Tudor Life

The Tudor Society Magazine

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June 2022

Popular Culture

Mary, Queen of Scots on Screen

Lesser Known Screen Queens

Tudor Chroniclers

Early Music Revival

Experiencing Tudor History

Philip Howard, Earl of Arundel

AND MUCH MORE





The Exhibition of the Royal House of Tudor

By Elizabeth J Timms

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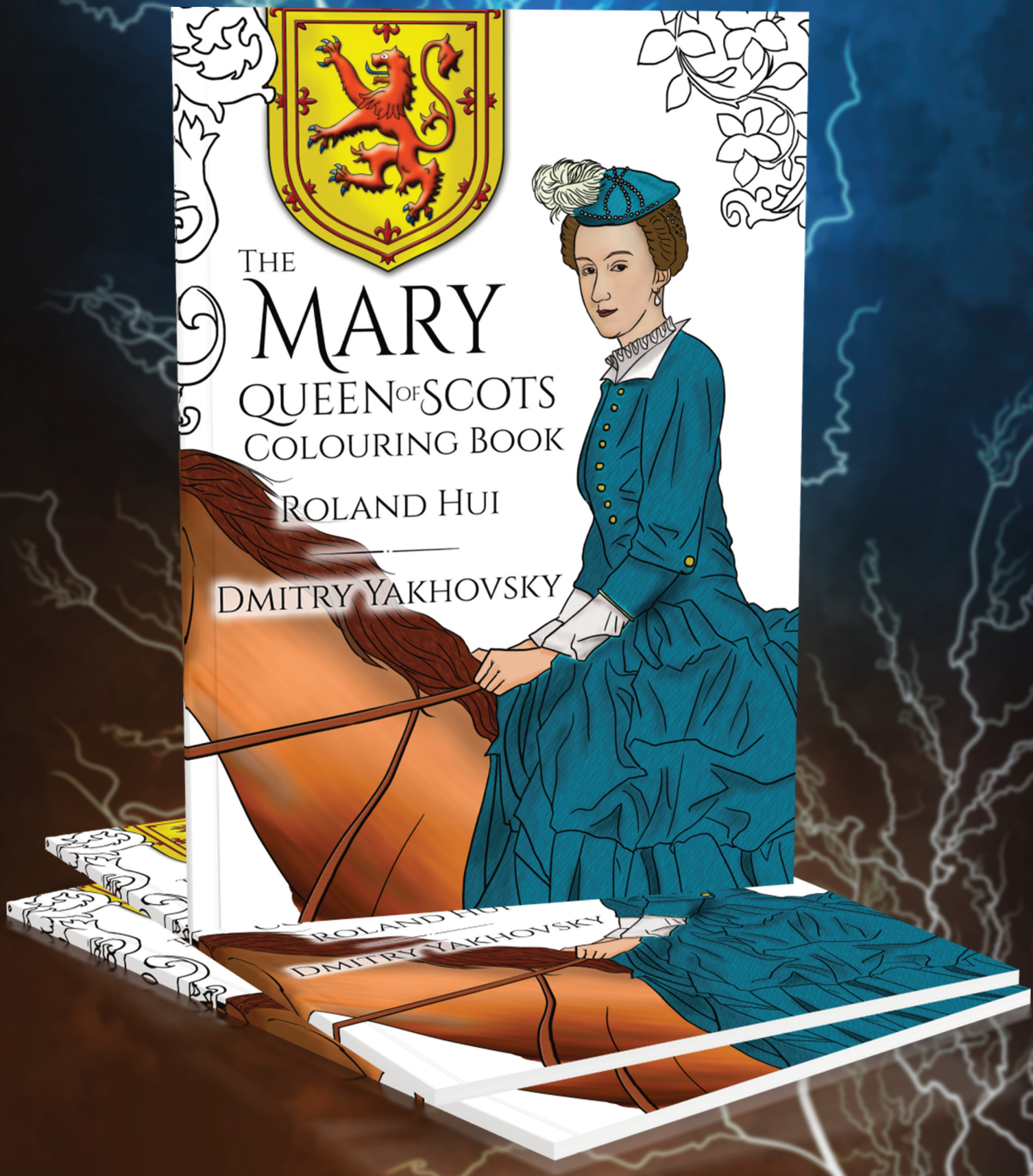



Popular Culture & The Tudors Today

Pop culture, whether for good or harm, divides Tudor enthusiasts. Its importance and impact does not. The success of the Philippa Gregory trilogy with Starz - "The White Queen," "The White Princess," and "The Spanish Princess" - saw the three eponymous queens played by Rebecca Ferguson, Jodie Comer, and Charlotte Hope. A trio of celebrated actresses, who helped turn the shows into ratings juggernauts, building on the enormous fan base for the books. The same is true of Hilary Mantel's "Wolf Hall," on Broadway and screen. Some say these shows inspire interest in the real thing, others that they misinform, while others think they're separate and should be judged solely as entertainment. Whatever one thinks, they've introduced millions to the House of Tudor.

GARETH RUSSELL
EDITOR

Above; The White Queen
BBC/Starz

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MARY I VILLAIN OR VICTIM?

by David Lee.

The reign of Mary I, eldest daughter of Henry VIII and only surviving child of Katherine of Aragon, has long been labelled as a disaster. The historiography that surrounds the life and times of England's first queen regnant has long been discussed. Indeed, many historians and authors have attempted to dismiss the myths of Mary's apparently 'bloody' reign and to separate fact from fiction. Though her reign was short, her legacy speaks volumes regarding sixteenth century attitudes towards female rule, Catholicism and the abuses of the Tudor regime. But what of the modern attitude towards Mary's reign? Why is it that we continue to revere her sister and successor Elizabeth I as 'Gloriana', while little is often offered but contempt or disregard for Mary? How accurate is the existing historiography of her life and reign? Does Mary deserve the title 'bloody Mary'? Was she in fact a villain, or victim? Most importantly, who was Mary I beyond our modern interpretation and popular culture?

Mary's historical reputation continues to carry the burden of myth, propaganda and dramatisation. The modern interpretation of the 'evil Catholic queen' with an unquenchable thirst for Protestant blood has long been debunked by historians. Even modern authors of historical fiction tend to be kinder to Mary. Yet, the burning of almost three-hundred people for the crime of their faith and ways of worship has never sat right with the public as a whole. We tend to forget that the reigns of Mary's grandfather, father, brother and sister were all just as bloody. So where does the current historiography come from? The fact that Mary outwardly opposed her father's and brother's religious policy prior to her own reign, and in overtly defiant manner, is where our initial interpretation of her character begins. The notion that Mary was a staunch Catholic to the bone is no myth. Nor was her wish to restore England to Catholicism. Yet, there was much more to Mary than her religion.

Mary's youth was dominated



Mary I by Antonis Mor
1554

by religious change and personal turmoil. Her father's disregard for and eventual divorce from her mother brought tragedy and trauma for the once princess, thereafter known simply as 'lady'. Mary not only lost her position, her mother, and her father's favour. She also lost her identity. Her father's break with the Roman Catholic Church also challenged her faith. The fact that Mary succeeded her brother at all in 1553 went against all the odds. She has been declared illegitimate, played second fiddle to her younger sister Elizabeth and then later to her brother Edward. Her brother's reign brought her nothing but suffering. Her father may have reconciled with his eldest daughter before his death in 1547, but she found it difficult to ignore her brother's religious policy and confronted him on numerous occasions. To say her life was in danger throughout her father's latter reign and the entirety of her brother's reign is an understatement.

Therefore, is it really a surprise that Mary's later policy towards religion has carried through this historical impression of her as what Loades has referred to as 'an instrument of Divine Judgement'? The burning of hundreds of Protestants within such a short period of time not only damaged her reputation during her own lifetime, but it inevitably handed down folklore that has seeped into popular culture and therefore, is often depicted as evidence of her tyranny. Her actions were by no means forgivable, even to the modern reader. However, hundreds if not thousands of more souls were taken during the reigns of her father and younger sister. Her mistake was not just to remove Edward VI's religious policy, but her alienation of her people in general by a blend of her foreign marriage, personal failures and persecution.

When Mary triumphed and set aside the nine-day queen, Lady Jane Grey, she was determined to show her new subjects just who their queen was. The people cheered, ecstatic to see the daughter of good king Henry on the throne. However, though she meant to do well by her people, Mary lacked the charm, confidence and charisma of her father and sister. Where Elizabeth was later able to flaunt her femininity, perhaps even her own notion of her sexuality to inspire and awe her subjects, Mary was more introverted and conservative. The people may have been initially happy to have Mary as queen, but she gave them the impression of being somewhat aloof, perhaps even uncomfortable in her position, or so it has been suggested. Though queen regnant, it is likely that Mary shared the contemporary attitude towards a woman's place in society. She was certainly



Philip II of Spain
by Titian c1550

more conservative than her grandmother, Isabella of Castile, known for being a woman of incredible courage and charisma.

Though Mary's reign was not on the same level as her father's and later her sister's reigns in terms of propaganda and public relations, it would be too easy to accept her character as cold, weak or even evil. The reality is much more complicated than that. One of the first mistakes Mary made was to marry a foreign prince. Though many retained great sentiment for Henry VIII's first queen, Katherine of Aragon, they were not comfortable with the idea of a male Spanish consort. This was again because of the Tudor attitude towards a woman's place in the world. Women were expected to be subordinate to men. If Mary were to Marry Philip, which she did, it meant that she would be submissive to him as a wife. Even she believed that. The Tudors were a superstitious society, and therefore, to see their queen as submissive to a foreign prince as her husband, was to indicate England's submission to a foreign power – Spain.

The second mistake Mary made, was the execution of Jane Grey. Her initial approach was to spare her young cousin, despite her remaining an attractive Protestant alternative. However, as further rebellions sprung up during Jane's imprisonment, and Jane's own refusal to either convert to Catholicism or at least conform and appear to do so, Mary was given little choice. Throughout history, this action has reflected badly upon Mary's character, but it was only the beginning of her bloody legacy.

The question of succession had long been a topic of discussion in Tudor England. During the reigns of Henry VIII and Edward VI, it was a problem that there existed more female contenders to the throne than male. Henry VIII was eventually provided with a son, but the hope of a this longed for boy was all for nothing. Edward died only five years into his reign, without having sired an heir. Mary's accession was by no means smooth, and we must remember that by the time Elizabeth succeeded, there remained no male heirs to the throne. Elizabeth also most definitely learnt from her sister's mistakes. Therefore, Mary's bad decisions as the de facto first queen regnant were bound to carry through in the collective historical memory. Mary twice believed she was pregnant, even stating that she felt her child stir inside her womb. Yet, in the end, there would be no baby, and her people were left disappointed. But neither did Elizabeth provide England with an heir. Mary tried so hard, yet remains criticised. Where Elizabeth refused to try at all, she has been glorified and

turned into an icon. Why is this? And what good did Mary do during her short reign? Can anything ever be enough to redeem her reputation?

Mary's reign has not only been deemed disastrous due to her foreign marriage, inability to produce an heir and the burning of Protestants. Her domestic policy in general has been broadly described as severe. To some early twentieth century historians, Mary was a religious bigot, oblivious to the inevitable change in the English attitude towards religion. Some have portrayed her as a sixteenth century woman, caught up in a political and religious situation of which she had to find some compromise. She has either been portrayed as a saint, a victim, or heroine. Loades has suggested that Mary's reign was not in fact been fruitless at all, but was a period of important social and political change. Ultimately, Mary's tenure as queen was an education not only for Elizabeth, but for England on female rule. Indeed, Mary may have signed some controversial and unpopular policies, but the fact that her reign survived the later consequences such as the Wyatt Rebellion, amongst others, is a testament to her strength and the power of the Monarchy at this time. Looking at her reign from this viewpoint, it is much easier to see that Mary was just a complex, passionate and enthusiastic queen regnant as Elizabeth. Her only mistake was her rashness when it came to policy, whereas Elizabeth was always more cautious. Especially early on in her reign.

It is also notable that the blame for Mary's shortcomings cannot be entirely put on her marriage to Philip. Indeed, Mary's own plans regarding Philip's position as king and the succession failed. An agreement on Philip's position and his power had to be quickly formulated prior to his marriage to Mary. Philip would be king only by right of his wife, but he did exercise some power. In fact, Mary and Philip were to be viewed as co-rulers. It was the act which made it treasonous to deny Philip's authority that perhaps made the couple seem somewhat ruthless. Mary and Philip also plunged England into a war with France which resulted in the loss of Calais - perhaps Mary's greatest failure. While this was devastating for her as queen, her people were more concerned with domestic issues such as multiple harvest failures and the spread of disease during the latter years of her reign. All of these issues mentioned culminated in what some historians refer to as demoralisation of the populous. This ultimately led to Mary's general unpopularity with her people by the end of her reign. To say that her failures outwardly appear to outweigh her successes

is an understatement. Yet, the fact that Mary reigned as long as she did and was able to successfully put down multiple rebellions at least shows that she had true conviction. Indeed, Mary's control over the English church by the end of her reign was substantial and England was well on the way to a full Catholic restoration.

Loades has argued that before the summer of 1555, Mary was extremely popular, despite her policy and looming marriage to Philip. However, after her failed 'pregnancies', multiple domestic problems - which were largely ignored, and the departure of Philip to Spain, her people lost confidence in her. What came next – the burnings of hundreds of Protestants after the revival of the heresy laws, including the archbishop, Thomas Cranmer, has handed us down the image of a Mary was a bloody tyrant. The fact that many of the c. 300 Protestants who were burned for their faith were common citizens, has also led us to her villainous portrayal, both through decades of Protestant propaganda, a divide in historiography and fiction. We must remember that Mary truly believed that she was saving souls.

It must also be noted that as Elizabeth was Mary's successor, one whom she tried to disinherit and defeat, it is unsurprising that her short, Catholic, and relatively bloody reign has been so long interpreted as tyrannical. Mary had already long suffered under her father's regime, and therefore we must understand her approach towards religion and domestic policy from the standpoint of a Catholic Renaissance princess, and also that of a woman scorned. More notably, her failures must also not be entirely blamed on her personally, for Mary herself was determined to rule by good council. Therefore, her biggest mistake was to surround herself with the wrong men, who gave her the wrong advice. Indeed, some have argued that if Mary had lived some two decades longer, without providing an heir, Elizabeth may well have been unable to reverse much of the Marian policies, and thus English politics may have taken a different direction.

Whatever way we view the reign of Mary I, a multitude of factors will always play a role in why we do so. A combination of Protestant Elizabethan propaganda, myth, legend and genuine personal and political failures have led to a split in attitudes towards England's first queen regnant. We are quick to judge her reign based on the burnings of hundreds of people, and while this horrific factor of her reign cannot be ignored or excused, she signed less death warrants than that of her father and sister. Mary was not in fact

the frail or despotic queen that many have depicted her as either. Rather she was courageous, intelligent, steadfast in her ambitions, but unfortunate. What she lacked in beauty or charisma, she made up for in her determination to survive. Something that she shared with Elizabeth. Today, if we can learn anything from the life and reign of Mary I, it is that her short and somewhat sad tenure as queen paved the way for her sister's glorious reign. So was Mary I a villain or victim? It seems that despite her severity as queen and her tragic and tumultuous life, she was neither. Mary was a survivor.

DAVID LEE

•Anna Whitelock, Mary Tudor: England's first queen, (London, 2009).

•David Loades, 'The reign of Mary Tudor: historiography and research', in Albion: A Quarterly Journal Concerned with British Studies, vol. 21, no. 4 (1989), pp 547-558.

•Tracy Borman, The private lives of the Tudors: uncovering the secrets of Britain's greatest dynasty, (London, 2016).

About David Lee

David 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.



Early Music Revival

The journey towards hearing music the Tudor way

By Jane Moulder

I am sure that many readers of Tudor Life will have some CDs and recordings of period music in their collection. Whether it is of popular songs and dances, the doleful lute songs of John Dowland or some of the gorgeous polyphony of William Byrd, Thomas Tallis and their contemporaries. Some members may have visited a renaissance fayre or a medieval joust and been entertained by some costumed musicians playing period instruments, all adding an 'authentic' flavour to the occasion. Today, we take this all for granted. But behind the music and instruments we listen, there is over 100 years of research to reach the point where 'early music' is accepted and commonplace.

Musical fashions and trends change and alter over time, just like everything else. Even 50 years after the death of Elizabeth, the music, instruments and tunes familiar to the Tudors were being seen as old fashioned and tastes changed, especially with the Restoration of Charles II, when large groups of violins playing together became all the rage. Therefore, by the beginning of the 20th century, the music of the Tudors was more or less forgotten, even the choral music of William Byrd was not being performed as part of sung masses in Cathedrals.

There was one attempt at reviving the music of the renaissance and that was as early as 1726 when a group of musicians, led by Johann Pepusch, set up The Academy of Ancient Music. Pepusch was a German composer who settled in England and he became well known as a musician, teacher and theatre director. The Society's aims were to explore and perform the music of the past but especially that of the Elizabethan period. Despite this, the Society also performed works by Handel, who was very much alive at the time and actually helped cement his popularity. The Society met at the Crown and Anchor Tavern in London and each year put on a series of subscription concerts and was popular for a time but by 1797, the Society was folded. The name, though, was revived in the early 1970's by Christopher Hogwood, a keyboard player. His group, The Academy of

Ancient Music was at the forefront on the early music revival in the 1970s.

