503	1546	1575
1522	1547	1587
1536	1556	1590

____ Henry VIII's son, the future Edward VI, was christened in the Chapel Royal at Hampton Court

____ David Rizzio, the private secretary of Mary, Queen of Scots was assassinated

____ The twenty-nine year-old Henry VII married the twenty year-old Elizabeth of York.

____ Archbishop Thomas Cranmer was burned at the stake in Oxford for heresy.

____ Mary, Queen of Scots was executed at Fotheringhay Castle

____ Eustace Chapuys, the Imperial Ambassador, arrived at the dying Catherine of Aragon's bedside

____ Henry VIII signed his last will and testament

____ Death of Elizabeth of York, wife of Henry VII, from a post-partum infection

____ Elizabeth I's Principal Secretary, Sir Francis Walsingham, died at around the age of fifty-eight

____ Elizabeth I was entertained at Kenilworth Castle by Robert Dudley, Earl of Leicester.

____ Henry VIII's coffin was taken to Windsor for burial after resting overnight at Syon Abbey

____ Anne Boleyn played the part of Perseverance at the pageant of "The Château Vert"

Susan Abernethy talks about...

Thomas Cromwell – Valuable Public Servant to King Henry VIII

BORN IN PUTNEY, SURREY, C. 1485, THOMAS WAS THE SON OF WALTER CROMWELL whose various professions included blacksmith, fuller, cloth merchant, brewer and hostel owner.

His mother's name is unknown. Walter frequently served as a juryman and at one point he was made constable. He was able to secure good marriages for his daughters with his eldest daughter Katherine marrying Morgan Williams, an aspiring Welsh lawyer. Katherine and Morgan's son Richard changed his name to Cromwell and worked in Thomas' service, being particularly adept in the suppression of monasteries. Richard's great-grandson was Oliver Cromwell, Lord Protector of England in the 17th century.

We know little of Thomas' childhood other than his confession to Archbishop Thomas Cranmer relating what 'a ruffian he was in his young days', as recounted in John Foxe's 'Book of Martyrs'. Thomas may even have been imprisoned at some point. His life at home could not have been easy as his father was a hard drinker and frequently in trouble himself. Either due to his own wicked behavior, an argument with his father or some other reason, Thomas left his family to travel on the Continent. Although accounts of exactly where he went and what he did are imprecise, it seems most likely he joined the French army, fighting in the battle of Garigliano in Italy on December 28, 1503.

Once he left the French army, he entered the household of the merchant banker Francesco Frescobaldi. He toured the Low Countries for some time and worked as a cloth merchant. While there, he made many contacts among English merchants and learned several languages. Thomas returned to England and married Elizabeth Williams, née Wykys and together they had one surviving son Gregory. It was an agreeable match for Thomas. Elizabeth was a widow and the daughter of a Putney shearman who served as a gentleman usher to King Henry VII. Taking advantage of his father-in-law's assistance, Thomas was able to gain a foothold in the English cloth trade. Along with his experience as a business agent, Thomas' role often overlapped into work in the law, despite the fact he had no professional training.

By 1520, Thomas was firmly established in London mercantile and legal circles and acting for clients in several significant suits, some of which led to peti-

tions being delivered directly to the king and Cardinal Wolsey, bringing him to the attention of those in high circles. By 1523, he was a member of Parliament and beginning to rise in government service. In 1524, he was elected as a member of Gray's Inn as an attorney. Because of his skill in land conveyancing, Thomas worked on the dissolution of thirty monasteries started by Wolsey to raise money for his building projects. Cromwell's ruthlessness in the project was remarked upon, even going so far as to accuse him of corruption.

Cromwell's wife died in 1527. By 1529, he was one of Wolsey's most trusted advisors. Upon Wolsey's fall from grace that same year, Cromwell worried he would go down with him. In the end, the situation only made Cromwell more determined to make something of himself. He gained the backing of several influential courtiers and the favor of the king in record time, becoming a member of the council. Land transactions relating to Wolsey's college projects and the supervision of building works at the Tower of London were handled by Cromwell. He was involved with the sale of lands for the king as well as various matters of law enforcement. By now his influence was palpable.

In the new session of Parliament, Cromwell actively wrote and passed various legislative acts, including some bills attempting to get the much sought-after divorce the king desired. At this point, he appeared to be acting as the king's agent, working to execute policy which had been formulated elsewhere. Henry was increasingly convinced of his right to have complete jurisdiction over all matters spiritual and temporal, a solution to the divorce Anne Boleyn and her circle favored. Cromwell had been highly influenced by evangelical ideas by this time and was in discussions with Stephen Vaughn and Miles Coverdale. He had been known to express anti-clerical sentiments beginning in the 1520's.

Throughout the 1530's, Cromwell persistently urged the king to implement evangelical reforms and towards that end, he worked on legislation to acknowledge the king as supreme head of the church in England. By the autumn of 1531, Cromwell had complete control of the king's legal and parliamentary affairs and had joined the inner ring of the king's council.

Subsequent to the resignation of Thomas More in the spring of 1532, the king rewarded Cromwell with the grant survivorship of the lordship of Romney in south Wales. This was followed by appointments as master of the jewels, clerkship of the hanaper and chancellor of the exchequer. These posts were for life and gave him a position in three major institutions of government: household, chancery and treasury. These promotions in government, along with his commitment to the evangelical cause, brought him into conflict with those who leaned toward the conservative and Roman Catholic segment of government.

The death of William Warham, Archbishop of Canterbury in the summer of 1532 allowed Henry to appoint his man Thomas Cranmer to the position with the aim of ridding himself of Queen Katherine. Cromwell worked to pass legislation to pave the way for Cranmer to declare the divorce. Once Anne Boleyn became pregnant, a secret marriage ceremony ensued. The laws were passed and by April 1533, all was in place. With the marriage to Katherine declared illegal, the king's marriage to Anne Boleyn was made lawful and any children by her would inherit the throne. Relations with Rome deteriorated and Henry allowed Cromwell to unleash a campaign to discredit the papacy and to begin a public relations campaign to advance the acceptance of Anne Boleyn as queen.

By April 1534, Cromwell was Henry VIII's principal secretary allowing him to enrich himself accordingly. His style as an administrator was very personal and he had a hard time delegating. His principal strength was his attention to detail, overseeing operations which were pragmatic and flexible. He demonstrated the ability for radical innovation and creativity, such as the invention of the court of augmentations to administer the Dissolution of the Monasteries.

Henry and Anne Boleyn had a tempestuous relationship and Anne failed to give the king the much sought-after son. Henry's eyes had turned to one of Anne's ladies-in-waiting, Jane Seymour and Cromwell was tasked with creating a case against the Queen. He came up with a daunting list of fictitious charges, made arrests and tortured Anne's musician Mark Smeaton, who made a confession of sorts. The men accused along with the Queen were tried and found guilty, and executed. Henry was free to marry Seymour.

Cromwell's enforcement of the royal supremacy led to rebellion in the north, the Pilgrimage of Grace, in 1536. The rebels blamed the king's evil councilors for the suppression of the monasteries. The rebellion was aggressively quashed by Henry but the incident forced the king to make political reforms, most notably within the privy council. This left Cromwell even more dependent on the king's grace and favor, and resulted in this executive body coming to be dominated by Cromwell's conservative opponents who would plot his downfall.

Cromwell worked to eliminate some of his opponents on the council while retaining Henry's favor. The king elevated him to the Earldom of Essex. Then Cromwell greatly miscalculated in making an alliance with the Germanic states by brokering a marriage with Anna of Cleves. Anna's brother, Wilhelm, had entered a dispute with Charles V over the ownership of the strategically located and economically important Duchy of Guelders. The claims of both men were tenuous, but by the time of Anna's marriage to Henry, the argument had reached the point where they were on the brink of war. Because of the Cleve's alliance, Henry was about to be drawn into a conflict with the Hapsburg Empire.

A Secret Council convened to consider a legal basis for extricating Henry from the Cleves alliance and his marriage to Anna. They agreed upon an arrangement to protect Anna's honor and extricate England from the looming debacle of war. Cromwell was tasked with writing a memorandum suggesting Henry did not like Anna, and declaring the marriage had never been consummated. Anna would confess to this and the annulment of the marriage would allow both parties to wed again. In addition, they decided the marriage was legally null and void due to Anna's pre-contract of marriage with Frances of Lorraine.

Cromwell was arrested. Not long after, he was found guilty and executed on July 28th. Henry's reign suffered a great loss with the death of Cromwell. He was ruthless but effective and Henry never found another administrator to match his capabilities. The government from this point forward consisted of a Privy Council and would never again be dominated by a single, omnipotent minister.

SUSAN ABERNETHY

Further reading:

"Thomas Cromwell: A Revolutionary Life" by Diarmaid MacCulloch, "Thomas Cromwell: The untold story of Henry VIII's most faithful servant" by Tracy Borman, "New Worlds, Lost Worlds: The Rule of the Tudors, 1485-1603" by Susan Brigden, "Anna, Duchess of Cleves: The King's Beloved Sister" by Heather Darsie, entry on Thomas Cromwell in the Oxford Dictionary of National Biography written by Howard Leithead

Cardinal Thomas Wolsey.
Credit: Wellcome Collection

Cardinal Wolsey.

From the original of Holbein, in the Collection at

Christ Church, Oxford.

Wolsey's Lost Tomb by Elizabeth Jane Timms

In 1847, the English historical painter Charles West Cope painted a picture for Queen Victoria's consort, Prince Albert, which today hangs in the Billiard Room at Osborne House, the royal couple's beloved Italianate residence on the Isle of Wight. The picture was entitled 'Cardinal Wolsey at the Gate of Leicester Abbey' and according to a contemporary account, 'much pleased' Prince Albert, who personally visited Cope in his studio to observe the painting's progress. (1) Prince Albert demonstrated a warm interest in the preservation of what was considered important to British heritage, actively promoting the Tower of London as an ancient monument and being influential for example, in the acquisition in 1845 of the Trafalgar coat of Lord Nelson for the nation. Cope's idealised composition movingly depicts the moment of Cardinal Wolsey entering the Augustinian Abbey of St Mary de Pratis, being too ill to continue his journey to London. Cope imagines the monks welcoming the Cardinal on the steps of the abbey, at the moment when those fateful words may well have been uttered: 'Father Abbott, I am come hither to leave my bones among you'.

WITH HIS MULE NEXT TO HIM, still poignantly caparisoned in cardinal red, Cope's painting shows the King's former Minister now arrived at his final place of rest and in that powerful phrase which has been attributed to him as he neared his end: at last 'given over' in his 'grey hairs'. In the picture, Wolsey's robe is trimmed with ermine, yet there is the sense that here is a Prince of the Church entering the Abbey to cast off all earthly wealth and now, halted en route to the capital by royal order, he is now abandoning his mule to set out on a wholly different journey.

Wolsey died at Leicester on 29 November 1530. Desiring a perpetual remembrance in the place of burial - 'pro memoria perpetua Rmi Dom. in loco sepultureæ' – sums of money were specified for this. These paid for two chantries, annual alms-giving, three annual commemorations, for those ministers present at each and on the anniversary of death. An extra amount was added at the end 'for pittance' and a payment of twenty-six shillings and eightpence, 'for ringing the bells'. The Life of Cardinal Wolsey by Cavendish records that the funeral took place in the

abbey's Lady Chapel: 'And that done, and the body interred, Master Kingston, [the Lieutenant of the Tower] with us…' (2) The wealth that Wolsey had literally left behind at the entrance to the Abbey was considerable, to which the inventory of his goods and plate made out after his death, testifies. His worldly riches, symbols of his life (and failure), are recorded blankly and without emotion, as they were found at Cawood by Henry, Earl of Northumberland, Walter Walch, a gentleman of the Privy Chamber, and the new Abbot of St Mary's, York.