After this time, the music slid into obscurity until the early 20th century. The person who today has been attributed with spearheading the revival of music from the past is Arnold Dolmetsch. He was a French musician who eventually settled in London. His family trade was building keyboard instruments and Arnold obviously picked up the necessary instrument making skills which would later enable him to fulfil his passion. After studying music in Brussels, he came to London in order to study at the Royal College of Music. His passion for instruments was fired having seen some historic instruments in the British Museum and he set about constructing copies of them. He first of all made a lute, followed soon after by harpsichords, clavichords and then various string instruments such as viols. He eventually set up an instrument making workshop in Haslemere, Surrey and this went on to become a major centre for the promotion of early music in England. Arnold not only made the first ever modern harpsichord,



Johann Perpusch

but he also, following the loss of an original Bressan recorder, made the first ever reproduction of a recorder. It was the promotion of this instrument that really made his name famous throughout the world. Dolmetsch's children followed in his footpath and his son, Carl, became a leading recorder player and established recorder making on a commercial basis, enabling many amateur musicians to be able to buy and play the music – thus spreading its popularity.

Arnold Dolmetsch also researched and wrote a landmark book called "The Interpretation of the Music of the XVIIth and XVIIIth Centuries" having studied various original treatises from the baroque period. He helped establish the concept of 'authentic' performance whereby the way that music was played in the past, in terms of style and ad-



The Dolmetsch family playing instruments made by Arnold, pictured in 1928

ornments, was different from the modern style.

Dolmetsch was not the only person who was interested in playing music from the past in an authentic manner and various other people were to have a huge influence on this fledgling movement. Names associated with the early revival are Thurston Dart and Robert Donnington from England and also Paul Sacher, a Swiss, who established the Schola Cantorum Basiliensis in 1930. This was one of the first training centres to be established for teaching music-making with on period instruments. It is still a world leader in training period musicians.

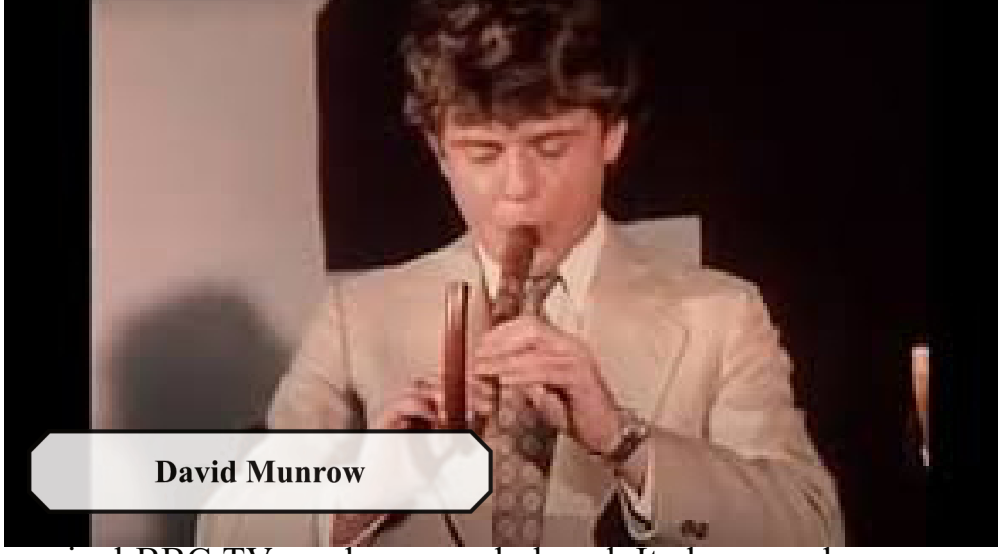
The interest in music from before the 'classical' period grew during the first decades of the 20th century but it was during 1960s and '70s that there was huge snowballing of activities in the field – whether concerned with performance research, history, instruments, repertoire, interpretation or re-creation. Many groups



Arnold with his son, Carl, working on recorders in 1929.

were established and recordings made enabling the music to be heard by more and more people. Early music was becoming established and recognised.

One of the key figures who was instrumental in broadening the appeal of early music, especially that of the medieval and Tudor periods, was David Munrow. As a young man, he was a keen musician and had spent a gap year central and south America, where he became interested in the local music and instruments. When he eventually went to university to study English he met up with Thurston Dart, who was then professor of music at Cambridge, and it was he who lent Munrow a crumhorn. This spurred the Munrow to change courses and study early music instead. He eventually joined the Royal Shakepeare Company as a bassoonist and therefore became very interested in music of the Tudor period. He had an obsession with instruments, both early and ethnographic, and he commissioned many makers and had a huge collection. He helped popularise 16th century music by providing the scores for two



David Munrow

seminal BBC TV productions (no doubt well known by members of the Tudor Society) – The Six Wives of Henry VIII (1970) and Elizabeth R (1971). He also had a radio series, Pied Piper, where he looked at all genres of music. He made many programmes, provided the soundtrack to tv and films and founded his own group, The London Early Music Consort, made many records and wrote books – but it was his clear love and enthusiasm for the music and instruments which, above all others, helped convert many fans to the genre. He sadly died, having committed suicide, in the mid '70s but he is still talked about and listened to today.

In order to play the music of the past ages, it is always best to play it on instruments that match the period. In this way, one can have a better idea of how the music would have sounded when first written and played. It also sounds better – well, in my opinion anyway! In the same way that the repertoire had to be discovered and researched, the instruments too had to be rediscovered and recreated. Those made by Arnold Dolmetsch would probably not be considered appropriate for today's musicians and since he made his fledging attempts, there has been a considerable expansion in knowledge and understanding of the instruments. In the mid 20th century several makers and manufacturers sought to reproduce instruments in order to feed the renewed interest and increasing number of players. However, when they did so, they did not make historical reproductions, believing them to be inferior to what could be made today. Instead, they sought to 'improve' the design using modern understanding and to overcome the 'problems' they saw with the originals.

These ‘problems’ included a limited range, or a ‘thin’ sound. What they did though was to change the nature of the instrument and produce something that was neither historically accurate or appropriate. Sadly, a lot of those instruments are still in circulation and played today, more often than not by people who think they have the genuine article. Modern woodwinds instruments today are characterised by a plethora of keys. These are there to stabilise and achieve notes that are difficult or impossible to produce on their earlier ancestors. It is these difficulties in achieving a full range of notes on the instruments that is one of the attractions to a modern early music performer – the musician has got to work a lot harder and devise various techniques in order to achieve a ’good’ sound rather than just simply pressing another key. Viols and early violins have gut strings rather than the modern metal strings and they require a different technique and bows, too, are constructed and held differently from their modern equivalents – all these factors, on top of the construction method, conspire to produce a very different sound from a modern violin. Early bowed stringed instrument were thought inferior because they are not so loud and the tone is ‘smaller’ and not as ‘refined’ but by embracing the differences, they can produce characterful music in keeping with the period. Thankfully, thanks to some pioneering efforts of makers who have studied the original instruments and reproduced



Modern reproductions of historical Instruments on display at an early music exhibition.

them faithfully, with understanding and skill, there is now a superb range of highly competent instruments available for both amateurs and professionals alike.

The understanding of how the instruments were played together has also progressed over the years. Recordings made of renaissance dance music from the 1970s are characterised by numerous instruments all being played together on one track – crumhorns, shawms, recorders, gemshorns, racketts and sackbuts accompanied by lots of different types of percussion was typical. It was like all the toys from the toy box all being used at once! But today, there is a much more homogenous and appropriate interpretation as the knowledge and understanding of how the music would have been played has increased.

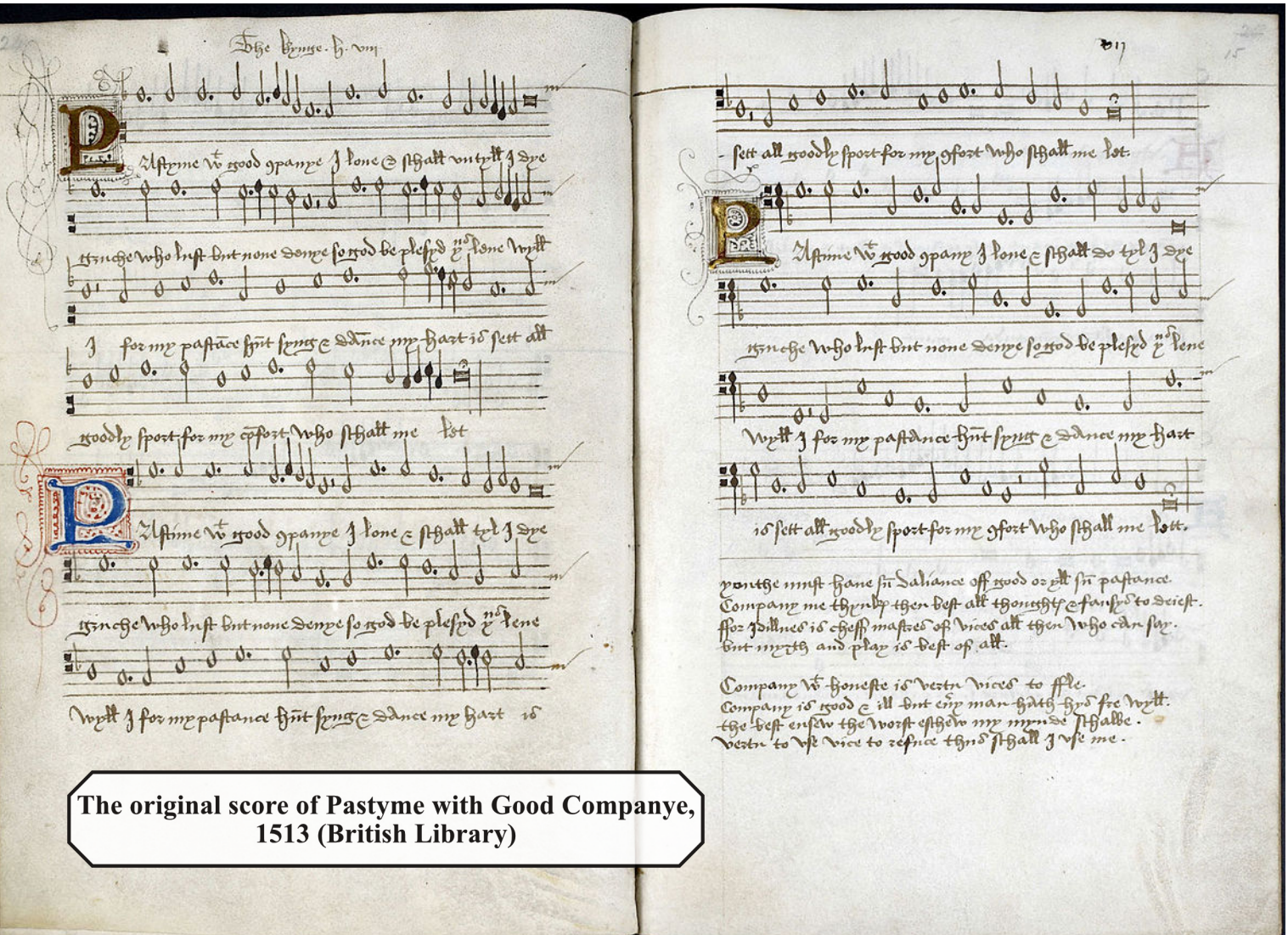
As with any other area of study and research, there is always a pull between academia and practical application: with the former adopting a theoretical and dogmatic approach and the interpreters making their own assumptions about how the music should be played. The two sides didn't (and still don't) always see eye to eye! There are also differing attitudes to early music and these too have changed over the years. There is a view, held by some, that composers such as Brahms and Wagner are the height of musical accomplishment and, at one point, even Bach was not considered worthy. On that basis, the popular dances and ballads of the time of Henry VIII and Elizabeth I would not be given any credence whatsoever!



There is an approach which focuses on 'authentic performance' using treatises and research and then there is the approach which takes the historical knowledge but artistic interpretation is of primary importance. Conductor, John Eliot Gardiner, who has worked closely with many of the world's leading early music ensembles and orchestras has said, "My enthusiasm for

period instruments is not antiquarian or in pursuit of a spurious and unattainable authenticity, but just simply as a refreshing alternative to the standard, monochrome qualities of the symphony orchestra." Historical research can provide the structure and detailed background on the music of the period but the way it is interpreted and sounds and, most importantly, how it is received and appreciated by an audience is down to musicianship and invention of the performer.

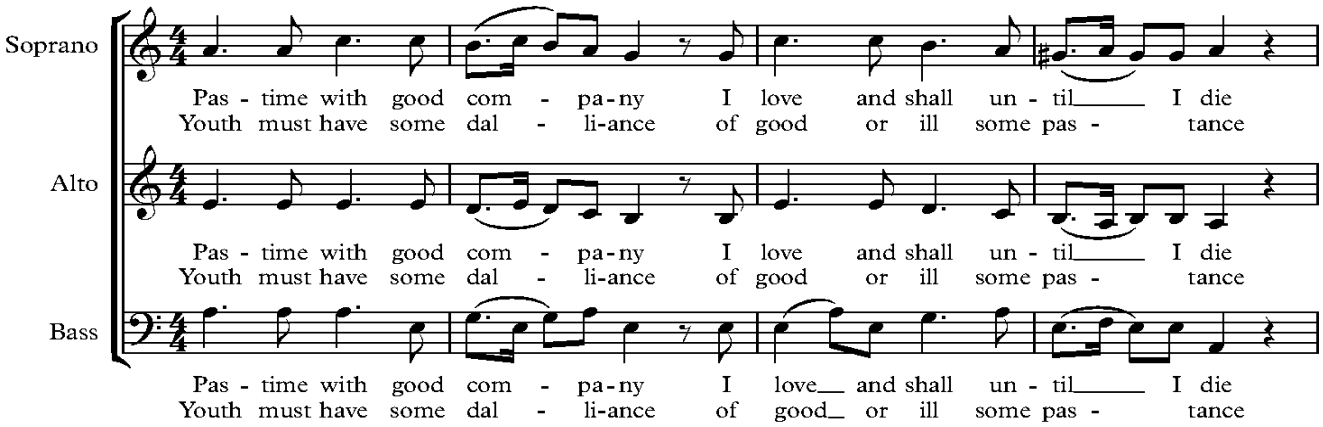
As a performer myself, one of the biggest changes I have seen in the 40 of so years since I have been playing is, along the improvement in instrument making, the accessibility of printed music. It is one thing having the enthusiasm and the instruments, it is another thing having the music in front of you to play! In the early days of the early music revival, access to music was reserved for the few. Often researched and studied by academics, the commercial printing of it was not viable. It was therefore hard to access and very expensive when found. During the latter part of the 20th century, this began to change. More people were researching and transcribing music into modern notation and printing processes were becoming less specialised allowing small, specialist publishers to enter the market. Today, with online and digital resources, the problem (if it can be called that), is now the sheer abundance of material available. However, there is still a plethora of music to be transcribed from the original documents but digital copies are easily accessible for those that can read the music and music software produces

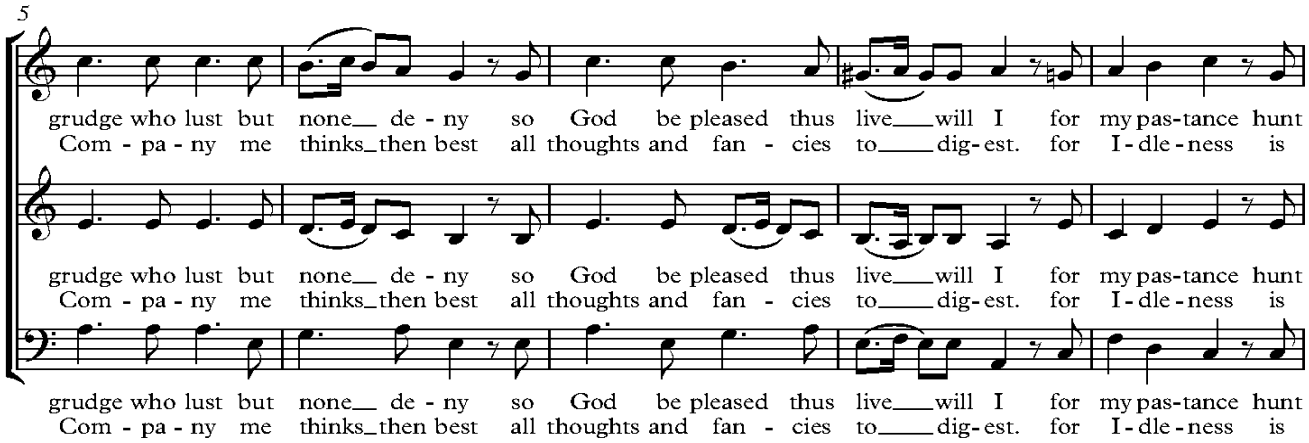


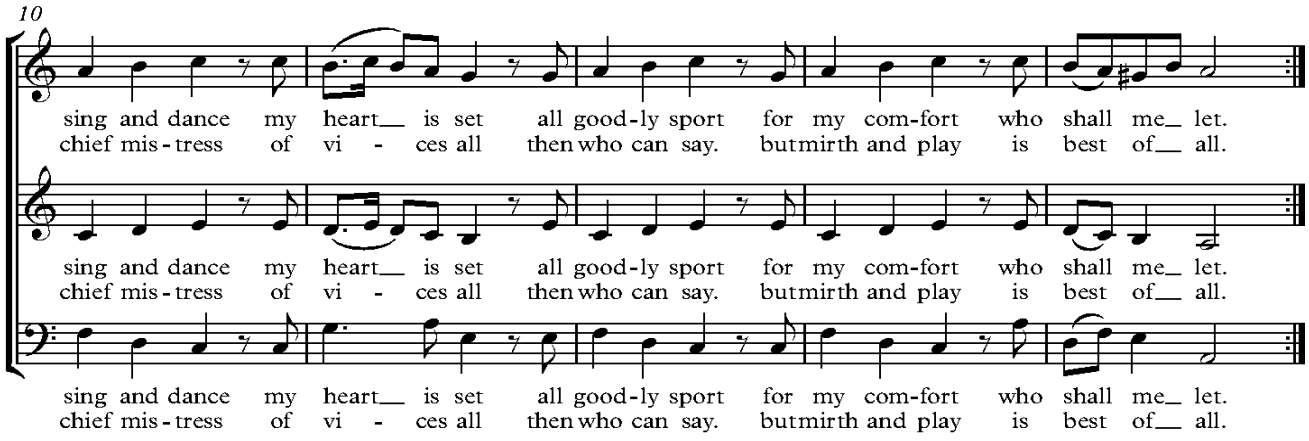
The original score of Pastyme with Good Companye, 1513 (British Library)

Pastime with Good Company

Henry VIII (1491-1547)







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A modern rendition of the same piece.

very professional finished results.

Looking to the courts of Henry VIII and Elizabeth I, the music that was predominantly performed was dance and ballad music. This was music for entertainment, the pop music of the day. The music is structurally simple and therefore is approachable and can be easily performed by amateur musicians. Today, thanks to the work of all who have gone before, the world of early music is open to many to play and enjoy. They can do so knowing that their instruments are good reproductions, the style in which it should be played and can easily find and read the music of the period. And everyone can listen and enjoy the results!

The world of early music has changed hugely over the years and as well as there being better instruments, more music and greater understanding of how it was played, the big change is also for the listener. It's a niche area and records and CDs were difficult to find but now, with the expansion of media services anyone can easily access a vast range of period music to suit ones tastes and moods on various streaming services or via YouTube. So do explore and see what you can find. You may like to listen to my own group, PIVA. We specialise in the popular dance and ballad music of the late 16th century, especially English music.

https://piva.org.uk/

JANE MOULDER



Who played Henry VIII?

Can you name the actors?















Anne Boleyn's Coronation

The 1st June 1533, Whitsun, was the day of Anne Boleyn's coronation ceremony at Westminster Abbey. **CLAIRE RIDGWAY** looks at this lavish affair…

The chronicler Edward Hall records that the Mayor, clad in scarlet and wearing his chain of office, took a barge to Westminster at 7am. He was accompanied by the aldermen, by the sheriffs, and by the Council of the City of London. At Westminster they waited for the Queen. She arrived between 8 o'clock and 9 o'clock, and stood under the cloth of state as the royal court and peers gathered, dressed in their parliament robes. A railed blue "ray cloth" was spread all the way from the high dais of the King's bench to the high



Claire Foy as Anne Boleyn in Wolf Hall



Charlotte Rampling as Anne Boleyn in Henry VIII and his Six Wives

altar of the abbey, and the officers of arms helped organise those gathered into a procession.

Hall records the procession order as:

- Gentleman
- Squires
- Knights
- Alderman of the City
- Judges
- Knights of the Bath
- Barons and viscounts
- Earls, marquesses and dukes
- Lord Chancellor
- Staff of the Chapel Royal and monks
- Abbots and bishops
- Sergeants and officers of arms
- The Mayor of London
- Marquess of Dorset, bearing the sceptre of gold
- Earl of Arundel, bearing the rod of ivory topped with a dove
- Earl of Oxford, High Chamberlain of England, carrying the crown of St Edward
- Charles Brandon, Duke of Suffolk and High Steward of England for the day
- William Howard, carrying the rod of the Marshal of England
- The Garter Knights

Following this procession came the woman of the day, the pregnant Queen Anne Boleyn. Anne was wearing a surcoat and robe of purple velvet, trimmed with ermine, and the coif and circlet she had worn for the procession the previous day. Her train was carried by the Dowager Duchess of Norfolk, and she walked barefoot under a canopy of cloth of gold carried by the barons of the Cinque Ports. Anne made her way to the "great chair", the chair of St



Genevieve Bujold as Anne Boleyn
in Anne of the Thousand Days

Edward, where she rested for a while before descending to the high altar. There, Anne prostrated herself while Thomas Cranmer, Archbishop of Canterbury, prayed over her. When she got up, he anointed her. She was then able to rest once again in St Edward's chair while orations were said. Cranmer crowned Anne with the crown of St Edward, which was usually reserved for crowning the reigning monarch. He placed the sceptre in her right hand and the rod in her left. The Te Deum was sung and Cranmer helped Anne exchange the heavy crown for a custom-made lighter version.

Mass was celebrated, and Anne took the sacrament before visiting St Edward's shrine and giving the traditional offering. She then rested for a few moments while everybody formed into a line to process back to Westminster Hall for the coronation banquet. Anne walked back, her right hand "sustained" by her father, the Earl of Wiltshire, and her left hand by Lord Talbot, who was acting as a deputy for his father, the Earl of Shrewsbury. Trumpets played as they processed to the hall. It was time for the celebratory banquet.

At the banquet, Anne sat on the King's marble chair set under a cloth of state. She sat next to Thomas Cranmer, Archbishop of Canterbury, and was attended by the Dowager Countess of Oxford and the Countess of Worcester, who stood beside her, and two gentlewomen at her feet. The Earl of Oxford was high chamberlain, the Earl of Essex was the carver, the Earl of Sussex



Natalie Dormer as Anne Boleyn in The Tudors



Natalie Portman as Anne Boleyn in
The Other Boleyn Girl

the sewer, the Earl of Derby the cupbearer, the Earl of Arundel the chief butler and Thomas Wyatt the chief ewer, on behalf of his father. Between Anne and the Archbishop stood the Earl of Oxford, with his white staff of office. When everyone was seated the Duke of Suffolk and William Howard entered the hall on horseback to announce the first course, which was being carried by the knights of the Bath. Suffolk is described by Hall as wearing a jacket and doublet "set with orient perle" and a gown of embroidered crimson velvet, sitting on a horse draped with crimson velvet, embroidered with real gold letters, which reached the ground. "Trumpets and hautbois sounded at each course, and heralds cried "largesse."" Henry VIII did not join the banquet but watched proceedings, accompanied by the ambassadors of France and Venice, from a special "little closet" which Hall described as situated "out of the cloyster of S. Stephens".

The banquet was followed by wafers and hippocras, then the Queen washed and enjoyed "a voyde of spice and comfettes", after over eighty dishes! After that, the Mayor passed her a gold cup, from which she drank, before giving it back to him. Anne then retired to her chambers where she had to go through the formalities of thanking everyone before she could rest. At 6pm it was finally over, it had been a long and exhausting day for her.

The coronation celebrations were not actually at an end. The four days of processions and pageantry were followed by jousts and further banqueting. King Henry VIII and Queen Anne Boleyn were triumphant.

CLAIRE RIDGWAY

THE TUDOR SOCIETY

Members' Bulletin

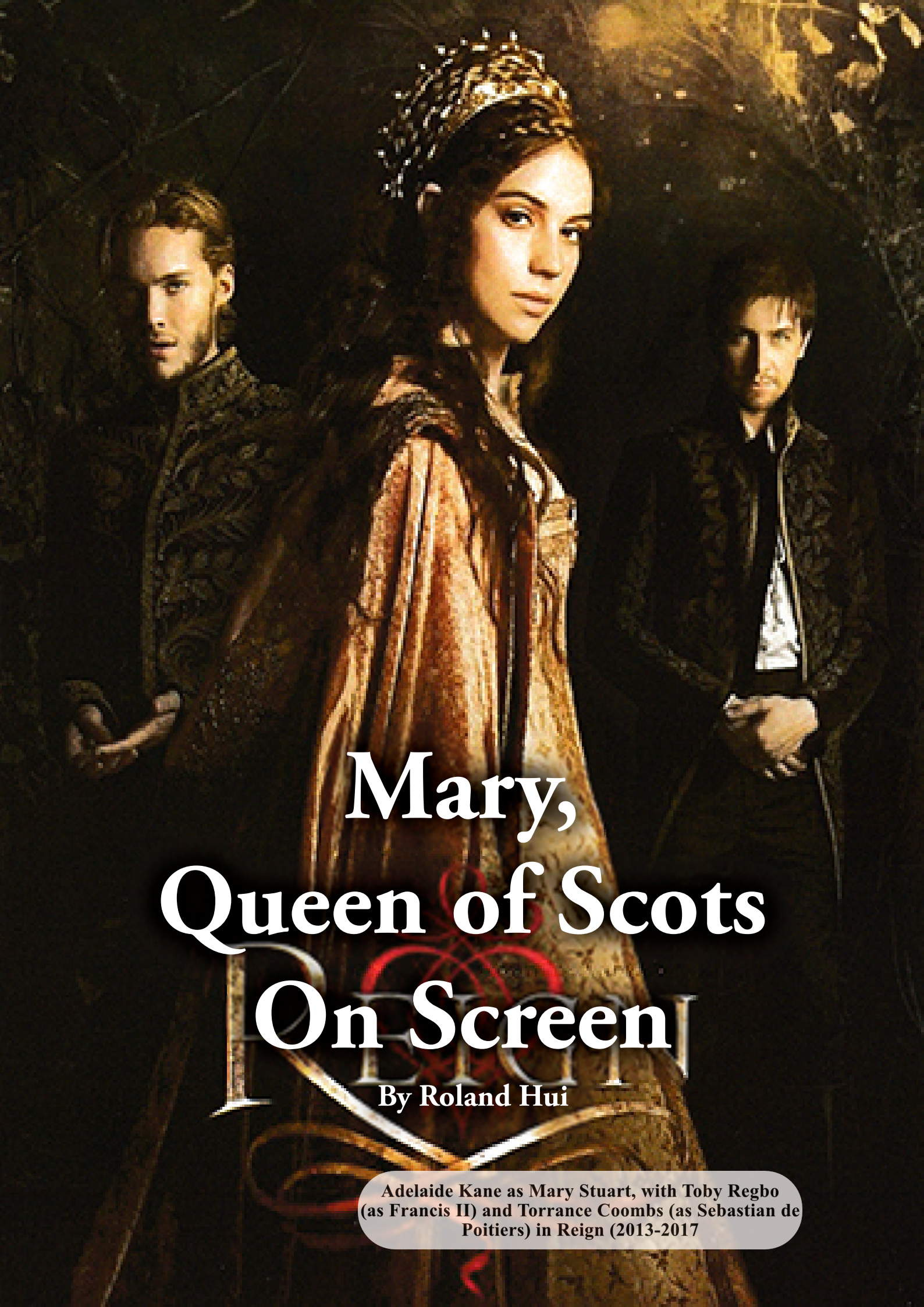
We have some big changes happening from next month at the Tudor Society and all members will shortly receive an email from us about these changes.

As the summer season gets fully underway, we'd like to thank all those who work at Tudor historical sites around the country. A good number of our members work in this capacity, either as employees or as volunteers. Your knowledge can make the difference between an average visit and an excellent one. We like to think that the resources brought to you by the Tudor Society are helping to dispel the myths and put solid facts in their place.

Where are your favourite Tudor sites? We obviously love Hever Castle, the Tower of London, Hampton Court Palace and Dover Castle. Sometimes it feels like all the best Tudor places are in the south east of England. But of course there are some other wonderful places all across the country, places like Bradgate Park in Leicestershire, Bosworth Battlefield and also Sheffield Manor Lodge come to mind. We're so blessed to have such a wealth of historical sites to visit wherever you are. PLEASE DO make a point of speaking to the staff at these places. There's so much to learn just by asking questions, and they are there to help you gain a knowledge about our rich and fascinating history.

Thank you so much for your support of the Tudor Society and as we grow and change our offering we do hope you'll continue to be with us on the journey.

TIM RIDGWAY



Mary, Queen of Scots On Screen

By Roland Hui

Adelaide Kane as Mary Stuart, with Toby Regbo (as Francis II) and Torrance Coombs (as Sebastian de Poitiers) in Reign (2013-2017

Of the 16th century monarchs, Mary Queen of Scots has the longest cinematic history. As early as 1895, the great inventor Thomas Edison made a short film about her. Depictions of Mary's death were plentiful in the 19th century as seen in paintings and in wax tableaux, and Edison's recreation of the executioner striking her head off (done with nascent special effects) was in keeping with the interest in Mary Stuart as a tragic heroine. This fascination continued into the era of silent motion pictures when some half dozen features were made about her life. Unfortunately, hardly any of these have survived, but in 2020, one entitled *The Loves of Mary, Queen of Scots*, made in 1923, was rescued from obscurity and given a public showing after nearly a century.[1]

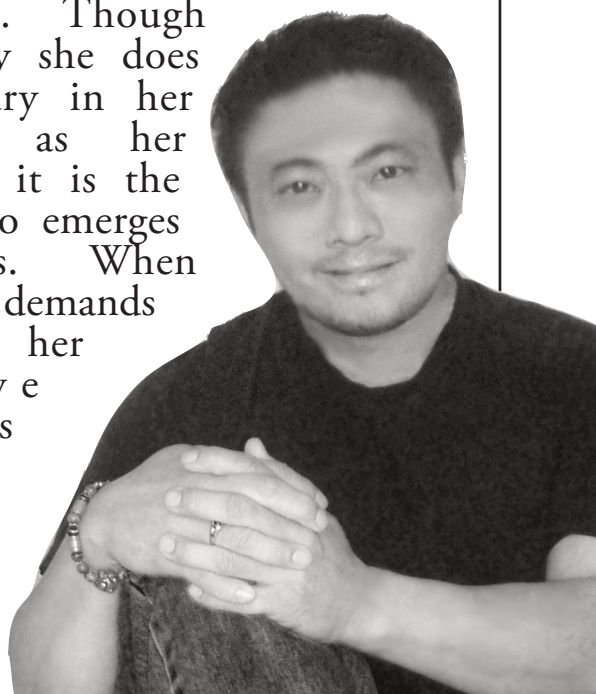
It was not surprising that in the 'golden age' of Hollywood in the 1930's, Mary Queen of Scots found herself upon the silver screen again. The source material this time around was a play by the celebrated dramatist Maxwell Anderson (who would later tackle another doomed and headless queen, Anne Boleyn, in *Anne of the Thousand Days*). Released in 1936, *Mary of Scotland* was directed by John Ford, an unusual choice given that he was better known for the many Westerns he did and not for what was termed 'women's pictures'. The casting of actress Katharine Hepburn was equally odd. One critic thought that the popular actress, widely recognized for her distinct persona onscreen and off, came across as 'not really Mary Stuart but rather Katie Hepburn.'[2]

The focus of *Mary of Scotland* was upon the title character as a romantic figure, one so very different from her



Katharine Hepburn and Fredric March in Mary of Scotland (1936)

cousin and adversary Elizabeth of England. Whereas Mary is open, gentle, devout, and wholly feminine, Elizabeth (Florence Eldridge) is guarded, gruff, practical, and mannish. Their rivalry is established from the very beginning when Mary's return to her native Scotland is seen as a threat to Elizabeth. Though eventually she does have Mary in her clutches as her prisoner, it is the latter who emerges victorious. When Elizabeth demands that her captive renounces her claim to the



English throne in order to save her life, Mary refuses. It is Elizabeth who will eventually die unloved and barren, while Mary has known true passion (with her husband Lord Bothwell) and her son Prince James will one day inherit the English crown.

In presenting Mary as a heroine, Hepburn's characterization of her was an innocent victim smeared by others, unlike her historical counterpart whose involvement in her second husband's murder is still suspected and who was almost certainly guilty of plotting Elizabeth I's assassination. Even Bothwell (Fredric March, who was married to Florence Eldridge incidentally), widely considered to have instigated Lord Darnley's murder, is shown in the film as blameless and noble. Bothwell is even an admired 'man's man' as opposed to the weak and sexually ambiguous Darnley (Douglas Walton), and he is the great love of Mary's life. On the eve of her execution, she proudly tells Elizabeth that despite the misery she had fallen into, she would not have given up a day with Bothwell to have a hundred years of her cousin's life.

Even though *Mary of Scotland* was adapted from a reputable play and was given the deluxe treatment by RKO Pictures, it received mixed reviews and failed at the box office. Still, filmmakers were willing to give Mary Stuart another chance four years later. However this time around, it was a German, rather than an American production. Conceived and made during World War II, *Das Herz der Königin* (*The Heart of the Queen*) was somewhat of a propaganda film. With a sympathetic Maria Stewart (Zarah Leander) as the enemy and



Zarah Leander and Willy Birgel in Das Herz der Königin (1940)

victim of the Queen of England (Maria Koppenhöfer), it cast Britain in a wholly negative light. Even the movie's opening titles did not conceal its disdain against Elizabeth. As the audience was told, she 'pursued Maria Stewart with jealousy and hate. She tried to incite the Scottish people to revolt against their lawful ruler.'

Whereas Bothwell was decent and just in the 1936 film, it was not the case in the later German version. He (Willy Birgel) has Maria under his control and she becomes lovesick over him. "My heart had seduced me," she later confesses. "I only followed my heart." Things come to a head when Maria, unhappily married to Prince Henry Darnley (Axel von Ambesser) gives Bothwell



Vivian Pickles and Bernard Holley (as Gilbert Gifford) in Elizabeth R (1971

her consent to have him killed. When she is later imprisoned by Elizabeth and condemned, Maria willingly goes to the scaffold - even though she is innocent of conspiring against her cousin - in contrition for Darnley and Bothwell's deaths - and that of a devoted servant named Olivier (Will Quadflieg) who had died for her sake. *Das Herz der Königin* was not a success, and is now largely remembered as a curiosity (a German-made movie about a Scottish Queen) and for showcasing Zarah Leander as a songstress; she performs a number of songs in the film interestingly enough.