Ennumerated were the late Cardinal's gilt and parcel-gilt plate, his 'white plate' and tapestries, his carpets and chapel goods, his 'Oxford stuff' and his wardrobe of beds. These included his luxurious Venice cupboard carpets, his rich testours of velvet, his chairs of cloth of gold, his quilts and his red and green say hangings. As might be expected for any great household that would be dismantled, the late Cardinal's Pantry, Bakehouse and Buttery were properly itemised in the inventory, even down to the number of bread towels. The list included those goods that were still left in the Cellar: Gascon wine 'to be reserved for my Lord', with the pans and pots 'in my Lord's kitchen'. (3)

Wolsey's plate had often been emblazoned with his own arms, granted to him by the College of Arms in 1525. Symbolic of the way in which the names of Henry VIII and Wolsey will remain forever interlinked, Wolsey's devotion to his King may still be seen in his arms in the form of the rose, whilst the red lion represents his loyalty to the Papacy: an interesting heraldic illustration of how Wolsey was pulled in both directions in the King's Great Matter. Probably what is the most recognisable portrait of Wolsey is a posthumous image, today hanging at Christ Church Hall, Oxford. It was taken down from the walls for public exhibition at Christ Church College in 2015 and put next to his cardinal's hat. (4)

The cardinal's hat of Thomas Wolsey has an individual history of its own. It had in fact, once been displayed by William, Lord Sandys in the Long Gallery at the Vyne (5) and was later owned by Horace Walpole, who displayed the hat in his Holbein Chamber at Strawberry Hill. The catalogue of the Strawberry Hill sale refers to it as 'a most interesting and valuable relic, the red hat of Cardinal Wolsey', stating that it had been discovered by Bishop Burnet in the Great Wardrobe when Burnet was Clerk of the Closet and that it passed to his son and thereafter became the property of the Countess Dowager of Albemarle, who

later presented it to Walpole. (6)

Wolsey's genius for building is given magnificent tribute in the outstanding architectural heritage of Hampton Court Palace and yet, there remains a certain sense of Henry forever trying to surpass him in magnificence and thereby overshadow his memory. It is surely Henry who immediately fills the historical imagination at Hampton Court and not Wolsey and yet, Wolsey's artistic legacy has fortunately survived in England: the oriel window in the Great Hall at Hampton Court being one possible example of what Wolsey had created first.

Yet remarkably, the eternal association of Henry and Wolsey even extended to their tombs. We know from the Letters and Papers of Henry VIII that Wolsey was meant to oversee the intial tomb planned for Henry and his first wife, Queen Catherine. This is stated within the royal indenture which deals with the matter of Henry VIII's planned tomb in 1519, where there is an instruction for the King's tomb to be finished within four years, 'under the direction of Wolsey'. (7) Yet whilst Wolsey was to supervise the matter of the King's own tomb, he was already also, deeply concerned to make plans for his own fine monument at Windsor. In many ways like another king ('alter rex') himself and a master of the art of patronage, Wolsey wanted to build his last memorial: a palace for his own body. And just as Henry VIII in 1512 had commissioned a Florentine, Pietro Torrigiano to construct a magnificent sepulchre for his parents, Henry VII and Elizabeth of York – one of the Renaissance treasures of Westminster Abbey - so Wolsey would in turn also choose an Italian artist for his own splendid tomb monument.

Wolsey wanted to be laid at Windsor, the same place of rest that Henry had in fact, chosen for himself, proclaiming at a Garter meeting in Greenwich in 1517 that he expressly wished to be interred there 'and nowhere else'. (8) Whilst Henry's wish to be interred at Windsor with his 'true and loving Wife Queen Jane' was indeed fulfilled, like Wolsey's tomb, his own splendid monument was never destined to be completed. According to the author and historian Antonia Fraser, Henry had decided to re-use Wolsey's original tomb monument for himself already by 1529, (9) which if correct, would suggest a period even before Wolsey actually died. Symbolic of his life, Wolsey's fall also meant the collapse of his own splendid tomb.

He had in fact, intended to complete the unfinished chapel at Windsor as his place of burial, but this was later rebuilt to

commemorate Queen Victoria's beloved husband, Prince Albert and became instead the Albert Memorial Chapel, in which both Queen Victoria's grandson, Prince Albert Victor, Duke of Clarence and Avondale and her son, Prince Leopold, Duke of Albany, are buried, as well as the place where a fine memorial cenotaph of Prince Albert is housed. Queen Victoria's coffin lay in the Albert Memorial Chapel in 1901. Wolsey's chapel was examined in 1810, (10) when the Royal Vault was built by George III and the area remains the focus for royal burial – and none other. It is almost as if circumstantial history has forever tried to remind Wolsey that he had been in fact, not another king ('alter rex') but instead, the King's Minister.

Another Florentine, Benedetto da Rovezzano was commissioned to design Wolsey's tomb in 1524. It was to be a splendid funerary monument of black marble with bronze pillars. Angels held candlesticks at each of the four corners of a monument topped with an effigy of himself in gilt-bronze and decorated with his cardinal's hat and cross; there are thought to have been at least twenty-seven pieces of tomb sculpture. (11) Had it have been completed, it would have been a sepulchre on a truly princely scale. And whilst Wolsey's monument is now lost, the spectacular tomb of Henry VII and Elizabeth of York in the Lady Chapel at Westminster Abbey lives on: with its recumbent gold-bronze statues by Torrigiano, its own black marble base and seated angels adorning its four corners.

As with Hampton Court Palace, so Wolsey's tomb was to be re-possessed. The King intended to incorporate the magnificent sarcophagus into his own monument, but this itself would remain unfinished and Henry's dominant place in English history is instead commemorated by a marble floor memorial in the Quire at St George's Chapel, which almost has to power to shock with its simplicity. The vacant sarcophagus – used by neither Wolsey nor Henry VIII – was eventually removed from Windsor in the reign of George III. (12) A receipt survives in the Letters and Papers of Henry VIII made out in August 1532 – less than two years after Wolsey's death – to Cromwell by Giovanni da Maiano and Benedetto da Rovezzano. The receipt is for 12l 11s 8d 'for their labor and expence on the King's tomb in July last'. The record includes two further payments for their work in August and September. It specifically refers to Henry VIII's tomb. The unfinished tomb of Henry VIII was transferred to Windsor in 1565; in the end, it was never completed. (13)

Yet the fate of this monument did not end there. As if to symbolize the fact that its use would forever elude the original intention, It was finally used for the tomb of another Englishman, the great naval commander, Lord Nelson, who perished in the Battle of Trafalgar in 1805. Importantly, this tells us that the sarcophagus had already left Windsor prior to the exploration of Wolsey's chapel at Windsor in 1810.

In the seventeenth century, the engraver Wenceslaus Hollar made an etching showing a prospect of the Chapel of the College of St George from the south, including a ground plan of the chapel. The chapel adapted by Queen Victoria in the nineteenth century into a commemorative chapel for Prince Albert is clearly marked on the plan as 'the Tombe House' and Hollar labels the same space in his key as no. 28: 'Part of H: 8 Tombe'. The diarist and naval secretary Samuel Pepys visited the Chapel at Windsor in February 1666 and although he does make reference to the grave site of Charles I, Henry VIII and Queen Jane Seymour, he does not give a description of Wolsey's chapel and tomb remnants. He does however interestingly, record reading Cavendish's Life of Wolsey in June 1667 - sadly for us though, over a year after his visit to Windsor. (14)

The present author searched to find any representation of the sarcophagus in the Royal Collection, prior to its removal from Windsor and discovered an undated watercolour drawing, which survives in the Royal Library, entitled 'Remains of Wolsey's Tomb, Tomb House, Windsor Castle.' (15) It shows the tomb's handsome memorial – a large urn – upon a marble base.

Once again, Wolsey has been outdone in death. Today's visitor to the crypt of St Paul's Cathedral will experience the sense of hushed, national awe in the Nelson vault, but probably not consider the life of the King's Minister, whose name naturally, does not appear on the sarcophagus. Instead, the words 'HORATIO VISC NELSON' are carved on black in gilt lettering. Information supplied by St Paul's Cathedral confirms the re-use of the black marble sarcophagus for Nelson from the original planned for Wolsey and suggests that it had remained at Windsor until it could be found an appropriate use. (16) So, instead of Wolsey's intended effigy of gold-bronze, it is the viscount coronet of Lord Nelson which adorns this tomb.

Chance researches in the collections of the Victoria and Albert Museum in London led the present author to discover that the black marble sarcophagus is not in fact,

the only part of Wolsey's lost tomb thought to survive. What still exists of Henry VIII's planned monument is now fragmentary and similarly, only very few pieces of Wolsey's tomb decoration seem to have been preserved. These beautiful figures now believed to be from Wolsey's tomb are on public display in the Medieval & Renaissance Room in the Edwin and Susan Davies Gallery of the Victoria and Albert Museum.

Drawing on this information, we can see that these two candle-bearing angels are identified as made by Benedetto da Rovezzano and date between 1524 and 1529. They are dressed in classical robes and crowned with diadems. (17) These cast bronze angels are now believed to be those very same angels designed to hold candlesticks at each corner of Wolsey's monument and they are an outstanding example of the kind of funerary sculpture which would be used in grand Renaissance tomb design. Similarly, these angels are illustrative of the way in which the fate of Wolsey's tomb also reflects his political downfall: his magnificence dismantled, like the passing glories of this world. Information supplied by the Victoria and Albert Museum states that the sculptures must have been made during the period that the King sought the Divorce: that critical period for Wolsey's fate. Rovezzano's inventory of the tomb records Wolsey's angels. (18)

Fascinatingly, a pair of candle-bearing angels resurfaced at an auction in 1994 and were purchased by a Parisian art dealer. Later, the Italian scholar Francesco Caglioti identified them as the work of Rovezzano and are now believed to have been part of the original Wolsey tomb. Another pair identified as Wolsey's angels were found at Harrowden Hall in Northamptonshire in 2008 and good evidence proves that the angels had once adorned the gate pillars. Unfortunately, exactly how they came into the possession of the Hall is unrecorded. (19) Today, Harrowden Hall houses the Wellingborough Golf Club. Sir Nicholas Vaux had welcomed Henry VIII to his family home of Harrowden in 1511 and the house was visited by subsequent royalty. It is tempting to consider the impression that these angels would have made as part of the gate decoration, instead of on the (nine-foot-high) pillars of Wolsey's tomb. The present building, most of which dates from the early eighteenth century, was extensively renovated in the 1970s. (20) There was a major public appeal to save a pair of angels for the nation, with donations

ranging from very large sums down to the sale of £1 badges in the Victoria and Albert Museum shop with the words: 'Save the Wolsey Angels'. (21)

It would be accurate to say that whilst it had been the validity of the marriage of King Henry and Queen Catherine which had been under examination at the Legatine Trial, Wolsey's failure to achieve the desired outcome over the Great Matter pronounced his own life sentence at that Blackfriars court. Whilst the Lieutenant of the Tower did arrive to convey Wolsey to London, we know that he never reached it. Dying en route there, has kept Wolsey in transit in Tudor history. Decades before excavation work began on the Greyfriars Church site, resulting in the discovery of remains identified in 2013 as those of the last Plantagenet king Richard III, the location of Leicester Abbey was itself, the subject of in-depth archaeological enquiry.