Interest in Mary Stuart was dormant for the next two decades. She then popped up in *Seven Seas to Calais* (1962), a movie about the exploits of Sir Francis Drake (Rod Taylor).[3] As this was an Italian production - though made in English - Mary was played by an Italian actress (Esmeralda Ruspoli). Her part is actually small; the imprisoned queen plots a getaway but her escape in disguise is later discovered.[4] This much thwarted lady was given far more screen time seven years later in a BBC 'Play of the Month' entitled *Mary Queen of Scots* with actress Virginia McKenna in the lead. However, little is now known of this production and prints of it apparently no longer exist or are hidden away in archives. The same can be said of the forgotten television series *Mistress of Hardwicke* (1972), about the life of Bess of Hardwicke, which had Gilly McIver portraying Queen Mary.[5]

Following the success of The BBC's *The Six Wives of Henry VIII* (1970), a sequel was made about the long reign of Henry's younger daughter, Elizabeth Tudor, a year later. Like its predecessor, *Elizabeth R* consisted of six episodes, of which the fourth, *Horrible Conspiracies* centred on the Babington Plot that brought Mary (Vivian Pickles) to her destruction. As the series was about Elizabeth I (Glenda Jackson), Mary appeared as an unsympathetic villainess, 'inspiring numerous plots, encouraging hellish priests, popish conspiracies, and all manner of dangerous wickedness,' as described by the English spymaster Sir Francis Walsingham (Stephen Murray). Even when she is first introduced in an earlier episode, Mary's ill will for Elizabeth is evident. She ridicules her cousin's affair with Robert Dudley (Robert Hardy) and she is duplicitous in her dealings. After

Mary is detained in England, the years have made her a sad and desperate figure with a mocking tone and a shrill voice to match. As *Horrible Conspiracies* was written, there was no doubt as to Mary's wanting Elizabeth dead.

After her *tour-de force* as the great Gloriana in *Elizabeth R*, Glenda Jackson resumed the role in Hollywood producer Hall Wallis's *Mary Queen of Scots* (1971). Wallis had initially thought of the French-Canadian actress Genevieve Bujold, whom he had elevated to international stardom in the film version of *Anne of the Thousand Days* (1969), but she declined and he had to look elsewhere. Another actress with an association to Anne Boleyn, Vanessa Redgrave, who had played Henry VIII's famed second wife in *A Man for All Seasons* (1966), was cast instead. Redgrave, as she later admitted, did little research on what made Mary Stuart tick, preferring to work intuitively. "Characters don't emerge simply from reading books," Redgrave said, "I get a sudden lightning impression of some quality I'm after. A stray phrase from a speech or an odd sentence or two may do it."[6]

Unlike the Mary in *Elizabeth R*, she was reverted into a romantic figure. Tall and lovely as the historical Queen of Scotland was, Redgrave gave a good impression of her in the years before her later decline. However, Mary loves too easily and comes to regret her marriage to Lord Darnley (Timothy Dalton) who is a vicious drunk and a bisexual who also sleeps with Mary's Italian secretary David Riccio (Ian Holm). She finds solace with the rakish Bothwell (Nigel Davenport),



Vanessa Redgrave in Mary Queen of Scots (1971)

and comes to condone his murder of Darnley. As in *Das Herz der Königin*, Mary later comes to accept her death in atonement for her past sins, and as in *Mary of Scotland*, she has the ultimate triumph over Elizabeth. Her cousin must live with the guilt of killing her and the knowledge that one day it will be her son who will rule England.

Despite its high production values and its strong performances, *Mary Queen of Scots* got mostly poor reviews. Its old fashioned grandeur was at odds with the popular culture of the early 1970s, and Mary, as she was presented in the film, did not connect with many viewers of the time. As the academic Thomas S. Freeman opined, Mary Stuart as 'an adulterer and an accessory to murder' and as 'timorous and unsure' in personality made her unlikeable and

unrelatable to audiences, especially in the wake of second-wave feminism.[7]

Tudor-themed films then went into a decline until their revival thanks to director Shekhar Kapur's well received *Elizabeth* (1998). Due to its success, a movie about Mary and Elizabeth was then proposed - possibly with Meryl Streep and Glenn Close - but it did not come to fruition. Instead, audiences got to see Mary in the two-part miniseries *Gunpowder, Treason & Plot* (2004). Taking a cue from Kapur's conspiracy ridden take on Tudor history, the program focused on two gunpowder-based crimes, the murder of Lord Darnley and the attempt to blow up Parliament in 1605. As screenwriter Jimmy McGovern told it, Mary (Clémence Poésy) was guilty of her husband's murder, being driven to it by Darnley (Paul Nicholls)'s brutal treatment of her and by her passion for Bothwell (Kevin McKidd). She has no regrets - even if she was damned for it as she tells a priest - as she is determined to protect herself and her son Prince James. However, years later, James (Robert Carlyle) as King of Scotland is far less reciprocal in his feelings for his mother. In 1587, he goes to Fortheringhay Castle to get a last look at her - without her knowing - on the eve of her execution. He does nothing to prevent it as he is single-mindedly determined to inherit the throne of Queen Elizabeth (Catherine McCormack). In the following year, Mary appeared again - twice - on television, briefly in *Elizabeth I* and in *The Virgin Queen*. Both had her (Barbara Flynn and Charlotte Winner respectively) as an enemy guilty of plotting against her English cousin.



Samantha Morton in Elizabeth - The Golden Age (2007)

Mary Stuart reappeared on the big screen in *Elizabeth - The Golden Age* (2007).[8] As played by Samantha Morton, the imprisoned Mary is still beautiful and alluring, and she uses her charms to flirt with and to pull the wool over the eyes of her jailer Sir Amias Paulet (Tom Hollander) - or so she thinks. When her scheming is discovered, Mary dies majestically as filmed by Shekhar Kapur. Amidst a chorus of sombre voices and gorgeously robed in flaming red, she goes serenely to her death as a Catholic martyr, while Elizabeth (Cate Blanchett), on the other hand, is tormented. As an ecstatic Mary places herself on the block, she even gives the headsman a seductive last look.

In 2013, Swiss filmmaker Thomas Imbach tried his hand at telling Mary's story. Using Stefan Zweig's acclaimed 1935 biography of her, Imbach took an unusual approach in tackling Mary (Camille Rutherford) psychologically, as was interested in 'her personality and her inner life'.[9] Her thoughts are revealed through letters and imaginary conversations she has with Queen Elizabeth, with whom Mary feels a spiritual kinship to as a relative, woman, and fellow monarch. Though the two never meet in person, puppets representing them are used to express their uneasy bond. The use of symbols also included sequences of bleak landscapes to denote Mary's dark moods and sense of foreboding.

A much different take on Mary Queen of Scots was the television series *Reign*, starring Adelaide Kane. The show was primarily directed towards teenage girls and was largely about Mary's early years in France focusing on her romantic life with her fiancé and later husband Francis of Valois (Toby Regbo) and her tensions with her overbearing mother-in-law Catherine de Medici (played with relish by Megan Follows). The series was highly fictionalized, and there was often a levity to the plots. However, *Reign* did tackle serious subject matters as well such as rape - a public service announcement was even included in that episode for those wanting to seek information or counselling. Even though *Reign* as a whole was far removed from reality as to Mary Stuart's life and history, it was popular among young audiences and was televised for four seasons.

Mary had her own movie biopic once again - *Mary Queen of Scots* - in



Camille Rutherford in Mary Queen of Scots (2013)

2018. In keeping with the times, Saoirse Ronan's very modern Mary was intelligent, independent, courageous, and a force to be reckoned with, as even her rival Elizabeth (Margot Robbie) had to admit. She was even a LGBT ally as seen in her compassion towards the gay David Rizzio (Ismael Cruz Córdova). But despite her many strong qualities, Mary's reliance on Bothwell (Martin Compston) undoes her - he rapes and then controls her - as does her own pride. As much as Mary may talk of sisterhood between herself and Elizabeth, ultimately, she considers herself superior to her English cousin, and her arrogance at their secret meeting leads to her downfall at Elizabeth's hands.

Mary Queen of Scots received mostly positive reviews, and many critics applauded director Josie Rourke's decision to cast non-Caucasian actors and actresses in the film. Rourke defended herself saying that she was enabling performers of colour to take on parts traditionally denied to them. As well, coming from her background as a stage director, where ethnicity was less an issue, Rourke was quoted, "I was not going to direct an all-White period drama. It's not a thing that I do in theatre, and I don't want to do it in film."

As of this writing, two Tudor-themed productions are in the works - a television series entitled *Becoming Elizabeth* about the young princess, and one called *Firebrand*, dealing with Queen Katharine Parr and the Protestant martyr Anne Askew. With the continuing enthusiasm for 16th century royals onscreen, no doubt another re-imagining of Mary Queen of Scots will appear on television or on film sooner or later.

ROLAND HUI



Saoirse Ronan in Mary Queen of Scots (2018)

1. Nan Spowart , *'The Loves of Mary, Queen of Scots* film is saved from the chop', The National, February 23, 2020: https://www.thenational.scot/news/18254860.loves-mary-queen-scots-film-saved-chop/
2. Variety, film review of *Mary of Scotland*, August 5, 1936.
3. One of the actors appearing in *Seven Seas to Calais* was Keith Michell who later portrayed Henry VIII to great acclaim.
4. It should be mentioned that in the later 1970s, Mary (played by Heather Chasen) also appeared in the young adult fantasy *A Traveller in Time* (1978).
5. Susan d'Arcy, '*Mary, Queen of Scots: The Royal Film*', Photoplay, April 1972, p. 39.
6. Thomas S. Freeman, '*Elizabeth I and Mary, Queen of Scots: Afterlives in Film*', Elizabeth and Mary: Royal Cousins, Rival Queens (edited by Susan Doran), London: The British Library, 2021, p. 279.
7. Around this time, a film about Mary was planned with actress Scarlett Johansson in the lead, but it was never made.
8. *Mary Queen of Scots* press kit, 'Interview with Thomas Imbach', p. 4.
9. '*The Diverse Domain of Mary Queen of Scots*': http://www.focusfeatures.com/article/josie-rourke-diversity_casting_mary-queen-of-scots.

Susan Abernethy talks about...

Mary, Queen of Scots - Stage and Screen

There's no denying, the story of the life of Mary Queen of Scots lends itself to intriguing drama. We find murder, mayhem, courtly love, romantic love, warfare, an explosion, abdication and, in the end, a grisly beheading.

Becoming the Queen of Scots at the age of six days and spending her early life in danger, she was betrothed to the Dauphin of France and sent to the French court to be brought up by her in-laws. While in France, her mother's Guise relatives convinced Mary at a young age to quarter her arms with those of England, a deliberate manifestation of her claim to the English throne. Married to Francis at the age of fifteen, she became Queen of France a little more than a year later when Henri II died from a gruesome injury suffered during a jousting tournament.

Mary's husband died a year and half later, leaving her with a life-changing decision. Mary's mother, the formidable Marie de Guise, served as regent of Scotland while Mary lived in France and died the same year as Mary's husband. Mary returned to Scotland with every good intention of ruling with proper authority. Considering what happened, it's a shame Mary didn't spend time under the tutelage of her mother, learning the ropes in Scotland and given lessons in how to deal with the Scottish nobility. Mary's claim to the English throne, as well as her religion, being a devout Catholic, put her in opposition to her Protestant cousin, Queen Elizabeth I of England. All of this adds up to a dramatic confrontation between the two women, and translates into exciting viewing for public consumption.

Early writers knew the value of this story. Friedrich Schiller, a German playwright, poet and philosopher, wrote a play in verse entitled *Maria Stuart*, which depicts the last days of Mary Queen of Scots. It consisted of five acts and had it's premiere in Weimar, Germany in June 1800. This play also formed the basis for Italian composer Domenico Gaetano Donizetti's tragic opera of 1835 in two acts entitled *Maria Stuarda*.

Hollywood took up the story and ran with it. A silent film, *The Loves of Mary, Queen of Scots* appeared in 1923 with Fay Compton in the title role. In 1933, American playwright, poet, author, journalist and Pulitzer Prize winner Maxwell Anderson, wrote a play *Mary of Scotland*. He later wrote the



play *Anne of a Thousand Days* in 1948, about the downfall of Anne Boleyn, Queen Elizabeth I's mother. He would write the screenplay for the movie *Mary of Scotland*, directed by John Ford and starring Katherine Hepburn in 1936. The movie concentrated on Mary's return to Scotland in 1560 to reclaim her throne where she is met with opposition by her half-brother, the Earl of Moray and other Scottish nobles.

In 1972, we had the television debut of two series, *The Six Wives of Henry VIII* and *Elizabeth R*. For many lovers of Tudor history, these shows were the introduction to our favorite era of British history. Glenda Jackson was magnificent in the role of Queen Elizabeth I, elegantly sporting her intricate period costumes and swearing impressive oaths. These two series were well-written and appear to have the most historical accuracy of any portrayals before or since.

Episode Five of *Elizabeth R* was entitled *Horrible Conspiracies* and centered on Queen Mary, portrayed by Vivian Pickles. The plot description reads: 'It is 1586 and Mary Queen of Scots has been imprisoned in England for nearly 20 years. Walsingham is determined to strike Mary and the catholic faction down. Elizabeth tries to protect her doomed fellow Queen, but is slowly drawn into Mary's tragedy.' Who can forget the scene where Elizabeth blithely signs the warrant for Mary's death and the reenactment of Mary's execution at the end of the episode?

A feature film entitled *Mary, Queen of Scots* made its debut around the same time as the television series. Released in 1971, it starred Vanessa Redgrave as Mary with Glenda Jackson reprising her role as Elizabeth I, and Timothy Dalton playing a vicious Henry Darnley. It was directed by Charles Jarrott who had produced and directed *Anne of a Thousand Days* in 1969. *Mary, Queen of Scots* was a lavish production and was nominated for five Academy Awards. The most controversial aspect of this film was the depiction of the two queens meeting face to face, the first being a meeting in the borderlands and a second meeting in Mary's cell before her execution. There is no historical or factual basis of any encounter of this sort. However, it is stated in the film these meetings were secret and never mentioned even to Elizabeth's closest advisers, an excellent example of dramatic license.

This brings us to the 2018 film, *Mary Queen of Scots*, directed by Josie Rourke, Artistic Director of the Donmar Warehouse in Covent Garden, London, and known for her National Theatre Live productions. The screenplay for this movie is based on John Guy's biography *Queen of Scots: The True Life of Mary Stuart*. Truly prepared to not like this movie, I was pleasantly surprised. Warts and all, the story is well told and the actresses were a joy to watch. Saoirse Ronan played Mary with just the right touch of toughness and vulnerability. Queen Elizabeth I is characterized as a dithering, crazed nutcase which detracted somewhat from the story but Margot Robbie's makeup and prosthetic nose give a realistic profile that matches the surviving portraits of Queen Elizabeth.

The rest of the supporting cast are great. Guy Pearce is a very suitable William Cecil. My favorite part of the movie is the scene of Rizzio's murder. To me, this is one of the most dramatic moments in history and the abominable act is presented perfectly. Perhaps

Mary's finest moment followed this act. She rose to the occasion, reconciling with her repugnant husband, giving birth to her son and acting as a strong queen and leader, if only for a short time. This movie is not perfect by any means, but don't let that stop you from seeing it.

Once again, this presentation gives us a scene where Mary and Elizabeth meet face to face. Even though the two women didn't start out as mortal enemies, Mary's main aim was for peace to prevail in the British Isles and for Elizabeth to recognize her as her lawful successor, barring the queen marrying and giving birth to an heir. As we all know, Elizabeth had no intention of naming her successor during her own lifetime. The scene in the movie is meant to be an allegory, in which the apparent meaning of the characters and events is used to symbolize a deeper moral or spiritual meaning.

Mary continually urged a meeting be scheduled, while she was Queen of Scots as well as after she abdicated and remained Elizabeth's prisoner. Mary was known for her considerable personal charm and perhaps it was her hope to captivate Elizabeth with her presence. The closest they ever came to a face-to-face encounter was a summit scheduled in 1562. They were to meet either in York or Nottingham. While plans for this meeting went forward, William Cecil was doing everything in his power to permanently postpone it.

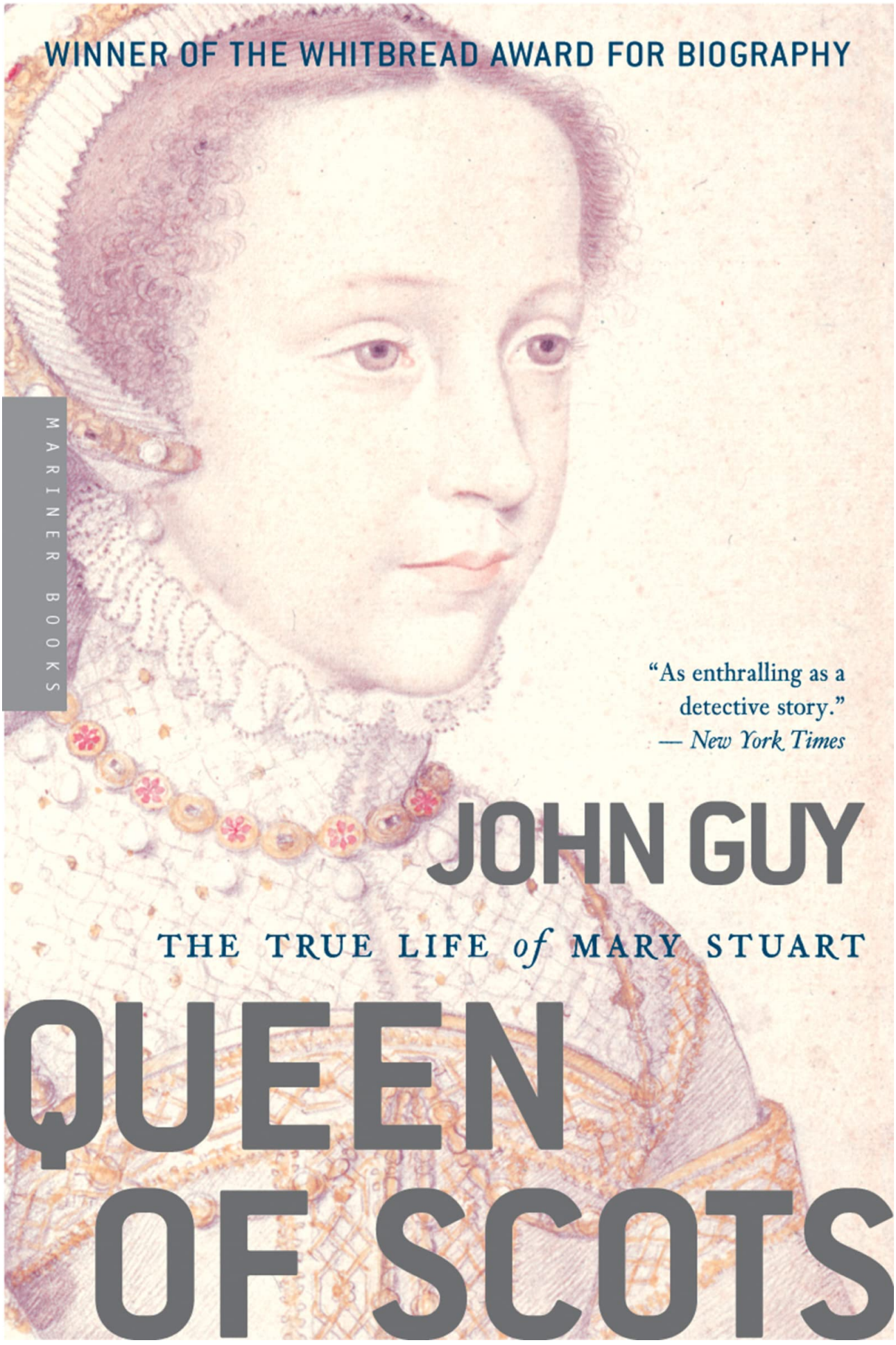
Elizabeth, as hostess, commissioned a series of masques for the occasion. The central theme of the masques involved the entities of 'False Report' and 'Discord' slandering the two queens by spreading rumors of their rivalry. The allegorical figures of 'Prudentia' and 'Temperantia' vanquished these enemies, condemning them to eternal imprisonment in a dank Tudor dungeon. After leading numerous prisoners around the stage in chains, the two heroines were to hand over these enemies to a gaoler along with a lock and key. Who knew at the time that Mary Queen of Scots would soon find herself England's most notorious prisoner?

The summit and the masques would never transpire. News reached England of a massacre in the French village of Vassy. Mary's French uncle, the Duke of Guise, discovered a barn hosting a large congregation of Huguenots for a semi-legal Protestant service. As leader of the ultra-Catholic faction in France, Guise was outraged and later claimed the worshippers hit him in the face with a shower of stones. In the end, his soldiers, armed with muskets, slaughtered up to one hundred Protestants. It would be one of the first engagements in what would be known as the French Wars of Religion.

Queen Elizabeth, as the foremost Protestant in Europe, could never receive the Duke of Guise's niece and following some discussion, the entire enterprise in York (or Nottingham) was cancelled. William Cecil has left us detailed correspondence on how Mary was to be provisioned. There's also the description of a makeshift *bureau de change*, where Mary's ladies could exchange Scottish coins for English sterling and a complete recounting of the official masque entertainment. The two rival queens would never again come so close to meeting one another in the flesh.

SUSAN ABERNETHY

Further reading: "Queen of Scots: The True Life of Mary Stuart" by John Guy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The 1890 Exhibition of the Royal House of Tudor

By Elizabeth J Timms

In 1890, an important exhibition opened at the New Gallery on London's elegant Regent Street. Under Queen Victoria's patronage, it was the second of three such exhibitions shown at the Gallery over a three-year period; the first of these was on the Royal House of Stuart in 1889 and the last on the Royal House of Guelph in 1891. Like all exhibitions, it united a wide wealth of treasures lent not only from national collections but also from private individuals. It presented to many for the very first time, the Tudor dynasty in a great variety of artworks and precious objects, some of which had never before been publicly displayed. This Tudor exhibition of 1890 is now all but forgotten.

The fact that the exhibition took place in Queen Victoria's reign, was itself perhaps no accident. The historical author Agnes Strickland's *Lives of the Queens of England* – had been published in twelve volumes between 1840 and 1848 – and they enjoyed great popularity. Strickland later wrote *Lives of the Tudor Princesses, Including Lady Jane Grey and Her Sisters*, published in 1868. Importantly, it was only in the nineteenth century that the Tower of London became a tourist attraction proper, with its heady mix of history and human drama, appealing also to the growing interest in all things Gothic. It was during Victoria's reign that a white marker was placed on Tower Green, to commemorate the spot then believed to be where the scaffold had once stood. Similarly, it was Queen Victoria who consented to the repair work at the Chapel of St Peter ad Vincula in 1876 and only then, that plaques were placed in the new floor to mark the presumed graves of (among others) Anne Boleyn and Katherine Howard in the altar area, whereas beforehand there had been no memorials. The large Tudor building on Tower Green still nurses a romantic tradition with Anne Boleyn's last days; correctly known as the Queen's House in the Victorian period, it is named not for Anne Boleyn, but instead because it is called after the reigning monarch and for Queen Elizabeth II today.

Queen Victoria lent many important artworks to the Tudor exhibition of



1890, including her priceless Holbein drawings from the Royal Library where they were kept, then as now. Victoria had a natural personal interest in British history and there are a number of instances in which she directly refers to the Tudor dynasty. We know for example, that she discussed Henry VIII's six queens with her devoted Prime Minister, Lord Melbourne in her early reign; Melbourne for his part, took the side of the great Tudor King, commenting simply: *'Oh, those women bothered him so'*. [1] As Princess, Victoria had chattered away in a letter in 1834 to her Uncle Leopold, King of the Belgians about her visit to Hever Castle: '*We had a very pretty party to Hever Castle yesterday, which perhaps you remember, where Anne Boleyn used to live, before she lost her head*'. [2] Perhaps it is just possible that Victoria may felt a particular interest in Anne Boleyn because of a shared Kentish connection, Victoria being the (only) daughter of the Duke and Duchess of Kent.

The young Queen had married Prince Albert of Saxe-Coburg-Gotha on 10 February 1840 under the same ceiling emblazoned with the entwined initials of Henry VIII and Anne of Cleves in St James's Palace Chapel Royal, a ceiling attributed to none other than Holbein. It was Prince Albert who actively promoted the preservation of the Tower of London as an ancient monument and there were at least several occasions when the Royal Children dressed up in Tudor costume. A watercolour from 1853 by Victoria, the Princess Royal showed her younger brother, Prince Arthur as Henry VIII in his royal-blue plumed hat; Prince Arthur was also painted in full-length as the strident Tudor King. [3] As a fellow queen regnant, one might have imagined that Victoria could have been fascinated by Queen Elizabeth I, yet according to at least two of her biographers, this was an English monarch whom she violently disliked. [4] Elizabeth had been a name put forward by her father, the Duke of Kent at her christening in 1819: a suggestion rejected by the Prince Regent. [5] Amongst Princess Victoria's charming collection of dolls, there was one of the dancer Mlle Brocard, dressed as Robert Dudley's first wife, the ill-fated Amy Robsart in the ballet *Kenilworth*; Victoria saw a performance of Donizetti's *Anna Bolena* in 1836 and made a beautiful watercolour sketch of the Italian singers Madame Grisi and Signor Lablache as *Anna Bolena* [Anne Boleyn] and *Enrico VIII* [Henry VIII]. [6]

The New Gallery was aptly named, for as a gallery space it was indeed new, the building having been completed in the space of only three months, in time for its opening in the summer of 1888, at 121 Regent Street. It was founded by J. Comyns Carr and Charles Edward Halle, the former directors of London's

Grosvenor Gallery. The New Gallery closed in 1910 and its premises first became a restaurant and then a cinema in 1913. According to information at the Royal Academy, this fine building was used by the Seventh-day Adventist Church from 1953 until the 1990s, after which it became a furniture store. [7] Happily, its royal themes have been revived, for it now serves as a premium clothing store, which received the Royal Warrant in 1955 as a weatherproofer for Her Majesty The Queen and in 1990 as an outfitter for His Royal Highness, The Prince of Wales. [8] The building survives and inside as out, retains the grandeur and lofty scale of a London gallery space.

The exhibition was accompanied by a splendid catalogue, published in London by R. Clay and decorated with the badges of the House of Tudor and the Royal Arms of Edward VI, as seen on the Gateway at Penshurst. Pictures, drawings, plate and relics from the reigns of Henry VII and Henry VIII were displayed in the West Gallery, whilst in the South Gallery were pictures and drawings from the reigns of Edward VI and Mary I. The North Gallery contained pictures, miniatures, plate, relics and coins from the Elizabethan era. Arms, armour and vestments were displayed in the Central Hall, leaving the Balcony space for remaining pictures as well as valuable books, manuscripts and seals. An illustrated edition of the catalogue was available to subscribers at the cost of one guinea. [9] The entrance fee was one shilling and the opening times advertised for ten o'clock in the morning until six o'clock in the evening – until 6 April 1890. Those contributing to the exhibition gave their own identifications of the exhibits and the Committee stated that it, of course, took no responsibility as to their authenticity. [10]

It is the section variously described as '*Relics, Vestments, etc*' in the Central Hall which is perhaps the most interesting, naming items that had passed through centuries of family tradition. Vestments included a cope from Henry VII's Chapel at Westminster lent by Stonyhurst College and some of the so-called *'christening mantle of Henry VIII'*, made of red velvet and silver tissue, which had been gifted to Prince Henry's nurse, Lady Luke.

Consulting a copy of this catalogue, the reader can only feel a sense of sadness that certain exhibits are now impossible to trace, whose genuinity can never be verified. Many family items probably did begin as gifts, whilst others acquired traditions which – whatever their authenticity - testified to the treasured beliefs handed down from generation to generation and at this distance in time, these objects can only be named as described. Yet not all can be totally dismissed. We see for

example, a '*gold embroidered dress of Queen Elizabeth*'. Given the fact that the precious item now known as the 'Bacton Altar Cloth' was exhibited at Hampton Court Palace and is now thought to perhaps be a 'lost' dress of Queen Elizabeth I, it is just possible that the gold dress could have had experienced a similar history: given as a present, recycled or adapted. After her death, Elizabeth's wardrobe contained over 2,000 gorgeous dresses. [11]

Of particular interest is the item known as the '*Hat of Henry VIII*', repeating a family story told of the courtier, Nicholas Bristowe who was given it together with the '*Shoes of Anne Boleyn*'. Fantastical as this may seem, a hat with a similar provenance entered the Royal Ceremonial Dress Collection in only recent years. According to the exhibition catalogue, Bristowe was riding with Henry VIII and Anne Boleyn past Ayot St Lawrence in Hertfordshire and when Bristowe asked the name of the place, the King replied: *'It is mine, but now shall be yours'*. The hat according to tradition, was the King's proof of his gift and Anne Boleyn's slippers were also given to Bristowe, so goes the story, as part of the bargain. [12] The hat is a remarkable survivor from the Tudor period whatever its arguable royal ownership, and like all the other objects, it is representative of what family tradition held sacred.

The list of so-called 'relics' continued. There was a fragment of silver tissue, thought to have been used in the canopy at the christening of the future Edward VI in 1537; a lace canopy was lent by Lady Dent of Sudeley, thought to have been the work of Anne Boleyn for the christening of the Princess Elizabeth in 1533. A lovely item of Venetian lace glass, known as *'Queen Katherine Parr's Jug'* was also loaned by Lady Dent. We see a piece of needlework depicting motifs such as birds, flowers and fruit, identified as the embroidery of Queen Catherine of Aragon (examples of the surviving Stuart embroidery of Mary, Queen of Scots can be seen at the Palace of Holyrood House, Edinburgh). Other extraordinary exhibits claimed to be the shoes of Henry VIII worn at the Field of the Cloth of Gold, made of embroidered velvet with silver-tipped heels. One item was even identified as a piece of ermine worn by Anne Boleyn at her execution, with traces of blood; a mantle of ermine was of course worn over furred damask by Anne on the morning of 19 May 1536, the 'blood' may simply be a touching example of fact mixed with folklore. Also exhibited was a gilt leather toilet-case with four combs, brush-handle, knife and stile, said to have belonged to Queen Anne Boleyn. [13] Religious items included a rosary, said to have belonged to Henry VIII and a prayerbook bound in

enamelled gold, thought to have been given by Anne Boleyn to a member of the Wyatt family.

More solemn items in the catalogue include pieces that are certainly authentic and which were lent by its great Victorian custodian, Lady Dent. These include at least four locks of Queen Catherine Parr's hair, variously mounted in frames or in gold lockets and displayed – together with one of the Queen's teeth – which were taken when the Queen's coffin was opened in 1792. [14] (The present author saw a tooth and lock of hair identified as belonging to Queen Catherine Parr at Sudeley Castle). In 1890, these locks of hair was exhibited next to several examples of Queen Catherine Parr's own compositions lent from Sudeley, including one book bound in red velvet signed '*Kateryn the Queen, K. P*', which according to the catalogue, had enjoyed its own quite remarkable journey to Gloucestershire via Spain, by way of a sister of the President at the English College at Valladollid.

A gold *etui* was exhibited. According to the catalogue, it had once belonged to Anne Boleyn and was given by her to an officer, Captain Gwyn on the morning of her execution, 19 May 1536. Perhaps importantly, the exhibition catalogue quotes none other than Strickland's *Lives of the Queens of England*, in which that exact same story is repeated. [15] The present author checked Strickland's volume on Henry's queens against the catalogue: '*The trinket is a small golden etui, about an inch, is richly chased, and in the form of a pistol, the barrel serving the purpose of a whistle, and enclosing a set of toothpicks; round the handle a serpent is coiled*'. Anne Boleyn is said to have told Gwyn: '*It was the first token the King gave her… that a serpent formed part of the device, and a serpent… the giver had proved to her*'. [16] Strickland's volume was published in a new, revised edition in 1909: some nineteen years after the New Gallery catalogue. A chance discovery of an illustration of what is almost certainly the same *etui* in an important recent study (2010) on the downfall of Anne Boleyn [17], described the object's location in the collections of the Victoria and Albert Museum.

The present author then referred to the Victoria and Albert Museum and found that the *etui* is still held in its collections: listed as a '*miniature whistle pendant*' and lent anonymously. [18] Information supplied by the Victoria and Albert Museum suggests that the piece is most probably English, dating between roughly 1520 and 1530: a rare example of the kind of gold trinkets sewn into the masque costumes which Henry loved to wear, such as the occasion when they were '*lost off the King's back*'. [19] Indeed, we might recall the occasion in 1511 of the great tournament to celebrate the birth of

the short-lived Prince Henry Tudor, when the King was dressed as *Sir Coeur Loyal* and those present were invited to pick off the gold initials of 'H' [Henry] and 'K' [Catherine] which adorned his costume and those of his attendant knights. [20] The *etui* can still be admired; a pleasant continuation of its earlier exhibition history in the New Gallery. It is currently on public display in the British Galleries at the Victoria and Albert Musuem in Room 58.

Royal Elizabethan 'relics' were displayed in the North Gallery. A quite extraordinary item was by tradition, Queen Elizabeth's coronation ruffle, richly embroidered with pearls. [21] We know for example, that the blue carpet upon which Elizabeth walked on her Coronation Day was torn away into souvenirs by an eager populace, her ruffle was not. If genuine, it was probably the result of re-worked gift. That splendid picture known as the 'Coronation Portrait' in the National Portrait Gallery, shows the Queen painted by an unknown artist in about the year 1600 is probably a later copy of an English original; in it her gold-edged ruffle is visible. [22]

Objects such as a glass cup used by Queen Elizabeth and a pair of shoes she left behind on a visit perhaps bear testament to the touching way in which everyday items became relics, preserved as such by those who offered the Queen hospitality in their country houses. There was a pair of enamelled bracelets set with pearls and rubies stated as belonging to Elizabeth I and coming originally from the sale of effects of Queen Charlotte; for this to be plausible, we should note that Queen Charlotte's personal jewel collection was distributed amongst her four youngest daughters and some pieces were in fact, sold; the Queen's state jewels reverted to the Prince Regent and left the British royal collection when they were claimed by the King of Hanover. Elizabeth I is known to have been given items of jewellery for her New Year's gifts; a historically invaluable inventory numbering some 628 jewels in the Queen's possession was made by her Lady of the Bedchamber, Blanche Parry on her retirement in 1587. [23]

Also lent was some baby linen, believed to have been embroidered by Princess Elizabeth for Mary I, in anticipation of what we know to have been the false pregnancy of 1555. Lady Dent of Sudeley lent a robe and mantle of white satin, by tradition worn by Princess Elizabeth [24]: it is likely that this description relates to that item still in the Sudeley collections, known as the robe and mantle worn by Princess Elizabeth at her christening, worked with gold Tudor roses and *fleurs-de-lys*. [25] It has been reliably suggested that the christening robe in fact, probably dates instead from the seventeenth century. [26]

Further curious pieces included a jewelled dagger said to have belonged

to Henry VIII and '*Cardinal Wolsey's Hat*': both from Horace Walpole's legendary Strawberry Hill collection. Consulting a copy of the catalogue of the remarkable Strawberry Hill sale – which began on 25 April 1842 and continued for twenty-four days – the present author was able to discover a little more about the provenance of these two items. '*Henry the Eighth's Dagger'*, was a *'rare and beautiful specimen of Turkish work'*, with a steel blade and set with diamonds and rubies. Walpole acquired it from the great collection of Lady Elizabeth Germaine, [27] the former lady-in-waiting to Queen Anne whose home of Drayton House Walpole had visited in 1763. Cardinal Wolsey's Hat was described as a '*singular and unquestionable relic…enclosed in a glass case*', [28] and had a convincing provenance. According to the Strawberry Hill catalogue, it was found in the Wardrobe by Bishop Burnet when Clerk of the Closet, who bequeathed it to his son. It subsequently came into Walpole's possession as a gift to him from the Countess Dowager of Albemarle.