The huge shadow of Henry VIII had indirectly pursued Wolsey, even here. In 1534, Abbot Bourchier and the canons of the Abbey did acknowledge Henry's Supremacy, yet like so many other English monasteries, Leicester Abbey was dissolved. The property was granted to none other than William Parr, Marquess of Northampton, the brother of Henry VIII's sixth wife, Catherine Parr. Some of the abbey stone may have been re-used in the construction of nearby Cavendish House, which was sacked during the English Civil War and is still a ruin to this day. In the same century, the Anglo-Scottish Dowager Countess, Christian(a) Cavendish is said to have ordered a search for the remains of Cardinal Wolsey, but his burial site was never discovered. Excavations in the 1920s and 1930s also failed to locate Wolsey's tomb, but the ground plan of the abbey was reconstructed and marked out in low walls.

The ruins of both Leicester Abbey and Cavendish House can now be enjoyed within the lovely setting of Abbey Park. The area incorporating the abbey ruins contains a memorial slab to Wolsey - to mark the approxminate location of his lost tomb. The grave slab, bearing his coat of arms and marked out in gravel, reads: 'CARDINAL WOLSEY OBIT A.D 1530'. Wolsey, like the King, is commemorated now by a simple floor slab, for all the grand Renaissance tombs they had planned – although it is the King and not Wolsey, who rests at Windsor, amongst the other royal graves.

But there was one more memorial. A statue of Wolsey was erected in Abbey Park, close to the River Soar. Entirely

lacking the ostentation of the gilt-bronze effigy he had wanted, this is a memorial which is both moving and serene. There could surely be no greater contrast between the distressing moment when Wolsey entered Leicester Abbey on his way to London and the peace of his statue today, contemplating the view onto the park.

ELIZABETH JANE TIMMS

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I had a chance to read Tracy Borman's "Henry VIII and the men who made him," just before it came out, and I can thoroughly recommend it. Borman also wrote a great biography of Thomas Cromwell which, along with Peter Gwyn's justly-acclaimed study of Thomas Wolsey, "The King's Cardinal," are well worth a read.

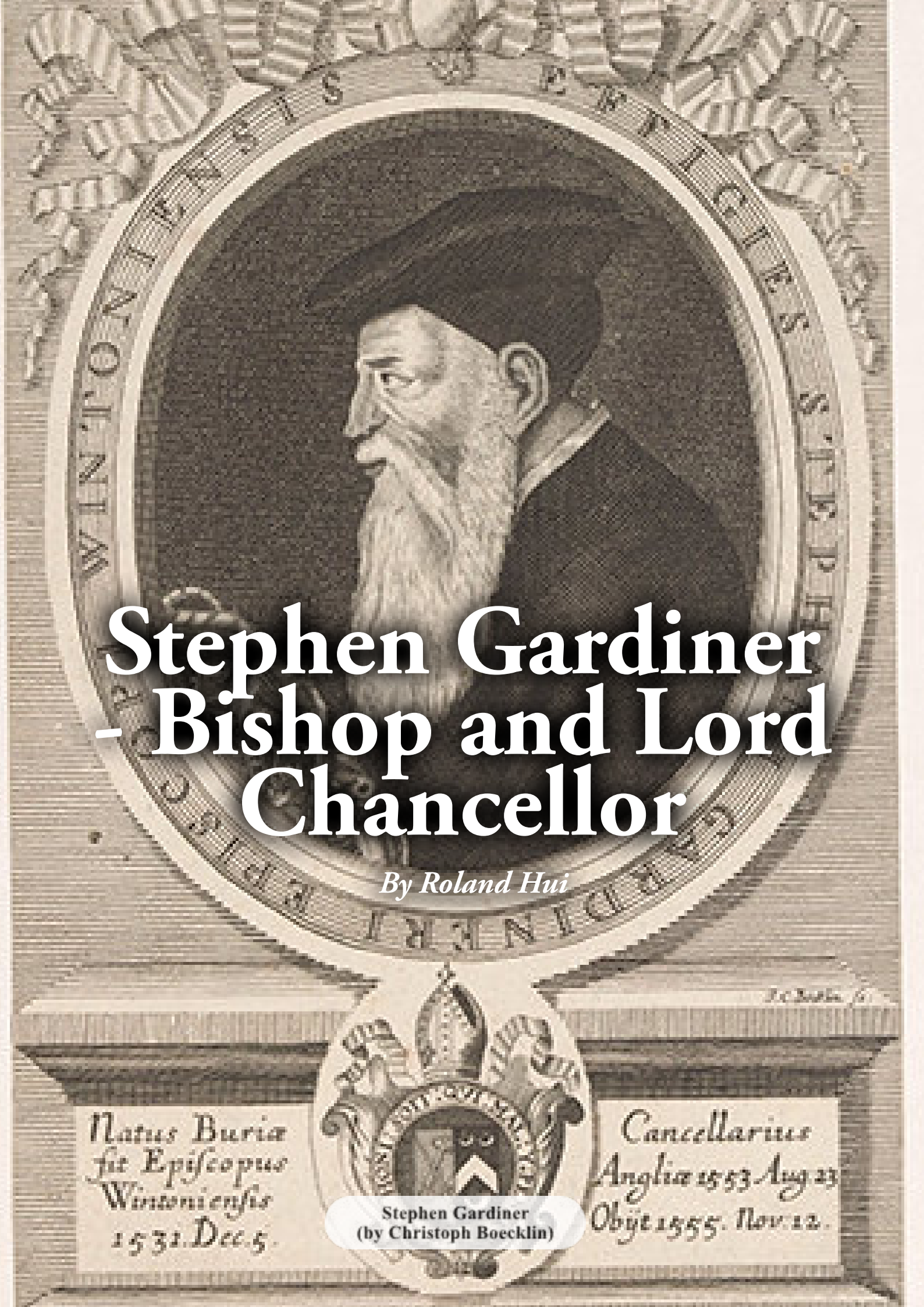
With later Tudor ministers, why not try Stephen Alford's biography "Burghley" or Stephen Veerapen's "Elizabeth and Essex"?

For fiction, nearly everyone in the Tudor world has heard of Hilary Mantel's "Wolf Hall" trilogy, a sympathetic re-imagining on the life of Thomas Cromwell from his early career until his downfall. Alan Judd's new novel "A Fine Madness" takes the reader into the complex world of Elizabethan espionage, centred around the schemes of Sir Francis Walsingham, who features prominently in the BBC series "Elizabeth R," especially in the fourth episode, "Horrible Conspiracies," in which Walsingham is played by Stephen Murray, Elizabeth I by Glenda Jackson, Lord Burghley by Ronald Hines, and Mary, Queen of Scots by Vivian Pickles. The last episode in the series brilliantly dramatizes the machinations of the last politicians of the Elizabethan age, with Glenda Jackson continuing as Elizabeth I, joined by Patrick O'Connell as the Earl of Tyrone (leading of the Irish uprising), Robin Ellis as the Earl of Essex (leader of the 1601 rebellion), and Hugh Dickson as Robert Cecil, the future Earl of Salisbury.

GARETH RUSSELL

Stephen Gardiner - Bishop and Lord Chancellor

By Roland Hui



Stephen Gardiner
(by Christoph Boecklin)

Although he is not as well known as his contemporaries of the English Church in the 16th century, Stephen Gardiner (1483-1555) played an important part in Tudor history nonetheless. As a diplomat under Henry VIII, he assisted the king in the 'Great Matter' of his divorce, and as a clergyman, he was a leading conservative in religious policy. Later, Gardiner reached the pinnacle of success as Lord Chancellor to Queen Mary I.

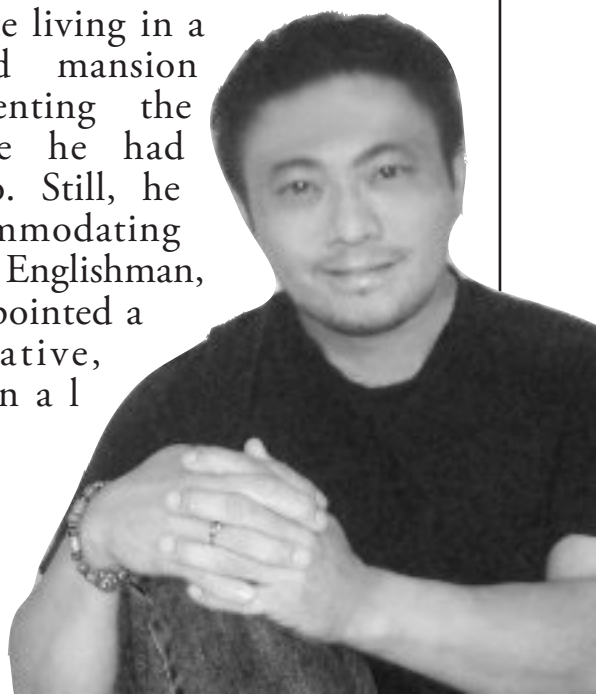
Stephen Gardiner was born in 1483 of humble origins. His father William was a cloth merchant, but it was later believed that his parentage was not wholly modest. A woman named Ellen (also referred to as Helen) who was thought to be his mother was supposedly the granddaughter of a queen. Ellen Tudor - as she claimed to be - was purportedly the illegitimate daughter of Jasper Tudor, a great uncle of Henry VIII, who was the son of Owen Tudor and Catherine of Valois (the daughter of Charles VI of France and widow of Henry V). However, this was the result of a misunderstanding. A genealogy made in 1530 actually stated that one 'Willyiam Gardener' (almost certainly another of this name) had a son with Ellen Tudor who was identified as 'the Prior of Tynemouth'. This individual was someone else entirely and not Stephen Gardiner.[1]

While young Gardiner was not the descendent of a French king, he was given a good education nonetheless. He went to Cambridge University where he studied Classics and Law. Gardiner excelled in languages, including Greek. His regard for it was so great, that when he became chancellor of the university in later life, he banned a move to adopt a newfangled pronunciation of it by the professors.[2]

Gardiner's academic talents and his reputation as 'the wittiest, boldest, and best learned of his faculty that is in England' won him a place with Henry VIII's great minster Cardinal Wolsey.[3] In the 1520s, the cardinal was still at the height of his powers, and his skill in diplomacy would be put to the test in the matter of the king's divorce. After years of marriage, Henry was tiring of his ageing wife, Katherine of Aragon, who had yet to give him a living son. When it became evident that she was no longer fertile, Henry, desperate for a male heir and in love with the younger Anne Boleyn, decided to have his union with the queen annulled.

In 1527, Gardiner, no doubt owing to his training in foreign languages and the law, was appointed to meet with Pope Clement VII in Italy. Not only would Gardiner and his companion, Edward Fox, have to persuade the pontiff to grant the king a divorce, but they would also have to undertake a treacherous journey to reach him. In May, Imperial forces under Emperor Charles V had sacked Rome forcing Clement to flee the city. Once they reached Italy, Gardiner and Fox had to evade the emperor's soldiers and seek out the pope who had taken cover in the town of Orvieto.

Clement was in a pitiful state living in a dilapidated mansion and lamenting the misfortune he had fallen into. Still, he was accommodating to the two Englishman, and he appointed a representative, Cardinal



Campeggio, to go to England to hear the king's case.

Although Campeggio - on secret instruction from his master - did not grant Henry VIII his annulment, the king did not blame Gardiner. Instead, his fury was directed towards Wolsey who was stripped of his powers. Gardiner, on the other hand, was made a royal secretary and even Bishop of Winchester in November 1531. In his new capacity, he was given the honour of reading the royal decree elevating Anne Boleyn to the nobility as Marquess of Pembroke in 1532, and less than a year later, Gardiner attended her coronation as the new Queen of England.