Sudeley Castle presents today several items which are likely to have been among those lent by Lady Emma Dent to the Tudor exhibition of 1890. The Castle's exhibition, entitled '*Royal Sudeley 1,000 Trials, Triumphs and Treasures',* is located in the 15th-century West Wing. According to information supplied by Sudeley, the Castle exhibition contains a lock of Queen Catherine Parr's hair, one of her prayer books and the aforementioned lace canopy, considered to be worked by Anne Boleyn for the christening of the Princess Elizabeth in 1533. [29] In fact, the Dents had also purchased from the Strawberry Hill sale; an example of this can be seen in the Louis XV Aubusson bedhangings and bedcover, today highlighted as one of the Castle's treasures at Sudeley.

Whatever the truth and present locations of all of these pieces, what is certain is that they did represent the relic of family tradition and in some cases, possible patronage. The pieces were treasured precisely because they had been handed down in these beliefs and that did not also rule out that they were genuine. Items such as those taken from the grave of Queen Catherine Parr are by definition, moving in their authenticity. Uniquely for its time, the New Gallery exhibition brought together wonderful objects which tried to recapture the colour and magnificence of the Tudor court and their stories surely were what constituted their highest value to those that lent and owned them.

Just under forty years since the Great Exhibition of 1851, here was an important British exhibition in tribute to the lost Tudor age.

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How do the Tudor chroniclers compare to the media of today?

By Jennifer E. Rizzo

THE REIGN OF THE SECOND TUDOR MONARCH, Henry VIII, is widely viewed as the end of the medieval period in England, and the beginning of the early modern age. Henry's ascension to the throne in 1509 marked the beginning of a transition in his kingdom, from ancient viewpoints and practices, to newer, more modern ideas. With his reign, the landscape of England's history changed forever.

This was true not only from religious, social, and artistic perspectives, but also in the way history was recorded. The chroniclers of the Tudor age wrote history as it unfolded, and their work remains an important source for historians. But, some Tudor chroniclers may have written biased accounts of history. Five hundred years later, have modern media standards improved?

BEFORE THE SIXTEENTH CENTURY, the majority of medieval chroniclers in England worked in monasteries, the most renowned being the Scriptorium at St. Albans. Although medieval chroniclers had been recording history for centuries before Henry VIII, the way scholars and citizens considered history changed dramatically in the sixteenth century. The three main causes for these changes were a rise in humanist ideals, the English Reformation, and an increased national consciousness.

In his book *Tudor Historical Thought*, F.J. Levy argues that humanism was the most significant force that changed the recording practices of historical events for chroniclers in the Tudor age. The humanist movement began in Italy, with Francesco Petrarch laying the framework for the Renaissance humanist movement in the fourteenth century. Humanism in England, known as Christian Humanism, began to take hold by the third decade of the sixteenth century with Desiderius Erasmus and John Colet. Erasmus believed that history was worth teaching for its own sake, a divergence from the medieval practice of only using history lessons for religious and moral purposes. Londoner John Colet wanted to apply humanist ideals to Christian classics, and thereby, Christian Humanism was born in England.

The humanist movement placed greater importance on the individual, and focused on the study of classical texts. For humanists, human interests, values and dignity dominated the discussion.

Shockingly to some in the sixteenth century, humanists often minimized the importance of God. Humanism, in turn, led to an increased interest in antiquarianism, or the study of the past.

The first chronicle written with humanist ideals was Polydore Vergil's *Anglica Historia*. Published in 1534, it covered England's history from the beginning of Henry VII's reign in 1485 through 1537, when his son Henry VIII sat on the throne.

In sixteenth century England, Christian Humanism led to anachronism, or the concept that the past was different from the present. As humanism became a part of the national mindset, regular citizens, who were increasingly literate, began to look at the recent history of such institutions as the Catholic Church with a more critical eye. In Tudor England, the most important person in the country was no longer the monk, but the citizen. According to Levy, "no longer did men think of the church as a continuous organism. Instead, they contrasted the church now with the church then, and they were displeased with the comparison." This analysis of the Catholic church helped lead to the English Reformation.

Henry VIII met Erasmus in 1499 at Eltham Palace, when the then Prince Henry was only eight years old. Erasmus, along with Thomas More, were both invited to visit Prince Henry by William Blount, Fourth Baron Mountjoy. Mountjoy was the young prince's companion in studies, and with him, Henry received an education fit for England's first Renaissance prince.

It may be easy to assume the main catalyst for the birth of the Church of England was Henry VIII's desire to marry Anne Boleyn. But interest in a reformation of the church had already begun in England before Henry even met his second queen, partially due to the rise of humanism. As stated before, anachronism led Henry's subjects to analyze the Catholic church as ruled by the Pope in a new way. Humanists were very interested in history, and when they studied older accounts of the church, they found faults. In Tudor times, many believed this revealed a truer picture of corruption in the church. As a reaction to these sentiments, church historians published their own accounts in defense of the church. The result was increased production of chronicles, as monastic and other chroniclers defending Catholicism became more prolific.

When Henry VIII proclaimed himself supreme head of the church in England, he expected the machinery of his legal system to fall in line. But in the sixteenth century, English law was based on precedent, and no legal precedence for a break with Rome was readily available. Therefore, Henry's government turned to the chronicles in an effort to find some precedence to justify the King's decision. According to Levy, this required "a plain appeal to history such as that found in the opening section of the Act in Restraint of Appeals, or a recourse to political theory, bolstering the power of the king, which in turn also ended in the use of historical evidence." The end result was that England was declared "imperial," and its king equivalent to Constantine, the first Roman Emperor to convert to Christianity. This, in large part, explains the Tudor chroniclers' insistence on tracing England to Constantine as King Arthur's heir.

The chroniclers' involvement in the spread of patriotism in England

began during the reign of Henry VII, when the king hired Vergil to write his *Anglica Historia* in 1506. The first Tudor king wanted to increase England's legitimacy in the eyes of European powers, and he hoped a chronicle of its history, written favorably for the Tudors, would be helpful. The first Tudor king had defeated and killed Richard III at the battle of Bosworth in 1485, ending the War of the Roses. After thirty years of bloody civil war, English citizens were eager to support a king and live in peace. The English united under one King, as opposed to dueling liege lords.

The sixteenth century also saw an increase in education and literacy, mainly among wealthier London based merchants. Their main interest in reading material were histories of London written in English, not the Latin of past chronicles.

English patriotism was also supported by the Reformation. Although Henry VIII's break from Rome did anger many of his subjects, and there were revolts such as the Pilgrimage of Grace, in many ways the Reformation increased patriotism. This new patriotism made citizens want to read the history of England more than ever before.

Despite all of the time period's improvements for chronicles, moral bias still had a strong presence in writing of the Tudor era. Although chronicling practices had changed since medieval times, the importance of teaching a moral lesson through history was still strong. Some chroniclers changed stories to suit a particular moral lesson, or left out details that did not suit their purpose.

Chroniclers were also commonly employed by the ruling monarch, creating a conflict of interest. For example, chroniclers during this time tended to include King Arthur in English history, although his existence had been debated for centuries. But, for the Tudors, Arthur's place in history was of paramount importance, and the chroniclers were beholden to the monarch. The last of the British Kings, the Welsh King Cadwallader, was said to be a descendent of the legendary King Arthur. From Cadwallader descended the Welsh Tudors. Linking Henry VII to Arthur helped authenticate the Tudor dynasty, and this is why Henry VII named his first son Arthur. An attack on Arthur by an historian could be seen as an attack on the Tudors themselves.

Between 1513 and 1518, Thomas More wrote *The Tragicall Historie of the Life and Reigne of Richard the Third*, and this work, along with Vergil's *Anglica Historia*, served as a model for the Tudor chronicles after it. More's *History of Richard III*, written at the same time as *Utopia*, was composed in the tragic Roman style, rather than Italian. It portrays Richard III as so evil, he is almost a supernatural villain, practically the devil himself. Written during the reign of Henvy VIII, More no doubt wanted to present Richard as an evil usurper and a murdering tyrant. If he had portrayed Richard III as possessing any redeemable characteristics, the reigning king may have seen it as an attack on his legitimacy. More's portrayal was copied into all the Tudor era chronicles, which were used as the basis for Shakespeare's play *Richard III*. Now, 475 years later, as audiences continue to enjoy Shakespeare's famous play, Richard III's reputation

is cemented as a crippled usurper and tyrant.

Confirmation bias was a problem for chroniclers during the English Reformation, as some were written in order to defend either Catholicism or Protestantism. As is the case in today's media, confirmation bias, which involves searching for information in order to confirm one's view, is not the best way to ensure accuracy when recording history. According to the *Harvard Theological Review*, "In their struggle against the Church of Rome, a number of sixteenth century English reformers became students of ecclesiastical and secular history." The reformers used information from the chroniclers to support a break from Rome, but when the information in the chronicles didn't suit their argument, they worked to discredit them, saying they were written with "clerical bias."

History lovers may feel betrayed when they discover some of the written record is a biased account. But how do these Tudor chroniclers compare to the news of today, and have we really come that far from Tudor journalists employed by the king or queen? Bias in the media remains a topic of controversy, and studies show that many consumers do not trust the news outlets to be unbiased.

How did we get from the chroniclers of the sixteenth century to today's media? The first newspaper in England, *The Weekly Newes*, was printed in 1622, and the first newspapers in the world had been printed in 1609 in Germany and Antwerp. A century later, magazines, originally known as journals, began to publish opinion articles in *Tatler* (1709-11) and *Spectator* (1711-12). With the invention of the telegraph, the radio, television and finally the internet, news began to spread faster over the centuries.

In the nineteenth century, cheap newsprint and improved printing presses expanded the reach of partisan newspapers. This change in process and cost expanded the reach of newspapers, but negatively affected the press' ability to function as a check on policy makers. In the twentieth century, countries controlled by communist governments saw news outlets controlled by ruling parties, and negative information about the government was filtered out. Developing, non-communist countries experienced varied degrees of censorship, while English speaking and European countries enjoyed the widest freedom of press.

Finally, news moved so quickly that newspapers began to use magazine techniques to hold their audience. An exception was made in the case of "hard news," defined as recent news of particular importance, in which case outlets tried to maintain objectivity. At this same time, radio and television reduced substantive news down to soundbites for the same reasons.

Today, online and social media news can create echo chambers, where consumers lack diverse opinions and viewpoints. Social media news outlets use a radically different structure than previous media outlets. Through social media, it is possible for users with no background in the subject area or reporting experience to reach as many end users as CNN, Fox News or the *New York Times*. These users also lack the benefit of fact checking or editorial judgment.

According to a 2021 study by Ofcom, 79% of people in England still use television as a news source, and 73% use the internet. 49% use social media, and the same percentage also use other websites and apps. 46% use the radio, and only 32% use print newspapers. When study participants rated news sources by importance, trustworthiness, range of opinions and impartiality, television and magazines performed strongest, and social media had the weakest scores. In the U.S., a 2020 Gallup and Knight Foundation study found that the vast majority of Americans see the media as essential for democracy to function, but that 50% see the media as very biased. Similarly, a survey by Pew Research Center in 2021 found a widening partisan divide in the mainstream media. News networks today exhibit bias towards both conservative and liberal political views.

The origins of Fox News shows how mainstream news networks today are similar to chroniclers employed by the king in Tudor England. Fox News was founded in 1996, but its origins date back to 1970. Roger Ailes, a political consultant for then U.S. President Richard Nixon, along with other presidential aides, compiled a 318 page plan for President Nixon entitled "Plan for Putting the GOP on TV News." Ailes was looking to create "pro-administration" news coverage, and he planned to create a news network to get it to viewers. Nixon approved of the plan, saying his supporters needed "our own news," from a network that would lead a "brutal, vicious attack on the opposition." However, as he became embroiled in the Watergate scandal, which ended in his resignation from the presidency in 1974, the initial plan for a conservative news network didn't come to fruition for another 26 years.

THE TUDOR PERIOD saw changes in chronicling practices due to humanism, the English Reformation, and increased national pride. However, these changes did not change the presence of bias and conflicts of interest. In the 500 years since the Tudors ruled, how the public receives news and history has changed a great deal. The chroniclers, laboring painstakingly with quill and parchment, would marvel at the ease with which modern-day journalists type away on their laptops. However, the Tudor chroniclers had more in common with members of today's media than initially meets the eye. Both groups' struggles to maintain an audience's attention, appease ruling parties and monarchs, and avoid confirmation bias, while still adapting to the constantly evolving needs of society, are universal problems stretching over many centuries. It seems the struggle for the media to appear unbiased and reliable is here to stay.

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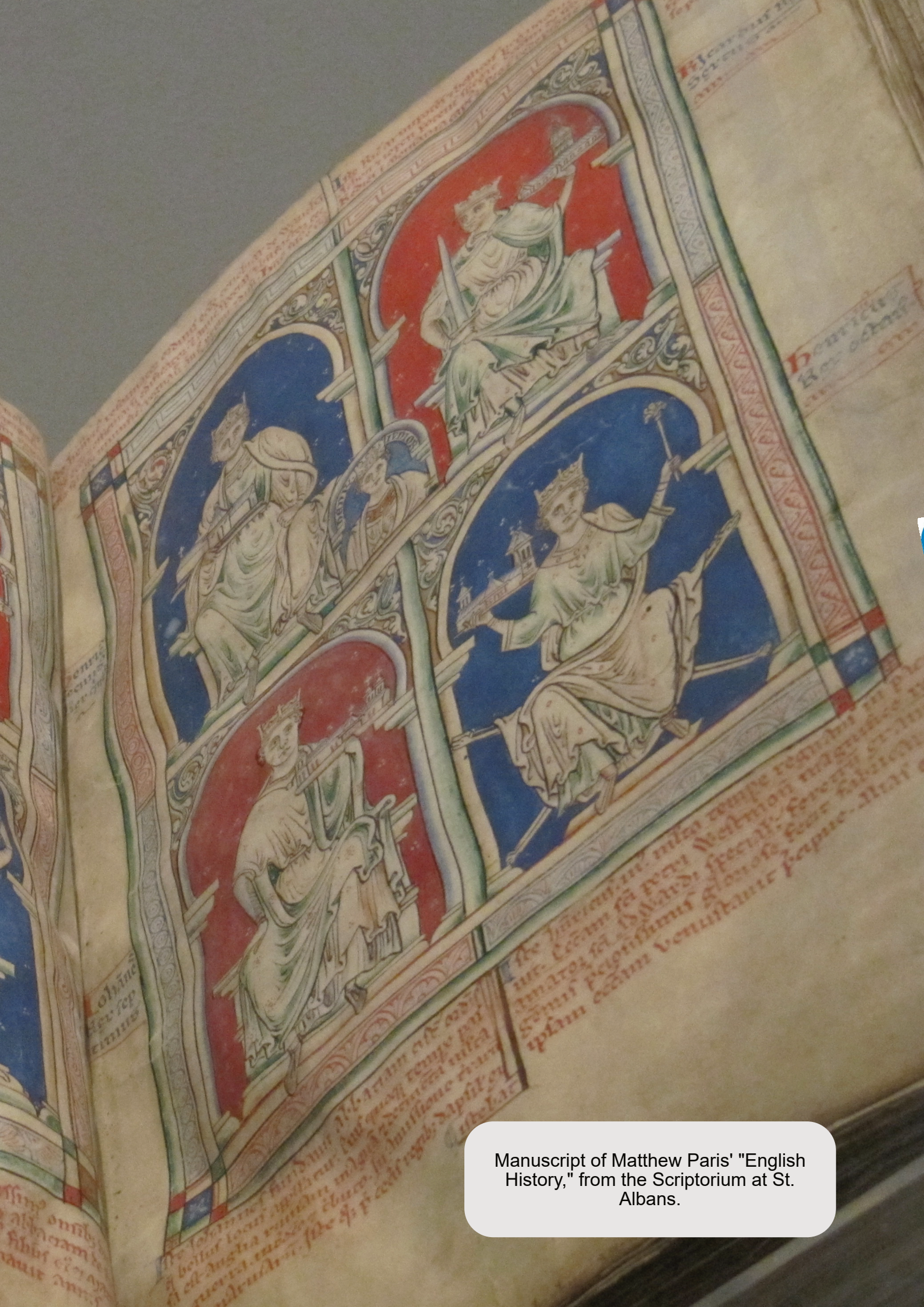
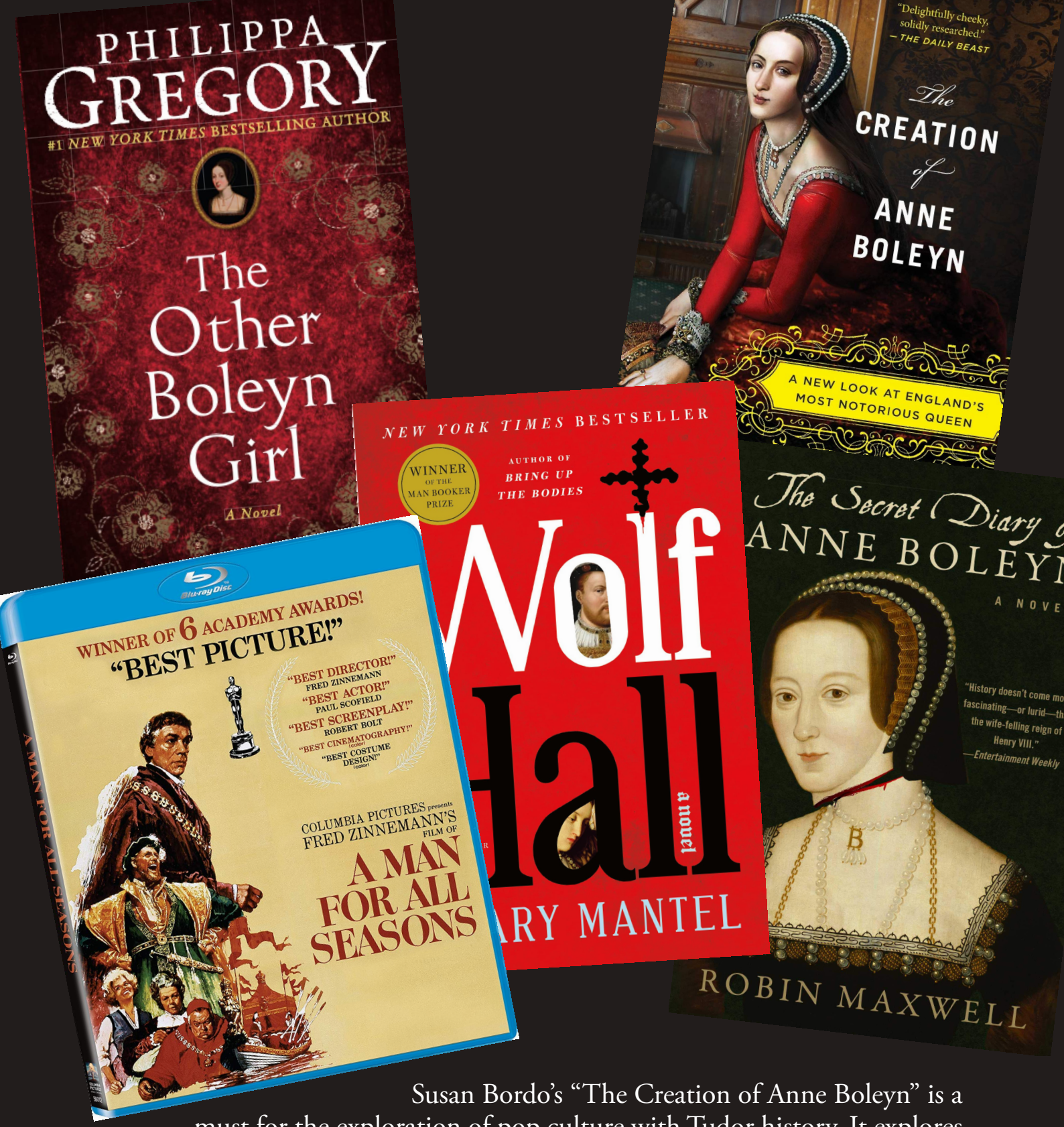


Manuscript of Matthew Paris' "English History," from the Scriptorium at St. Albans.



Susan Bordo's "The Creation of Anne Boleyn" is a must for the exploration of pop culture with Tudor history. It explores how our image of an individual has shifted and changed over the centuries.

In terms of novels which radically shifted the needle in how many people saw figures from the Tudor era, try Robin Maxwell's "The Secret Diary of Anne Boleyn" and Philippa Gregory's "The Other Boleyn Girl." By way of dramatic contrasts, compare the Thomas More of "A Man For All Seasons" to the same character in "Wolf Hall"..

Gareth Russell

The Lesser-Known Screen Queens

by Gareth Russell

Henry VIII's wives have been portrayed many times on screen, with some of those performances becoming iconic. Of which the most obvious example is Geneviève Bujold's Oscar-nominated turn as Anne Boleyn in 1969's "Anne of the Thousand Days" and Glenda Jackson's two production as Elizabeth I. In the Boleyn catalogue, there's also widespread admiration for Dame Dorothy Tutin, Natalie Dormer, and Claire Foy. Lynne Frederick's Catherine Howard and Maria Doyle Kennedy's Katherine of Aragon also have a large fan base. However, there are some performances which, if not forgotten, perhaps slipped beneath the radar.

As the first trailer for the new Starz series "Becoming Elizabeth" drops online, I thought I'd discuss ten over-looked performances of Tudor-era queens from Elizabeth of York to Elizabeth I, with a Mary, Queen of Scots, too. I did, unfortunately, have to skip over Lady Jane Grey, whose main performances - Nova Pilbeam's and Helena Bonham-Carter's - happily aren't in the overlooked category.

Norma West as Elizabeth of York in "The Shadow of the Tower" (1972)



South African actress Norma West was fantastic as the first Tudor queen in the criminally-underrated BBC drama "The Shadow of the

Tower". Its ten episodes followed the reign of Henry VII, from the Battle of Bosworth to Henry's twilight years a quarter of a century later. West's Elizabeth appears in the first episode, "Crown in Jeopardy," waiting with her sisters to see which way the wind will below. Here, she is regally contemptuous of "Henry Tidr," as she mockingly calls the invader. Appearing in eight of the series' ten episodes, West shows Elizabeth as enigmatic, elegant, intelligent, and pious - and a consummate political survivor.

Claire Bloom as Katherine of Aragon in "The Famous History of the Life of King Henry the Eighth" (1979)



Claire Bloom is one of Britain's greatest living actors. So, it is perhaps a surprise that her performance as Henry VIII's first wife is so overlooked. Filmed for the BBC in 1979, it was an adaptation of the Shakespeare play about the dissolution of Henry's first marriage and the rise of his second wife, Anne Boleyn (played by Barbara Kellerman). Bloom plays Katherine at the end of her queenship with heart-tugging dignity, making the most of the beautiful dialogue Shakespeare gave to her. Her time as Queen Katherine commenced a series of triumphs in Bloom's career. She soon began filming as the enigmatic Lady Marchmain in the critically acclaimed adaptation of "Brideshead Revisited," Queen Gertrude in a televised "Hamlet," and the last Tsarina in the mini-series "Anastasia," opposite Omar Sharif, Olivia de Havilland, Rex Harrison, and Christian Bale.

Merle Oberon as Anne Boleyn in "The Private Life of Henry VIII" (1933)



At the time, Oberon's depiction of Boleyn was so celebrated it launched her career as a major Hollywood star. "The Private Life of Henry VIII" became the first massive British hit in the 'talkie' era. Over the decades though, it has faded. In part, this is because Oberon's Anne has very limited screen time. Most of the movie focuses on Henry's fourth and fifth wives, played respectively by Elsa Lanchester and Binnie Barnes. Its opening sequence takes place on the day of Anne's execution, but even with such limited time, Oberon is magnetically charismatic. Her jokes about what a pity it will be to lose a head like hers ring in the same spirit as the real Boleyn's quip about her 'little neck,' which the screen Boleyn also makes. There is such élan to this Boleyn, with a really moving oscillation between composure and dignity-masked terror. A beautiful performance.

Anne Stallybrass as Jane Seymour in "The Six Wives of Henry VIII" (1970)



This might seem an odd one to include, given the enduring popularity of this six-part series. However, while each episode has its fans - Annette Crosbie as Katherine of Aragon, Dame Dorothy Tutin as Anne Boleyn, and Elvi Hale as Anne of Cleves - it's quite rare to hear Stallybrass's performance garnering the same affectionate applause. I wonder if part of that is because of the script, which presents Jane as so unrelentingly virtuous that she risks coming off as a bit of a worthy bore. Admirable, yet stultifying. I don't think that's necessarily fair to Stallybrass, however, who plays a virtuous - even, almost saintly - Queen Jane, but she also gives her extraordinary moments of terror and guilt when she's in private. An overlooked characterisation that shows a more complex and interesting Jane than suggested by first impressions.

Joss Stone as Anne of Cleves in "The Tudors" (2009-11)



Henry VIII's fourth wife has the most uneven representation of the six. She is either skimmed over for comedic - sometimes, quite cruel - effect, as in "Young Bess" (1953), "Henry VIII and his Six Wives" (1972) and "Henry VIII" (2003). Or, as happens with the in-depth portrayals of her, depicted as an intellectual giant and shrewd politician, who manipulates her husband to win her freedom. That is the Anne we see in "The Private Life of Henry VIII" (1933) and "The Six Wives of Henry VIII" (1970). While "The Tudors" took many liberties that put some viewers off, I think Stone's depiction as the six-month queen came closest to the mark in showing her earnestness, conscientiousness, popularity, and, above all, the fear she felt living so close to Henry.

Emily Blunt as Catherine Howard in "Henry VIII" (2003)



It's easy to see why this performance helped launch Blunt's career. She is brilliant as Catherine. Again, there were liberties in the script, most obviously with her execution where the screen Catherine's behaviour is the direct opposite of the historical Catherine's. However, I don't think Blunt's depiction gets enough credit for showing the many different emotions which Catherine was capable of, even before her downfall. She is both touchingly kind and capable of snobbish hauteur. It is an excellent performance of a charismatic and charming person, who is increasingly aware of how trapped she is by a situation she cannot control.

Deborah Kerr as Katherine Parr in "Young Bess" (1953)



The old Hollywood epics were indifferent to accuracy; it shows in this big budget adaptation of Margaret Irwin's novel. The title character, played by Jean Simmons, is aged-up, while Stewart Granger's Thomas Seymour is toned down. Way down. Until he almost exhibits - and perhaps this was intentional - the sort of

driving patriotism popularly associated with a Second World War veteran. It's a very 50s Seymour. Nonetheless, the movie has all the rollicking glamour of "the Golden Age of Hollywood" and some zingers for the young Elizabeth. When Anne Seymour asks her not to use words she cannot understand, Elizabeth replies, "Forgive me, madam, but they're difficult to avoid." Deborah Kerr is pitch perfect as Queen Katherine Parr, even though she too is dipped in metaphorical anti-bac and sugar, so that the whole dynamic of Elizabeth and Seymour can be re-imagined. Kerr is dignity personified and she is particularly good opposite Charles Laughton, returning to his role as Henry VIII twenty years after winning the Oscar for it.

Jane Lapotaire as Queen Mary I in "Lady Jane" (1986)



Long before she was playing Princess Kuragin in "Downton Abbey" and Princess Alice in "The Crown," but after her celebrated depiction of Empress Marie of Russia in "Edward the Seventh," Jane Lapotaire played the Mary Tudor many had been waiting for. With just a hint of steel, she is charming, intelligent, pious, and regal. Unlike many characterisations of Mary I, her Catholicism isn't portrayed as 'hysterical' or unhinged; it is very much a product of its time. Lapotaire's Mary is one who can credibly rally the country to sweep Helena Bonham-Carter's Jane off the throne in less than two weeks.

Quentin Crisp as Queen Elizabeth I in "Orlando" (1992)

This is one of the most unusual and exciting pieces of Tudor casting - and perfect for the production. 1992's "Orlando" was a historical fantasy based on Virginia Woolf's novel of the same name. It follows four centuries in the life of

a young Tudor nobleman, Orlando, played by Tilda Swinton. He wins the favour of the ailing Elizabeth I, who gives him a grant of land, in perpetuity, on the condition that he never fades, nor grows old, as she has. Somehow, magically, the dying Queen's words come true; Orlando stops aging from that day. A hundred or so years into his life immortal life, Orlando wakes up to discover that they have become a woman and must learn to live as an aristocratic lady. True to the gender fluidity and magical realism of the novel, Elizabeth I was played by a man, Quentin Crisp, heavily made-up and in a truly magnificent costume. Also, if you want to see a scene that brings to life, in full detail and splendour, what it was like to see a Tudor monarch arrive by barge, watch the opening to "Orlando".

Clémence Poésy as Mary, Queen of Scots in "Gunpowder, Treason, and Plot" (2003)

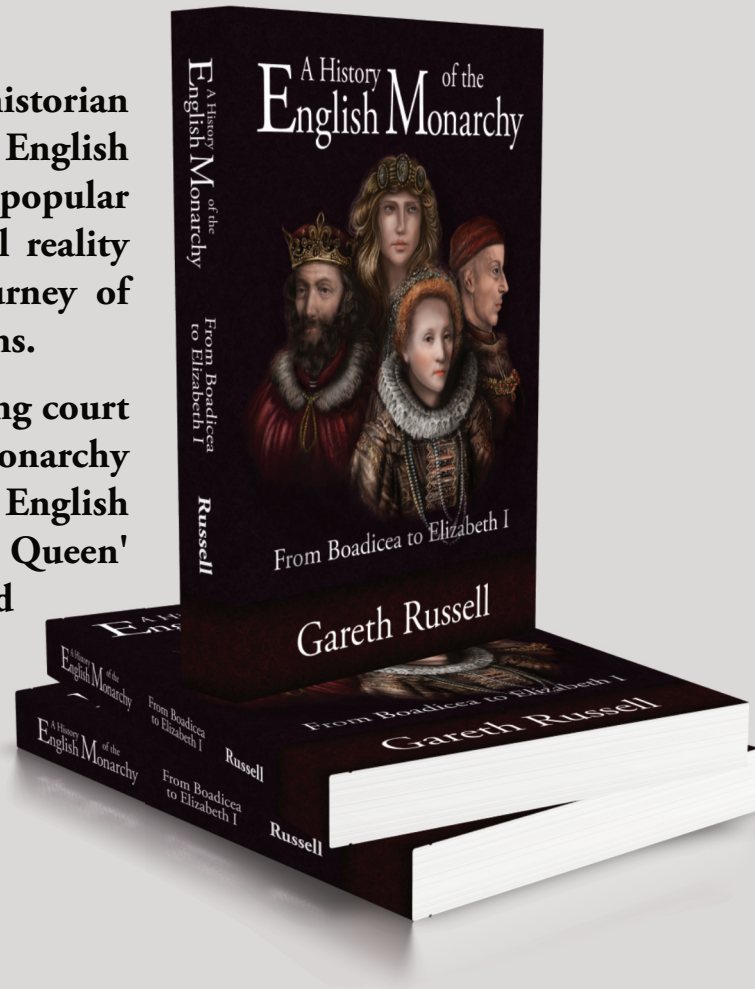


Co-starring Michael Fassbender, Robert Carlyle, and Kevin McKidd, this series, I thought, really benefited from having a French actress playing Mary, Queen of Scots. One gets such a powerful sense of how unusual Mary Stewart must have seemed to many of her subjects in Scotland, and they to her. Poésy, more famous for playing Beauxbatons' most celebrated over-achiever Fleur Delacour in the "Harry Potter" series, is brilliant as a Mary catapulted back to Scotland by her husband's death, which forces her to deal with the hard-line of the Reformation.

GARETH RUSSELL

In A History of the English Monarchy, historian Gareth Russell traces the story of the English monarchy and the interactions between popular belief, religious faith and brutal political reality that helped shape the extraordinary journey of one of history's most important institutions.

From the birth of the nation to the dazzling court of Elizabeth I, A History of the English Monarchy charts the fascinating path of the English monarchy from the uprising of 'Warrior Queen' Boadicea in AD60 through each king and queen up to the 'Golden Age' of Elizabeth I. Russell offers a fresh take on a fascinating subject as old as the nation itself. Legends, tales and, above all, hard facts tell an incredible story... a history of the English Monarchy.



Who played Henry VIII?

How well do you know your actors?



Charles Laughton



Jonathan Rhys Meyers



Damian Lewis



Homer Simpson



Rowan Atkinson



Robert Shaw



Sidney James

TONI MOUNT

Philip Howard, Earl of Arundel



Portrait of Philip Howard, aged 18, painted by George Gower

Philip was born on 29 June 1557 at his father's grand town house on The Strand in London and seemed likely to have a glittering aristocratic career ahead of him.

Philip was the only child of Thomas Howard, the 4th Duke of Norfolk, the most powerful Roman Catholic aristocrat in England by his first wife. He was born at the time when Queen Mary Tudor was doing all she could to re-instate Catholicism in England and his baptism was held in Whitehall Palace in the queen's presence and her consort, Philip II of Spain, stood as his godfather, giving him his name. Philip's mother, the heiress Mary Fitzalan, died soon after his birth and his father married again in 1559.

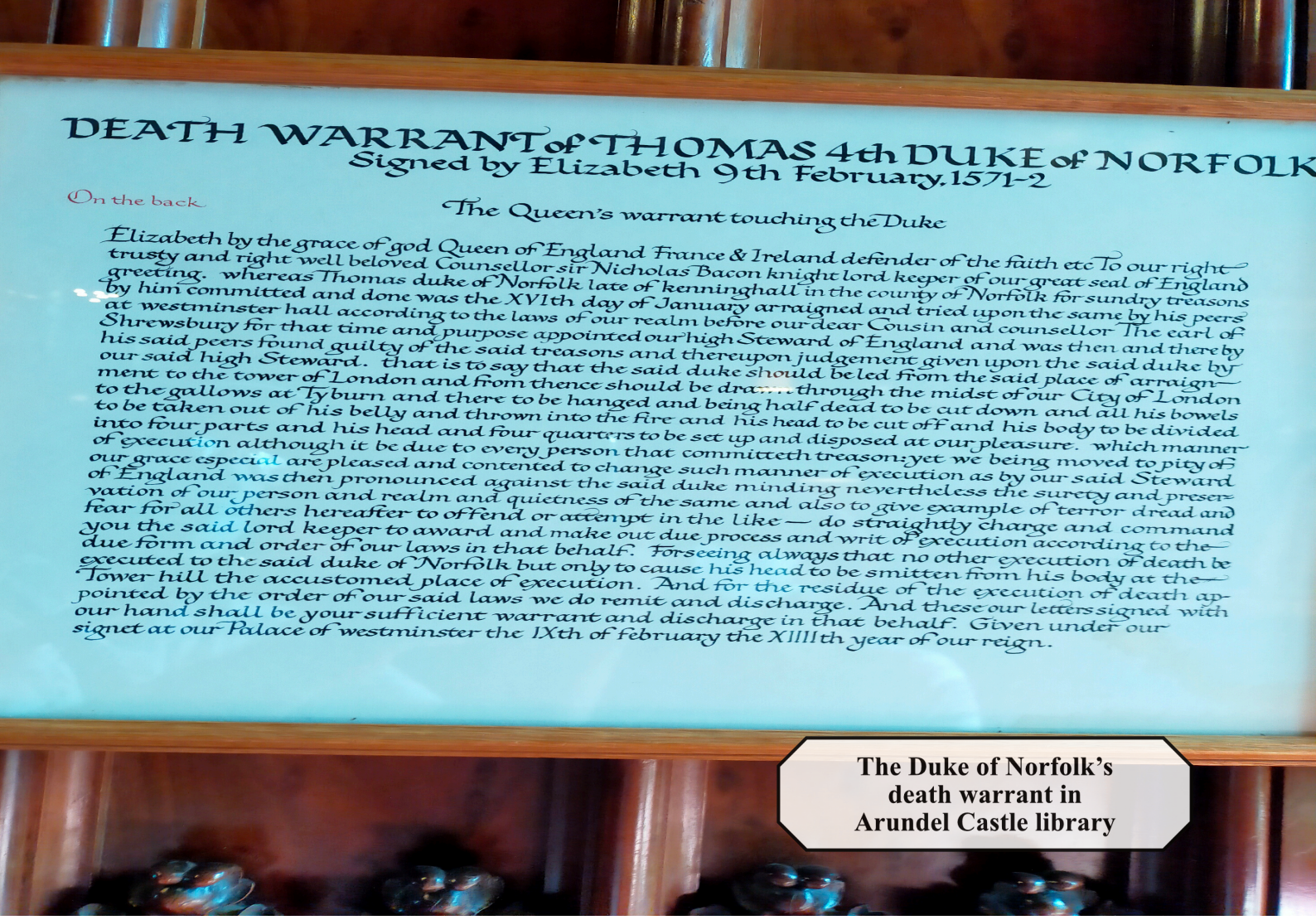
Philip's step-mother, Margaret Audley, had four children by the duke, including two more sons, Thomas and William. After Margaret died in 1563, Norfolk took a third wife, the widow, Elizabeth Dacre, who already had three daughters. The duke's three sons were quickly wed to their three step-sisters as soon as they came of age, fourteen-year-old Philip marrying Anne Dacre in 1571. He attended St John's College, Cambridge, graduating in 1574. A year later, when his portrait was painted, he first attended Queen Elizabeth's court and soon became her favourite despite his father's downfall.