Despite his efforts in helping Henry VIII secure his divorce from Katherine of Aragon, Gardiner had never been enthusiastic about the whole affair. As a traditionalist in religion, he had no taste for reforms in the Church as favored by Anne Boleyn and the rising Thomas Cromwell. Anne, as a matter of fact, 'very much suspected' that Gardiner was sympathetic to Katherine and her daughter Princess Mary.[4] His disdain of the great changes in the kingdom had been made evident with The Supplication Against the Ordinaries in the spring of 1532. Even though Henry VIII had already declared himself Supreme Head of the Church of England the year before, he wanted further jurisdiction over ecclesiastical matters. When the Supplication - a petition by the laity asking the king to step in against clerical abuses - was presented, Gardiner was appointed to answer for his fellow churchmen. As to the king's wish to asset full authority over the Church, the bishop responded by saying that 'we... may not submit the execution of our charges and duty,

Henry VIII
(by Jacobus Houbraken)

certainly prescribed by God, to Your Highness's assent.'[5] Henry, needless to say, did not take the rejection well. Still, the clergy cowered and fearing the fate of Cardinal Wolsey - arrested and almost certainly headed for execution had he not died naturally beforehand in 1530 - upon themselves, eventually gave in to the king. Put in the proverbial doghouse, Gardiner sought to regain royal favour. In 1535, he composed a treatise entitled De vera obedientia (Of True Obedience) telling Henry VIII what he wanted to hear by affirming his royal supremacy over the English Church.

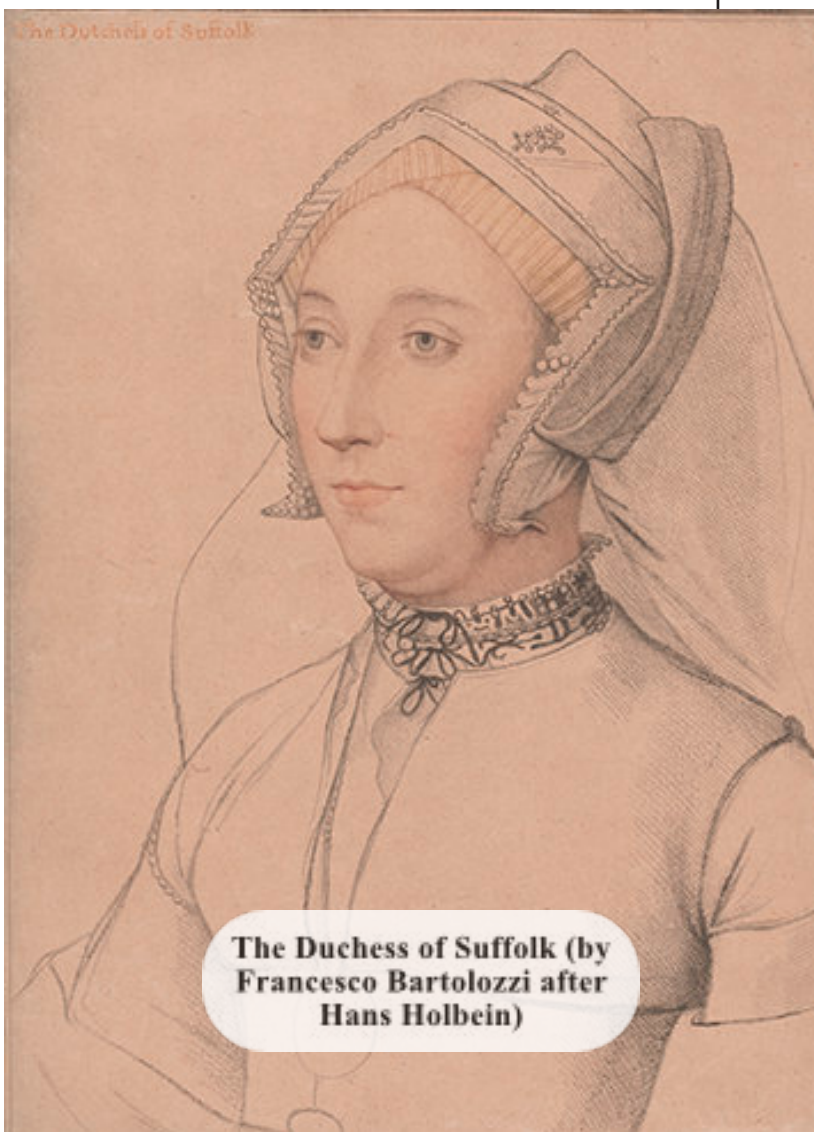
Back in the king's good graces, Gardiner allied himself with other conservatives at court. In 1540, when it

was obvious that Henry VIII was displeased with his fourth wife Anne of Cleves (a match arranged by Thomas Cromwell) and was seeking to court the Duke of Norfolk's niece Katheryn Howard, Gardiner happily entertained the lovers at his episcopal palace. But Katheryn's subsequent queenship proved to be brief. At the end of 1541, she was interrogated as an adulteress by members of the king's Council, which included Gardiner, and later, the bishop was a signatory to the death warrants of her accused lovers Francis Dereham and Thomas Culpepper.[6]

After Katheryn went to the block, she was succeeded by the mature twice widowed Katharine Parr. When Gardiner presided at her wedding to the king in July 1543, he could not have suspected that she was inclined to Protestantism. A devout woman, Katharine surrounded herself with those at court who shared her beliefs. Foremost among them was Katherine Willoughby, Duchess of Suffolk. She was terribly outspoken, and she made no bones about her disgust of popish clergymen such as the Bishop of Winchester. One of her amusements was to call her pet dog by Gardiner's name and to order it about to the laughter of her friends.

As he was unable to strike at the queen and her circle for the moment, Gardiner and his allies set their sights on the reform-minded Archbishop of Canterbury instead. Unlike Gardiner whom the king never took to personally - he thought him argumentative and stubborn hotheaded - the equable and compliant Thomas Cranmer was a royal favourite. Nonetheless, when charges of his supposed 'divers pernicious heresies' were drawn up and presented to the king, Henry surprisingly accepted them.[7] Had he abandoned the archbishop to throw him to the dogs?

In truth, Henry was playing a game of his own. While he allowed the conservatives to plot against the archbishop 'by the enticement and provocation of his ancient enemy the Bishop of Winchester', at the same time, he summoned Cranmer to him in secret. Henry warned him of what was afoot and he gave him his own signet ring to show his accusers that he had his protection. Surely enough, when the Council ordered the archbishop's arrest the next day, Cranmer revealed the ring to his enemies' astonishment. Gardiner and his co-conspirators then received a furious rebuke from the king as they gave the poor excuse that they had only wanted to examine the archbishop in order to clear his good name from any 'slander in the world'.[8]



The Duchess of Suffolk (by Francesco Bartolozzi after Hans Holbein)

Thwarted in his attempt to ruin Cranmer, Gardiner aimed to destroy Katharine Parr instead. He would do so by means of a woman named Anne Askew. A popular preacher devoted to the new faith, Anne was friends with some of Katharine's ladies. To prove her ties to the queen herself, Anne was arrested and put to torture in the Tower of London. However, she steadfastly refused to name Katharine as an associate. Anne was eventually executed for heresy, but before her death, she had written verses about her conversion to the Protestant religion, and she had imaginatively referred to the bishop (the 'Gardener') as a devilish figure who had tried to turn her from her faith:

Then this proud Gardener seeing me so blind,
he thought on me to work his will.
And flattered me with words so kind,
to have me continue in my blindness still.[9]

Even though Anne Askew had gone to her death without incriminating the queen, Gardiner was undeterred. An opportunity came his way via Katharine's habit of debating religion with the king. While Henry often found this stimulating, at times he grated at his wife's attempts to best him in their discussions. After one particular talk - or lecture as Henry saw it - he was in a foul mood. Gardiner noticed his annoyance and told him that the queen held opinions that could be considered dangerous. Obviously, he had chosen the right time as the king agreed that his wife should be taken to the Tower and questioned. Whether Henry was toying with Gardiner again - as he had done before in the case of Cranmer - is uncertain, but what is known is that an arrest warrant for the queen was prepared. However, Katharine got wind of it, and making her way to the king - which his other victims were never able to do - she begged his forgiveness swearing that it was never her intention to contradict him, but only to learn from him during their talks. All was forgiven, and when the guards came to apprehend the queen, they were furiously sent away by Henry himself.

When Henry VIII died in January 1547, Gardiner gave the sermon at his funeral. But this was not a mark of favour as the bishop soon found out. According to the late king's will, he was excluded from the Regency Council governing the new 9-year-old monarch Edward VI. Not only that, the boy

Edward Courtney, Earl of Devon (by Thomas Chambars after Anthonis Mor)

king's uncle, Edward Seymour, was elected Lord Protector, and his Protestantism put him at odds with Gardiner. When the bishop refused to accept the new religious reforms instigated by Seymour, he was deprived of his office and sent to prison.

Gardiner was eventually released in the summer of 1553. When Mary Tudor assumed the crown after the death of her half-brother Edward and the dethroning of Lady Jane Grey, the bishop was one of the suppliants greeting the new queen at the Tower of London. He and some others - also prisoners of the previous reigns - knelt upon Tower Green as Mary entered. She embraced each one of them lovingly and gave them their liberty.

Gardiner reached the height of his career under Queen Mary. A pious Catholic, she appointed the like-minded bishop to be her Lord Chancellor. Even though he had once been active in her parents' divorce, Mary chose to overlook the fact. She even gave Gardiner the privilege of crowning her queen at Westminster Abbey that October, in place of the disgraced Thomas Cranmer, now confined in the Tower for his Protestantism.

Although Mary was popularly acclaimed as queen, her intended marriage was not well taken. Mary insisted upon a match with a foreigner, Prince Philip of Spain, and was dismissive of taking an Englishman - like the nobleman Edward Courtney - for a husband,. Gardiner, in particular, was especially fond of the young man, as they had gotten to know each other well as prisoners together in the Tower. However, Mary was adamant, and when her betrothal to the Prince of Spain was announced, a revolt was in the making.

Queen Mary
(by George Vertue)

The uprising known as the Wyatt Rebellion was swiftly crushed by the beginning of February 1554. Courtney, angry that the queen had refused him for a husband, had foolishly lent his support. But weak-willed, he confessed all to his friend Gardiner early on, and for that, his life was spared and he was allowed go into exile abroad. Lady Jane Grey was not so fortunate. It was the government's belief - though untrue - that the rebellion had aimed to make her queen again and it was decided that she must be done away with. Still, Mary, a merciful lady, was reluctant to send her innocent teenage cousin to the block.

But it was Gardiner who forced her hand. In a sermon delivered before the queen and her court on 11 February, he warned how the 'body of the

commonwealth' could not be safe without 'cutting off and consuming' its 'rotten and hurtful members'.[10] Realizing that her kingdom could not be secure with Jane Grey alive, Mary gave in to Gardiner's demand that she must die. Jane was beheaded the next day. With the threat of a rival claimant gone, the queen joyfully welcomed Prince Philip to England, and in July they were married by Gardiner.

Having gotten rid of Jane Grey, Gardiner had also been resolved to deal harshly with the Princess Elizabeth. The queen's half-sister had apparently played no part in the rebellion, but she was dangerous nonetheless. Elizabeth was young, Protestant, and heiress to the throne should the queen have no children. She was also very popular with the people to the annoyance of Mary and Gardiner. The Bishop did his best to entrap Elizabeth - sending her to the Tower for a spell no less - but to no avail. She maintained her innocence, and even when Gardiner confronted her face-to-face afterwards urging her to confess, Elizabeth refused.

Like Queen Mary, Gardiner detested heresy and he played his part in the persecution of Protestants. In January 1555, Gardiner, as Lord Chancellor, presided at a trial to uncover religious dissent (for rejecting the pope's authority, denying the Mass, and so forth). Among the accused brought before him was a fellow cleric, John Hooper, Bishop of Worcester and Gloucester. While some of the prisoners were browbeaten into submission, Hooper and three others were unwilling to return to the Catholic fold. They were sentenced to death at the stake. The burnings would continue for the rest of Mary's reign, but Gardiner probably came to realize their ineffectiveness. Rather than suppressing the new faith, the plight of the martyrs gave strength to it.

That autumn, Gardiner fell ill, and by 11 November, his life was quickly slipping away. The Venetian ambassador reported how the bishop's imminent death would be sorely felt. He had always been generous in his dealings with the Venetians and the impending loss 'is most important at the present moment, it being freely admitted that for the service of a sovereign, whether as chancellor or for the performance of any other office, no better or more sufficient minister could be desired, as neither here nor elsewhere could his like have been found.'[11]

Stephen Gardiner died on 12 November 1555. He had served the crown loyally under Henry VIII and Mary I, but his reputation would suffer for his role in the Protestant persecutions. Even during his lifetime, the historian and martyrologist John Foxe had vilified him as 'wily Winchester' and as 'the Devils' Gardener', and later in his famous Acts and Monuments, he would even denounce the bishop for having been a wicked and deceptive servant to Henry VIII.[12]

According to tradition, as he lay dying, Gardiner muttered in Latin, "Like Peter, I have erred, unlike Peter, I have not wept."[13] His cryptic last words were in reference to the saint who had denied Christ three times but then felt pangs of regret. Was Gardiner confessing to transgressions in his life for which he was sorry but had never atoned for? Whatever sins they might have been, he took them to his grave.

ROLAND HUI

NOTES.

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Scrambled Dates and Events - Answers

1486 - the twenty-nine year-old Henry VII married the twenty year-old Elizabeth of York.

1503 - Death of Elizabeth of York, wife of Henry VII, from a post-partum infection

1522 - Anne Boleyn played the part of Perseverance at the pageant of "The Château Vert"

1536 - Eustace Chapuys, the Imperial Ambassador, arrived at the dying Catherine of Aragon's bedside

1537 - Henry VIII's son, the future Edward VI, was christened in the Chapel Royal at Hampton Court

1546 - Henry VIII signed his last will and testament

1547 - Henry VIII's coffin was taken to Windsor for burial after resting overnight at Syon Abbey.

1556 - Archbishop Thomas Cranmer was burned at the stake in Oxford for heresy.

1566 - David Rizzio, the private secretary of Mary, Queen of Scots was assassinated

1575 - Elizabeth I was entertained at Kenilworth Castle by Robert Dudley, Earl of Leicester.

1587 - Mary, Queen of Scots was executed at Fotheringhay Castle

1590 - Elizabeth I's Principal Secretary, Sir Francis Walsingham, died at around the age of fifty-eight.

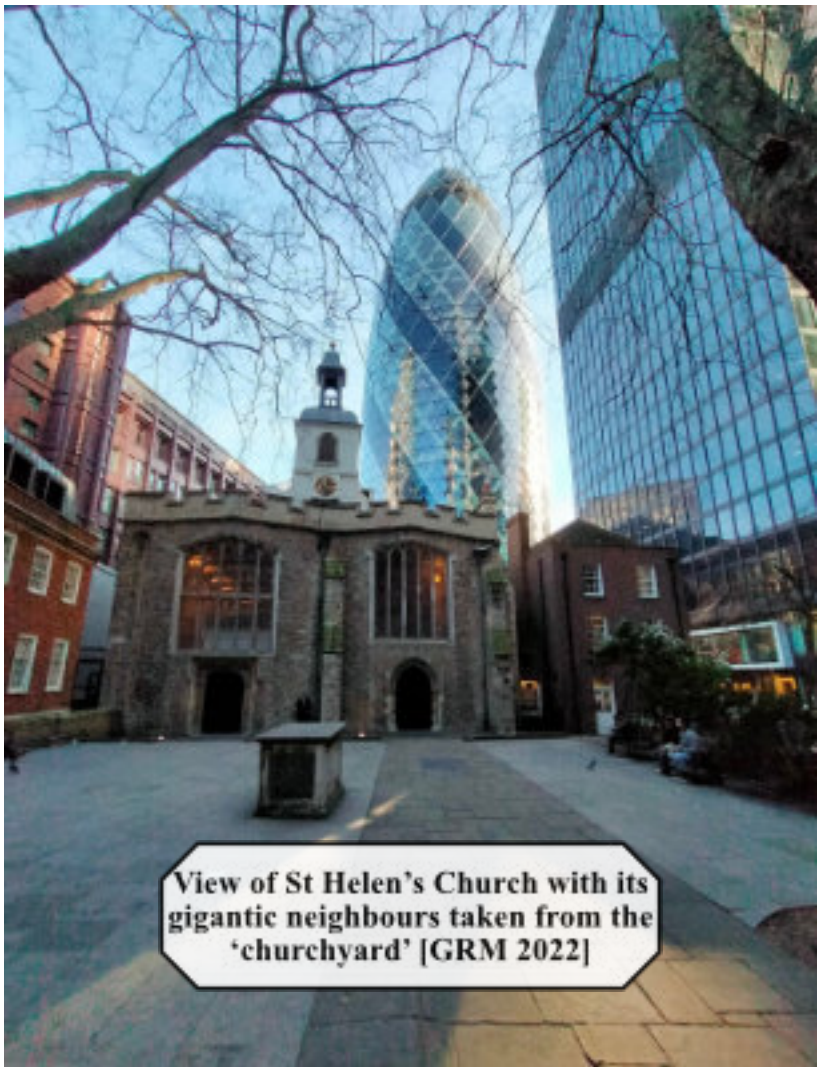
TONI MOUNT

Life and Death in Tudor Bishopsgate in the City of London

This article has evolved following a recent research trip to St Helen's Church in Bishopsgate, checking out details and searching for inspiration for my next Sebastian Foxley Medieval Murder Mystery, The Colour of Bone. St Helen's and its near neighbour, St Andrew's Undershaft – 'undershaft' refers to the maypole kept at this church in medieval and Tudor times ready for the annual May Day celebrations – having survived the Great Fire of London in 1666 and the Blitz of World War II, were both badly damaged by terrorist bombings twice in the 1990s but remain as the two medieval churches in the city still in use today.

St Helen's in particular has a wealth of history and is said to be second only to Westminster Abbey in the number of funerary monuments it contains. It is these monuments which have some intriguing stories to tell concerning those who lived – and died – in Bishopsgate in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries.

Today, St Helen's is overshadowed by the modern tower-blocks of the Gherkin and the Cheese-grater and isn't far from the Shard but, even five centuries ago, its nearest neighbour was reckoned the most imposing secular building in London: Crosby Place. St Helen's churchyard is now paved over and a solitary tomb stands there, that of a jeweller, Robert Dingley, dated to 1741, so beyond the scope of this article.



View of St Helen's Church with its gigantic neighbours taken from the 'churchyard' [GRM 2022]

The tomb of Sir John and Agnes Crosby in St Helen's Church

Inside St Helen's, there is a superb monument tomb of Sir John Crosby and his first wife, Agnes. He is in armour with a Yorkist Suns-and-Roses collar and she wears a fashionable late fifteenth-century headdress with her lap-dogs at her feet. Agnes had predeceased Sir John in 1460 and he designed their joint tomb. Sir John was knighted by Edward IV in 1471 for taking a leading role in the defence of London against Thomas Neville, known as the Bastard of Fauconburg, who attempted to take the city on behalf of the Lancastrians while Edward was away fighting in the South-West of England. Sir John openly supported the Yorkist cause during the Wars of the Roses yet he wasn't primarily a soldier but a wealthy merchant and member of the Grocers' Company. He died in January or February 1476 – so not a Tudor – but he left behind a luxurious mansion, Crosby Place, which was at the centre of city life for centuries to come.

In 1466, Sir John had taken a 99 year lease on the buildings adjacent to the church, paying the prioress, Dame Alice Ashfield [or Ashfed] £11 6s 8d per year in rent. However, he demolished the old buildings and began to build his beautiful house. Contemporaries noted that it took years before the place was finished and

The Great Hall of white stone is the only remaining part of Sir John's Crosby Place [the rest is 20th century]

habitable and poor Sir John had little time to enjoy its luxuries before he died. In his will, he left the mansion to his second wife, Anne, but it was too large for a widow and she sub-let it to Richard, Duke of Gloucester, as his London residence. It was certainly grand enough for a royal duke.

Sir John also bequeathed 500 marks to St Helen's Church, money which was used to redesign the interior of the nave. The church had a double nave: the original parish nave and, to the north, a second, parallel nave exclusively for the nuns, constructed in the early thirteen century when William Goldsmith founded the Benedictine convent next door. A row of arches and a screen shielded the nuns from the common folk but Sir John's bequest was used to build taller, more elegant

The Great Hall of Crosby Place much as Katherine of Aragon and Sir Thomas More would have seen it.

Sir John's four new arches viewed from the Nuns' Choir

Sir Thomas Gresham's marble tomb in St Helen's Church

arches and a new screen in 1480. [This rebuild is the crime scene in The Colour of Bone.]

Meanwhile, Crosby Place was at the centre of the action when the Duke of Gloucester became King Richard III in 1483. In his play on the subject, Shakespeare has the mansion as the setting where Gloucester is offered the crown, although this more probably occurred at Baynards Castle, the Duchess of York's property on the riverside. Shakespeare certainly knew Crosby Place as he lived in St Helen's parish for some time, appearing on a list of rate-payers. Some sources suggest that Gloucester had bought the property outright, rather than leasing it, but this seems unlikely because after his defeat at Bosworth in 1485, Henry Tudor seized all his possessions but not Crosby Place. Such a desirable residence wouldn't have been overlooked, so it must have reverted to Crosby's relatives after Richard was killed.

The mansion again became the focus for royalty in 1501 when Katherine of Aragon arrived in London in November to marry her first bridegroom, Prince Arthur. Crosby Place was then the home of a wealthy goldsmith, Alderman Bartholomew Rede, who would serve as London's Lord Mayor the following year.

Sir William Pickering's effigy lies secure behind railings

Despite the Cavalier fashions, Capt Bond in his tent with the army [1643]

Sir Julius Caesar Adelmare's fulfilled agreement with God

Katherine spent two nights in the luxurious mansion before the wedding in St Paul's Cathedral on Sunday 14th November.

A later famous occupant was Sir Thomas More although documentary evidence suggests he held the lease for a few months only and it's uncertain whether or not he ever actually lived there.

In 1538, St Helen's Priory was surrendered to King Henry VIII, along with all other abbeys, priories and religious houses at the Dissolution of the Monasteries. However, because the church was also the parish church, it was left intact.

A near-neighbour who also lived in Bishopsgate was Sir Thomas Gresham. He was Queen Elizabeth I's financial whizz and built the Royal Exchange – which he'd intended to name The Gresham Exchange but the queen had other ideas. Even so, Sir Thomas's badge of the Grasshopper was all over the building and is also on his grand tomb in St Helen's Church. After his death in 1579, in his will, Sir Thomas left money to set up and pay for Gresham College as a London institute of learning which still exists today as the Gresham Institute.

Other important citizens and Tudors of note buried in St Helen's include Sir Andrew Judd who was Lord Mayor in 1550-51 and died in 1558. Sir William Pickering was Queen Elizabeth's Ambassador to Spain who died in 1574. He also has a splendid marble tomb with his effigy and an elaborate canopy, all protected by wrought iron railings.

Another man of interest, although he only has a wall-mounted plaque, is Captain Martin Bond. He lived until 1643, so his monument isn't Tudor, but in 1588, at the time of the Spanish Armada, he was the commander of London's Trained Bands – a sort of Elizabethan Home Guard – based at Tilbury in Essex. It seems likely that Bond may have heard Queen Elizabeth making her famous speech to the troops there: 'I have the heart and stomach of a king, etc'.

Another man of note at St Helen's is Sir Julius Caesar Adelmare – what a name! He was Master of the Rolls to Queen Elizabeth and lived on to become a Privy Counsellor to King James I, dying in 1636. His wall-mounted monument shows a legal document with the seal broken off in which he has promised to 'pay the debt of nature' as soon as God pleases. The debt is, of course, 'death', so having

died, Sir Julius has fulfilled the agreement and the document becomes obsolete, as shown by the broken seal.

Despite all these grand tombs and intriguing monuments, the prize for the tomb that tells the most fascinating story must go to Sir John Spencer and his family. Sir John was another wealthy merchant in the textile trade – so wealthy that they called him Rich Spencer, making his money from trade with Spain, Venice and Turkey. In 1591, he came under suspicion of becoming extraordinary rich … by falsifying and monopolising of all manner of commodities.

Being wealthy had its dangers and a story is told later of a plot by a Dunkirk pirate to abduct Spencer and hold him to ransom for £50,000. Leaving his ship with six of his men in Barking Creek, the pirate and the other six crew members made for Islington, intending to seize Spencer on his way to his country house at Canonbury. Luckily for him, the merchant was detained in London on business and the plot came to nothing. How the failed plan became known isn't revealed but it was recorded in Vanity of the Lives and Passions of Men, published in 1651, long after the event, if it actually happened at all. Queen Elizabeth is said to have visited Spencer at his Canonbury estate in 1581.

In 1583-84, Spencer served as one of the two Sheriffs of London and was required to search out papists in the Holborn area. Among those he arrested were Antonio Bassano and his

His and Lady Alice's tomb shows the fashionable Elizabethan couple in full colour with their repentant daughter, Elizabeth, kneeling at their feet, wearing a French farthingale. Their monument, severely damaged by the bomb-blasts of the 1990s, was fully restored from photographs, including the paintwork. The whole is topped by a skull and an hourglass as a memento mori.

colleagues, the Queen's Musicians. He had a lot of explaining to do in this case. Spencer served as Lord Mayor of London in 1594-95. Obviously, his falsifying and monopolising didn't hold back his political career. At the time, he was living at – you've guessed it – Crosby Place, although it had needed expensive renovation before it was smart enough to be the Lord Mayor's official residence. John Stow described Crosby Place in 1598, in his Survey of London as 'of stone and timber, very large and beautiful and the highest in London', so Spencer succeeded.

Spencer didn't have an easy term as mayor. Following years of poor harvests, that of 1594 failed badly and England suffered famine. Spencer managed to persuade the City Companies to send any spare grain in their warehouses to Bridge House, on London Bridge, for distribution to the poor and starving. Hearing of this grain store, Admiral Sir John Hawkins tried to requisition Bridge House and its supplies for the use of the queen's navy and baking ship's biscuits for the fleet. Spencer refused and managed to keep the grain to feed the poor. The queen must have approved his actions because she knighted him soon after.

His only child by his wife, Alice Bromfield, [who shares his tomb] was a daughter, Elizabeth, and she has another story to tell. In 1598, William, Lord Compton, proposed marriage to Elizabeth but her father refused to allow the match. Compton used his powerful friends at court and had Spencer arrested and thrown into the Fleet Prison, accused of ill-treating his daughter – we don't know if he did treat her badly or whether it was a trumped-up charge. Compton then resorted to desperate measures to secure his beloved, having her smuggled out of Canonbury House in a large baker's basket used for carrying loaves. The couple wed immediately but her father withheld Elizabeth's dowry, unsurprisingly, and refused to forgive her elopement, even when she gave birth to his first grandchild in 1601. Fortunately, reconciliation was brought about by no lesser person than Queen Elizabeth herself.

Sir John continued to serve in a civic capacity into the reign of James I, serving as President of St. Bartholomew's Hospital from 1603 until his death 'at an advanced age' in March 1610. His wife died just three weeks later and both rest in St Helen's most colourful tomb. His funeral was sumptuous, his fortune estimated to be between £500,000 and £800,000 – a sum so vast that the inheritance was said to have 'turned the brain' of his son-in-law, Lord Compton, temporarily. However, despite such wealth, Spencer bequeathed nothing to the city or people of London.

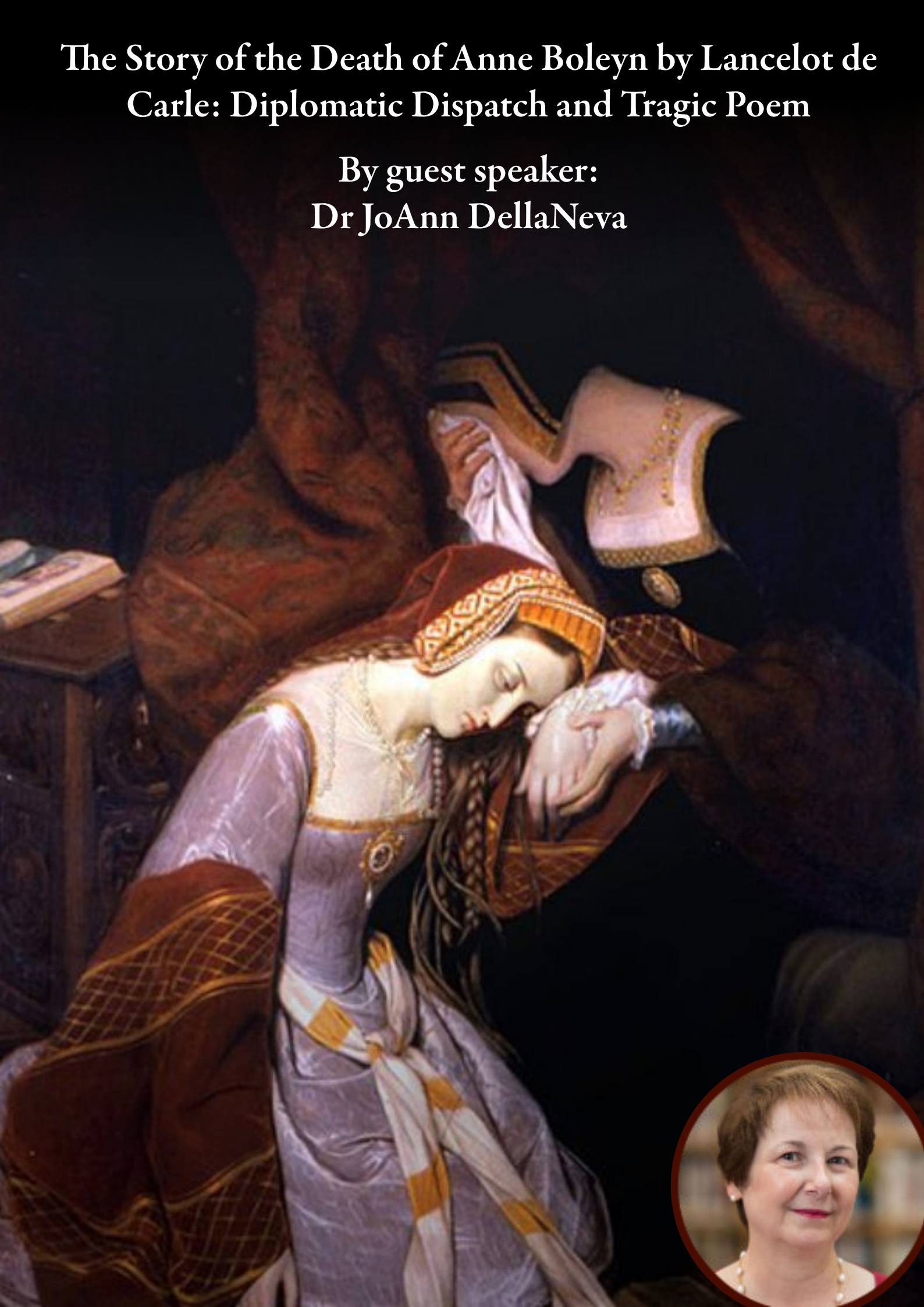
TONI MOUNT

Notes:

1.Crosby Place is known today as Crosby Moran Hall and stands on Chelsea Embankment, by coincidence just a stone's throw from More's Garden, once the site of Sir Thomas More's fine house in Chelsea. The medieval hall was all that remained of Crosby Place when, in 1910, it was moved, stone by stone, from Bishopsgate to its new site. It has been sympathetically restored and greatly extended since 1988. It's in private ownership.

The Story of the Death of Anne Boleyn by Lancelot de Carle: Diplomatic Dispatch and Tragic Poem

By guest speaker:
Dr JoAnn DellaNeva



Charlie on Books

Elizabeth and Mary: Royal Cousins, Rival Queens

by Susan Doran

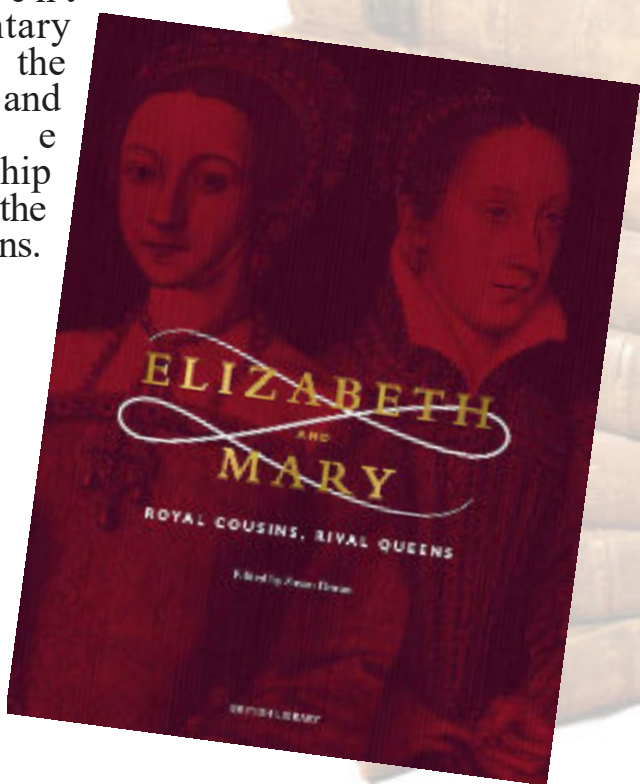
Between October 2021 and February 2022, the British Library ran a fascinating exhibition on Elizabeth I and Mary Queen of Scots. It looked at the relationship between the two queens, as well as comparing their lives and upbringings, with various objects and letters of note on display. To accompany that, Elizabeth and Mary: Royal Cousins, Rival Queens, the exhibition guidebook was published. It includes articles by Susan Doran (also the editor), a well-known name in the field, as well as other prominent historians. They are all accompanied by full-colour images of the objects from the exhibition and together they provide a useful insight into the lives of the two women.

The book starts by providing some context to Elizabeth becoming queen, but this is only brief, as the exhibition itself looks mainly at the time when she and Mary were 'two queens in one isle'. One of the most popular items associated with Elizabeth is looked at in detailed, that being the Chequer's Ring, which belonged to her and has a portrait of a woman who is (probably) her mother inside.

The authors do a good job of pointing out their similarities and differences, which can be seen, for instance, in their clothing:

'Both commonly wore black and white, but whilst these were Elizabeth's favoured colours and worn by her champions in the tiltyard, for Mary they were a marker of her mourning for Darnley. Her preference had been pointedly reinforced by Elizabeth years earlier: when Mary fled to England and asked if Elizabeth might send her some gowns as she had only the clothes she stood up in, Elizabeth's response was to send black velvet, black satin and black taffeta.'

Elizabeth and Mary: Royal Cousins, Rival Queens is a must-have book for anyone interested in the two women. Like many exhibition books, it can be enjoyed separately from the exhibition itself. For those who were unable to see it at the British Library, this is the next best thing. It is a lavishly illustrated book and is accompanied by excellent commentary on the objects and the relationship between the two queens.



Woodsmoke and Sage

by Amy Licence

We often read historical fiction in which we have to imagine what people saw or smelt during that time period, but often that is side-lined by the plot itself. It is hard to imagine what people in the sixteenth century heard every morning or smelt as they walked down the streets, but this is what Amy Licence tries to do in her latest book. Unusually, it is a non-fiction work and looks at the five senses (sight, smell, sound, taste, and touch). Woodsmoke and Sage aims to give the reader an insight into what Tudor people experienced on a day-to-day basis.

The book is divided by the five senses, with each then having their own chapters within these sections. Licence looks at all walks of life, from monks to kings, to show how their experiences of different things, like food, would have differed. However, there are still many things that stayed largely the same across the board:

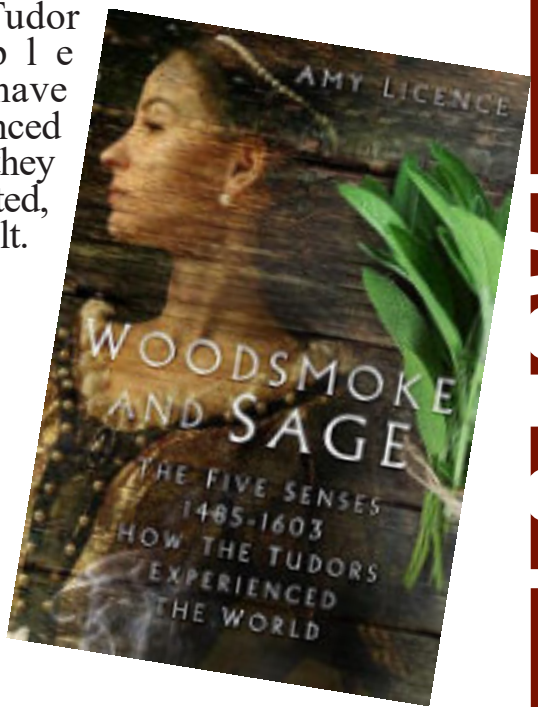
'With a few exceptions, dishes were prepared with ingredients or in sauces that made them predominantly milky, spicy, sharp or sweet, and the same handful of herbs reoccur in the vast majority of sweet and sour recipes. Barely anything escaped the popular cinnamon or ginger, blanched almonds or almond milk, lashings of salt and sugar or, if the household could afford it, a good dose of saffron, which would also colour the dish. Yet it is possible to observe a change in the flavours and ingredients as the era advanced, with more stodgy medieval-style fare at the advent of the Tudors, and fresher, sharper tastes used at the end.'

It is also interesting to see how much is spent on clothing, although this, due to lack of evidence, naturally has to focus more on the higher classes. The author takes us through the different fabrics used, the sumptuary laws which dictated what people could and couldn't wear. Reading what Henry VIII spent on clothes, however, is eye-watering:

'Undoubtedly, Henry was the greatest peacock of the era. An inventory of his wardrobe, made in 1516, reveals that he had 134 doublets made from twenty-nine different fabrics and, soon after, the Venetian ambassador Sebastian Giustinian declared Henry VIII to be the best-dressed sovereign in the world. A second inventory, compiled in 1521, reveals Henry's wardrobe to have been valued at around £10,380, the equivalent of £4 million today.'

It is an unusual book, as at parts it unfortunately reads almost like a textbook but, sadly, without the references, but for the most part it is thoroughly enjoyable. The references are half-hearted, with volume numbers but no pages, despite it being obviously well-researched, as many of the sources come from various archives across the country.

Woodsmoke and Sage is an interesting book that takes the reader through the Tudor world sense by sense. It is not always an easy task and, admittedly, some parts are succeed at this better than others. The lack of a proper referencing system does let it down somewhat, but I would still recommend it to anyone who wants to get as much as a sense as possible as to what Tudor people would have experienced – what they saw, tasted, and smelt.



A TUDOR HOUSE'S WORST ENEMIES

By Brigitte Webster

To the Tudors their home was extremely important and what they feared the most was losing it.

Fire presented the biggest danger. In a time when open fires were needed to cook, to keep warm and to supply light in the evening, accidental fires were all too common occurrences. The Great Fire of London in 1666 is a grim reminder, just how quickly one fire could spread and destroy numerous houses within a short time.

The adoption of the chimney at the beginning of the sixteenth century helped to reduce that risk as it made the hearth in the centre of the hall redundant and offered a more contained fire inside a purpose built chimney attached to an exterior wall. Homeowners were legally required to keep leather buckets filled with water outside their homes in the summer months. Ladders, axes and fire-hooks to pull down burning thatch and timbers were stored in parish churches as a community resource. In town, early detection of an outbreak of fire was paramount and that was the duty of the night bellman. He patrolled the streets during the hours of 'curfew', the time when all open fires had to be covered up and starved of oxygen. The term 'curfew' derives from the Norman-French couvre and feu (cover &

fire). In case of a fire, he would warn the sleeping citizen to wake up and get into action by ringing a hand bell and shouting loudly. Prevention was always better, and he would cry regular reminders to all householders 'to see to the fire and candle' before retiring for the night. These reminders were often in rhyme such as this one, dating to William Shakespeare's time:

'Maids in your smocks, look to your locks,
Your fire and candle-light;
For well 'tis known much mischief's done
By both in dead of night;
Your locks and fire do not neglect,
And so you may good rest expect'

Superstition and the very real, ever present fear of fires started by demons or Satan (Lightning) may have encouraged people to flight 'fire with fire' by deliberately scorching tear drop shapes into wood, most often observed on mantle beams.


BURN MARKS

In the twenty-first century we still worry about our house catching fire but we take more effective ways to reduce such a danger by regularly checking and sweeping the chimney. Failure to do so will result in birds nesting inside the chimney and small sparks setting the dry twigs on fire. Then as now, neglected chimneys can be the source of all sorts of pests which one does not immediately associate with chimneys.

Unused chimneys in particular can be a major source of pest problems as birds nest material provides food and harbourage and dead birds offer a protein bonus for carpet beetle, various moth species and other beetle larvae -all on a

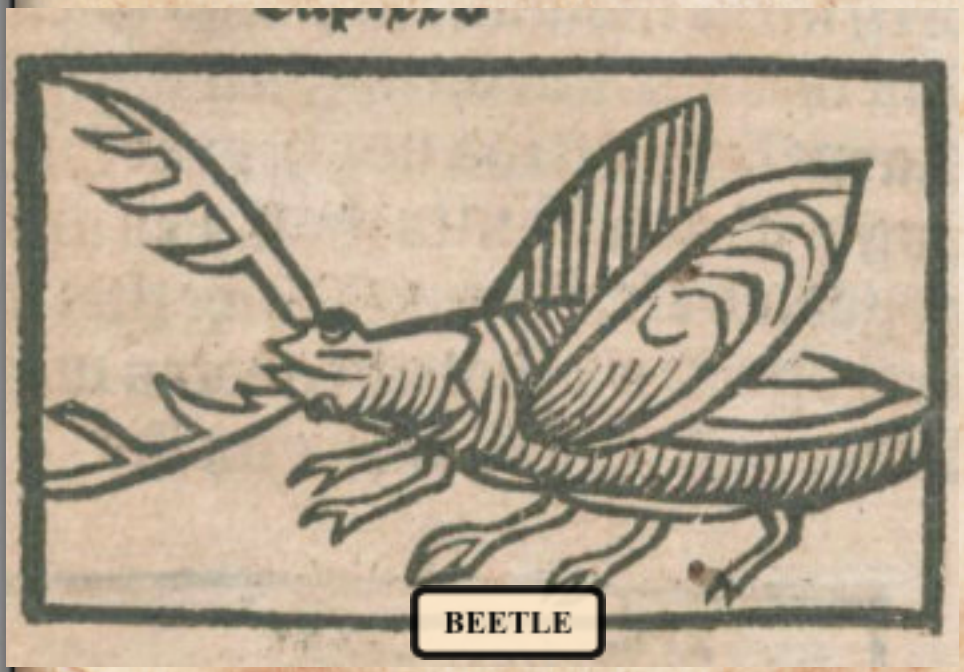
mission to set up camp and allow their young (larvae) to feed on woollens, carpets, curtains, bedding, clothes, tapestries, paper, leather etc.

The Tudors did not have to fight quite such an extraordinary large number of tiny pest species, as many are a later introduction to England, but they certainly had their hands full with keeping the number of fleas, headlice, bed bugs, flies and mice in check.

BIRDS NESTS ON ROOF

The so-called case-bearing clothes moth was a definite contemporary of the Tudors and Laurence Andrew gives some advice in his The Noble Lyfe and Natures of Man, of Bestes, Serpentys, Fowles and Fiishes yt be Moste Knwen from 1521:

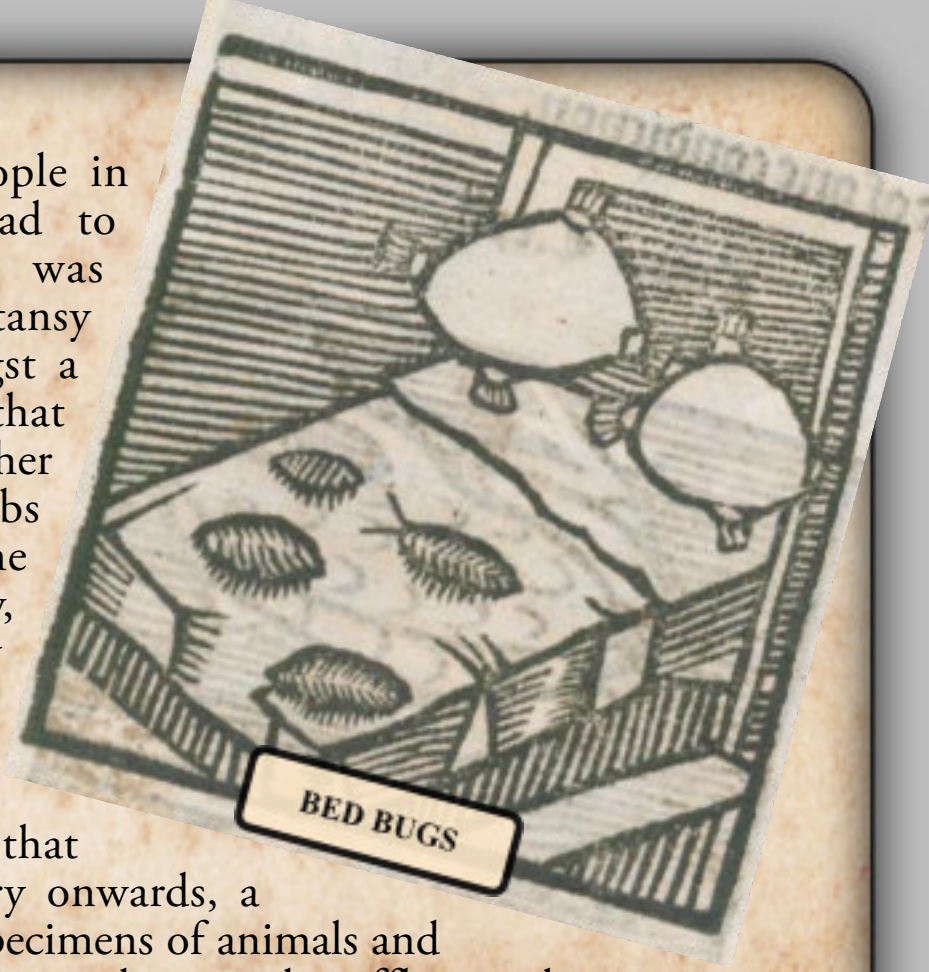
'The moth breeds among clothes till that they bitten it asunder and it is a maniable worm, and yet it hides him in the cloth that it can scantly be seen and it breeds gladly in clothes that have been in an evil air, or in rain or mist, and so laid up without hanging in the sun or sweet air after. The herbs that be bitter and well smelling is good to be laid among such clothes as the bay leaves, cypress wood'



BEETLE

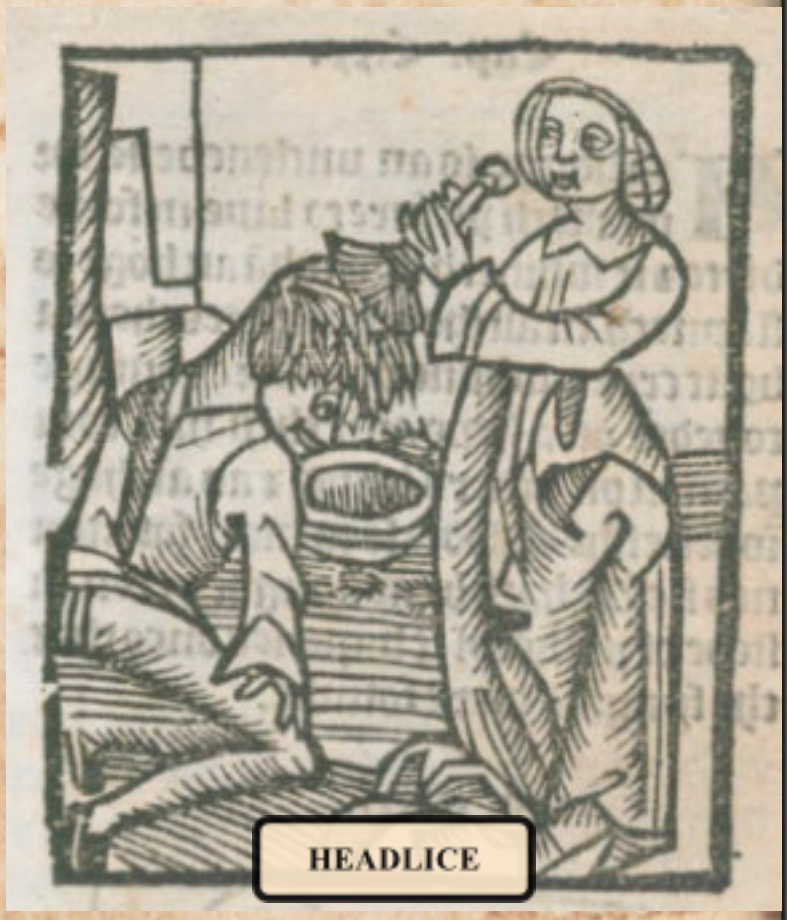
Before the use of

chemical insecticides, people in the sixteenth century had to make do with what was available. Lavender, rue, tansy and others are all amongst a group of 'strewing herbs' that were used to deter pests rather than kill them. These herbs were often scattered on the ground, together with straw, not realising, that the straw would harbour mould, highly attractive to all sort of tiny beetles who feed on these. It did not help, that from the sixteenth century onwards, a new mania for collecting specimens of animals and plants from faraway places took over the affluent class, introducing new pests and the need for developing preservatives.


BED BUGS

One of the most damaging pests to the very structure of Tudor homes are woodboring beetles. There are two which are particularly bad news for structural timber in the roof, floorboards and wall timber: The furniture beetle or woodworm and the deathwatch beetle. It is the larvae that eats the affected wood, hollowing out the timber from within and if not stopped, will cause the complete collapse of a roof or evenhouse. Depending on conditions, the larvae takes between two and ten years to mature before entering the pupa stage and finally emerging from the wood as a beetle six weeks thereafter.

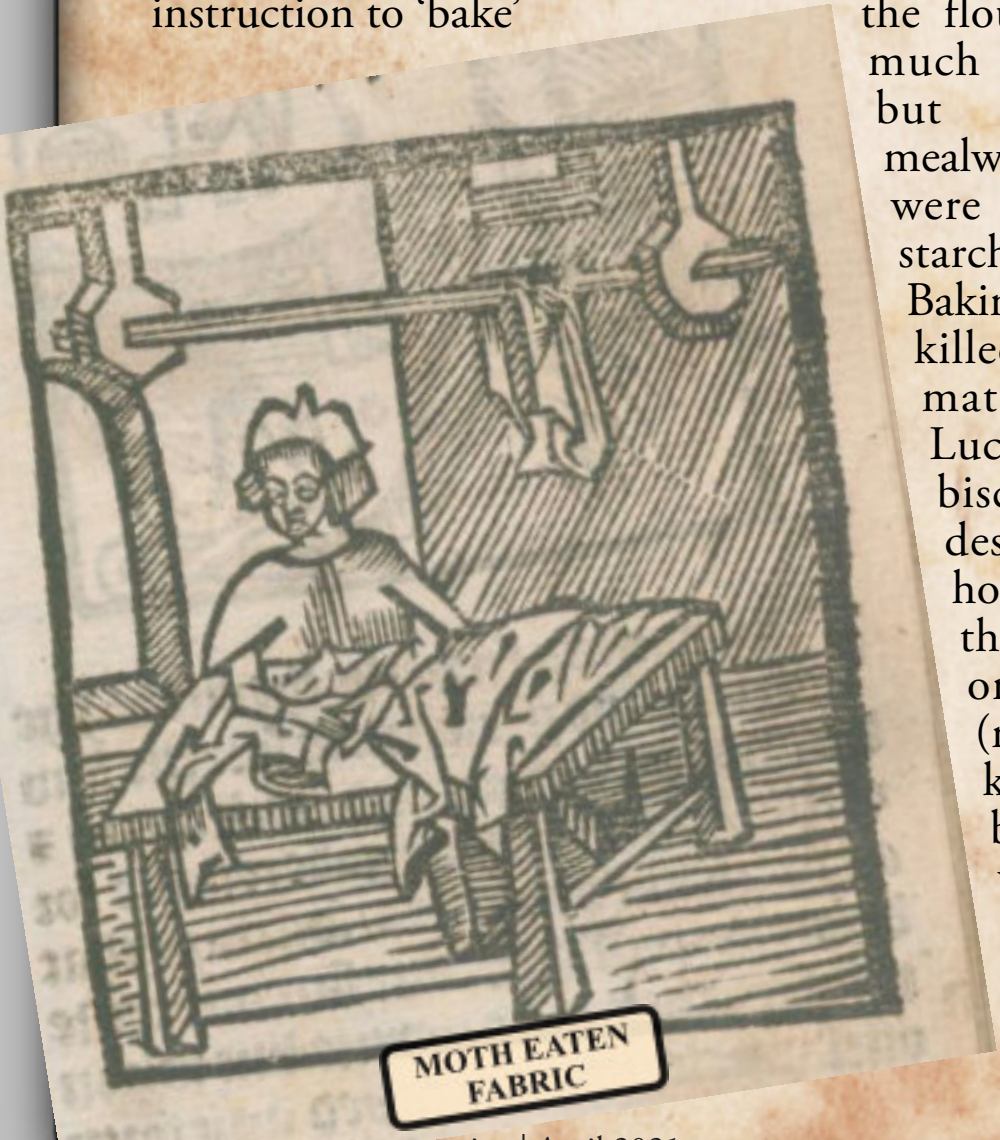
These exit holes are what you see on affected wood surfaces.


HEADLICE

Infested wood may not harbour any more live larvae, but such exit holes always need to be monitored and action taken if the affected beam is no longer fit for purpose. The furniture beetle's exit holes are generally much smaller than the those caused by the deathwatch species which can be up to three millimetres in diameter. While the deathwatch beetle thrives on oak which had suffered damp and hence was attacked by wet or dry rot fungus, the furniture beetle prefers starchy hard and softwood and particularly loves plywood from the early twenty century. Spring is the time when the adult beetles emerge, and this is when you can hear the deathwatch male beetle make clicking sounds at night-time to attract a mate.

Low numbers of woodboring beetles are to be expected in ancient houses but it is important to not allow them to increase their numbers by attending to any leaks in the roof or windows quickly. Treatment of infected timbers can be very expensive and a long drawn out process.

When you read Tudor recipes, you sometimes come across the instruction to 'bake' the flour before use. Not so much a problem these days but in Tudor times, mealworm and biscuit beetles were a real pest found in starchy food such as flour. Baking the flour would have killed any unwanted life matter in the flour. Luckily, mealworm or biscuit beetle do not destroy objects in the house but these weevils as they were also known – or rather, their larvae (maggots) had to be knocked out of ship biscuits as many sailors would have done.



The final group of pests are the rodents; mice and rats, vermin much detested then

and now. One of the earliest descriptions of mousetraps in Britain was by Leonhard Mascall, clerk of the Kitchen to the Archbishop of Canterbury in the sixteenth century. In his book of 'Sundrie Engines and Trappes to take Polcats, Buzards, Rattes, Mice and all other Kindes of Vermine'. In this publication of 1590 he describes how to make live capture traps, deadfalls and snap traps, all forerunners of the types we use today. Rats have always been associated with being the bearers of disease, death, plague and in more recent times chewing through electric cables and so causing short circuits and house fires – bringing us full circle. We might not fight exactly the same pests and dangers to our house than the Tudors did, but despite having so many more options available to us, we still have not won that battle yet. With our ever growing eco-friendly mindset, many of us have actually taken to look back and started to use herbal and all natural deterrents once more.

BRIGITTE WEBSTER

Photos: Author's own

Pictures: The noble lyfe & natures of man, of beastes, serpentys, fowles & fishes yt be moste knowen by Andrew Laurence, active 1510-1537

NEXT MONTH IN YOUR REGULAR

Tudor Life

TUDOR SUMMERS

GARETH RUSSELL
The summer of 1540: Weather extremes

DR JOANNE PAUL
Katherine Grey comes into Robert Dudley's bedroom in the dead of night.

ELIZABETH J TIMMS
Spending Tudor Summers

PLUS

SUSAN ABERNETHY
Elizabeth I's 1591 progress

and much more...

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