In theory, the Howards had converted to Protestantism when Elizabeth succeeded her sister Mary as queen in 1558 and Philip was raised as a Protestant. However, his father remained a Catholic at heart. In 1568, Mary, Queen of Scots, fled from her rebellious Scottish nobles and sought sanctuary with her cousin, Queen Elizabeth, in England. As we know, she had a cold reception and would spend almost twenty years as a prisoner, shunted between various manor houses and castles across England.

In 1567, Norfolk, the wealthiest nobleman in the country, had been widowed for the third time and he too, like Mary, Queen of Scots, was a cousin of Elizabeth so also had a claim to the English throne. Both widowed, both Catholic with claims to the throne, Mary and Norfolk would be a force to be reckoned with if they married. This was exactly what the ambitious duke intended and Mary agreed to the plan. Firstly, he supported the Northern Rebellion of 1569 in an effort to free Mary but that came to nothing and Norfolk had wisely avoided taking an active role so suffered no worse consequences than nine months imprisonment before being released in 1570. But he hadn't learned his lesson nor given up on his ambitions so, secondly, in 1571, the



Miniature of Philip's father, Thomas Howard, 4th Duke of Norfolk



The Duke of Norfolk's death warrant in Arundel Castle library

Ridolfi Plot was planned to murder Elizabeth, free Mary who would wed Norfolk and the couple would rule England. This time, after a tentative beginning, Norfolk was in the thick of the treasonous schemes.

When Elizabeth's agents discovered the plot, Norfolk's servants were taken and put to the torture. Unsurprisingly, they betrayed the duke who was arrested on 1 October 1571 and imprisoned in the Tower of London. At his trial on a charge of treason in January 1572, he was found guilty by a unanimous verdict and sentenced to being attainted and executed. The death sentence by beheading was carried out on Tower Hill in June, six months after the trial.

The Duke of Norfolk's death warrant in Arundel Castle library – the gruesome death [as above] was commuted to beheading as a nobleman

Aged thirty-four, the duke was buried in St Peter ad Vincula Church at the Tower of London, where his relative, Anne Boleyn, had been buried almost forty years before.

Returning now to Philip's story, because his father had been attainted all the Norfolk titles, offices and estates were forfeit to the Crown, so Philip could not inherit the dukedom nor the lands which went with the title. However, his mother, Mary Fitzalan, had been heiress to the Earldom of Arundel and when her father, Henry Fitzalan KG, died in 1580, Philip inherited the title from his grandfather which was unaffected by Norfolk's attainder.

Like his father, Philip was also a recusant, quietly keeping the Catholic

faith but he was under suspicion. As a result, Philip, his wife and other members of the Howard family attempted to leave England without the queen's permission – required because he was her second cousin – but they were recognised and brought back. In 1581, he witnessed the religious debate at the Tower of London organised by Thomas Norton, 'the Rackmaster', [see my previous article, summer 2021] between the imprisoned Catholic priest, Edmund Campion, the Jesuit, Ralph Sherwin, and a few Protestant theologians who were hoping to persuade the Catholics to see the errors of their faith. They failed. Philip's part in this discussion isn't recorded other than the fact he was there but we can guess where his sympathies lay.

The Throckmorton Plot of 1583 was yet another attempt to free Mary, Queen of Scots, and Philip's involvement was suspected. Once again, his planned flight to Flanders was thwarted, this time by Queen Elizabeth herself who came on a visit to his London house, unannounced, and told her one-time favourite to stay at home. Yet still he courted trouble when, in September 1584, he officially converted to Roman Catholicism and again attempted to leave England. On this occasion, in April 1585, he got as far as boarding a ship at Littlehampton in West Sussex, on the south coast but, like his father before him, he was betrayed by a servant.

Philip was taken to the Tower of London. As a nobleman, he was tried in the Court of the Star Chamber – so called because of its star-spangled ceiling – charged with a list of crimes: being a Roman Catholic, leaving England without the queen's permission, involvement in Catholic plots and claiming the forfeited title of Duke of Norfolk. These charges were enough to earn the death sentence but Queen Elizabeth must still have had a soft spot for her one-time favourite because he was sentenced instead to pay the huge fine of £10,000 and to remain at the Tower during Her Majesty's pleasure.

Her pleasure might have been relatively brief because a year later, in July 1586, Philip was offered his freedom if he agreed to carry the Sword of State before Queen Elizabeth on her way to attend divine service in a Protestant church. In other words, he must return to the Protestant religion. He declined the honour. His continued imprisonment prevented his involvement in any further Catholic plots but he was an embarrassment to the government as a recusant cousin to the queen.

The Spanish Armada of 1588, instigated by his godfather, King Philip II, provided the authorities with another opportunity to be rid of Philip when they accused him of praying for the Spaniards' success. He was put on trial again on 14 April 1589, this time on a charge of high treason. He was found guilty, attainted and sentenced to death, yet the queen refused to sign the warrant for his execution. Poor Philip, though, never knew this and lived for the remaining six and a half years of imprisonment in daily expectation of facing the headsman.

He was not permitted to see his family nor meet with his fellow prisoners but his dog was a

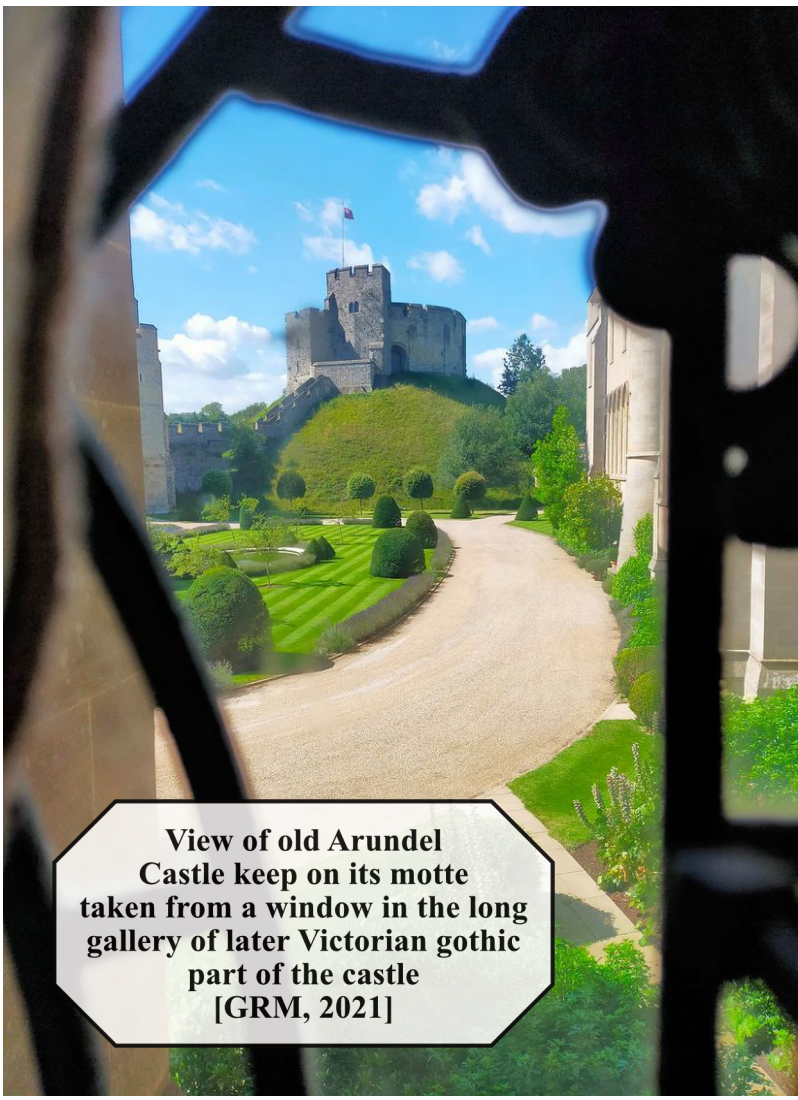


Philip Howard's monument with his dog in Arundel Cathedral [GRM, 2021]

constant and faithful friend. The animal learned to carry messages between Philip and other Catholics incarcerated at the Tower. Robert Southwell, a priest, became a close pen-friend by means of the canine go-between. The two men never met but kept up each other's morale, exchanging encouraging notes carried by Philip's pet. The dog is remembered in his master's monument in Arundel Cathedral.

In October 1595, Philip fell ill with dysentery. Realising he was dying, he sent a message to the queen, begging to be allowed to see his wife, Anne, and his son, Thomas. Anne had been pregnant when Philip was arrested ten years earlier and he had never seen his son. The queen agreed to them visiting on the condition that Philip attended a Protestant service. His titles and honours would also be restored, if he did this. Philip was probably too sick to oblige Her Majesty, even if he wished to, but he refused anyway, saying he would die in his Catholic religion. He never met his son. He died all alone on Sunday 19 October and was buried without ceremony in St Peter ad Vincula Church where his father also lay. Despite having died of natural causes, Philip was declared a Catholic Martyr.

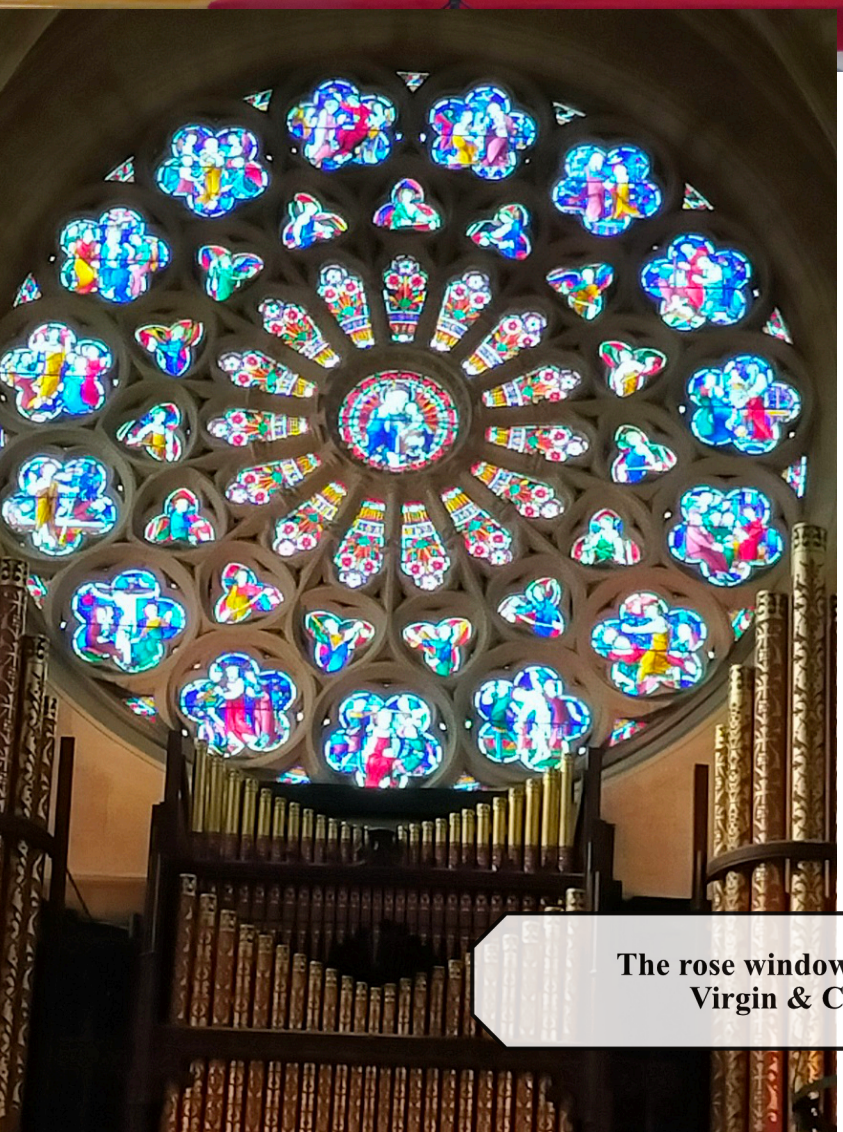
Although the queen never signed his death warrant, his attainder meant his son, Thomas, could not inherit the title Earl of Arundel nor any of his estates. However, Elizabeth's successor, King James I, was more lenient. Twenty-nine years after Philip's death, his widow, Anne, and his son were granted permission to move Philip's body from St Peter's at the Tower to the Fitzalan Chapel in the grounds of Arundel Castle and his son was allowed to succeed to the title Earl of Arundel and some of his grandfather's minor titles but not the dukedom of Norfolk. The dukedom would eventually be restored to Philip's great grandson, another Thomas Howard.



View of old Arundel Castle keep on its motte taken from a window in the long gallery of later Victorian gothic part of the castle [GRM, 2021]

When Arundel's Roman Catholic Cathedral was built in the nineteenth century, it was first dedicated to St Philip Neri, an Italian priest who had founded the Congregation of the Oratory, a society of Catholic priests and was canonised as a saint. By coincidence, Neri had died in 1595, the same year as Philip Howard. But after Philip Howard was also made a saint, in October 1970 the

The High Altar [GRM, 2021]



The rose window with the Virgin & Child

cathedral's dedication was changed to that of Our Lady and St Philip Howard and his bones were taken from the chapel in the castle to lie within his monument in the cathedral. During his imprisonment at the Tower, Philip carved a Latin inscription on the chimney breast in his chamber which roughly translates as 'The more we suffer for Christ in this world, the more glory we shall have with Christ in the next'. These words can still be read in the plaster today. I hope he received his heavenly reward.

TONI MOUNT



Acton Court 1535

Acton Court will open to the public 1 June to 3 July 2022
for self-guided audio tours and events.
https://www.actoncourt.com/tour-activities

Numbers are limited – book early to avoid disappointment.

Admission times: There will be two time slots
11:00-13:00 and 14:00-16:00.

Admission prices: Adult £10.00 plus Eventbrite booking fee.



Charlie on Books



Mary and Philip

By Alexander Samson



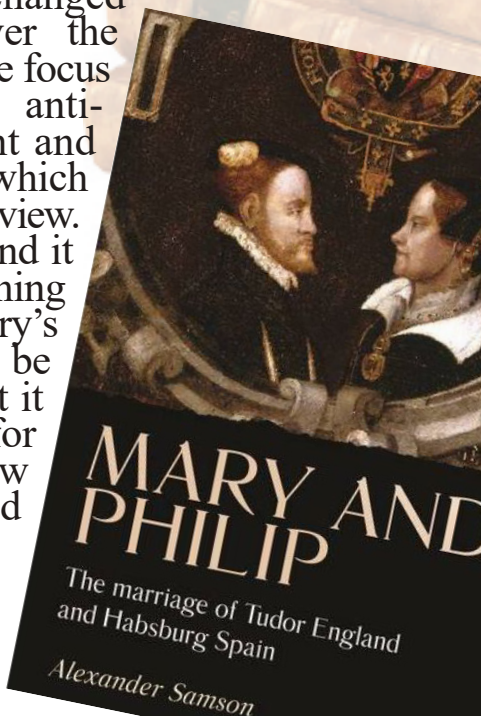
The marriage of Mary I of England and Philip II of Spain has been a somewhat controversial one over the years, which has not been helped by the negative image of Mary as 'Bloody Mary'. Thankfully, this has started to be challenged more and more recently, including in Alexander Samson's latest work, *Mary and Philip: The Marriage of Tudor England and Habsburg Spain*. Samson examines the couple and positively reassesses their joint reign, putting it in the context of the times and dispelling the later negative views surrounding them.

The author makes it clear from the start what his intentions are regarding the book. He states that, first and foremost, *'this book seeks to highlight the positive achievements of the reign and offer a balanced assessment of the glittering dynastic union of England and Spain, which for a time sat at the heart of early modern Europe'*. He then thoroughly dives into the details of the marriage contract and the negotiations, leaving no stone left unturned regarding the union of Mary and Philip. It is an academic work, so can be heavy going in places, but it is worth it for anyone interested in the couple.

The author is keen to re-examine the anti-Spanish sentiment and how far that went against the match from the start. He argues that we need to separate that from the religious issues, as they tend to be combined and confused, especially concerning Wyatt's rebellion. Once again, Samson meticulously examines this event from all angles, looking at both the possible causes and the historiography. He states that:

'It is undeniable that the Spanish match was deeply unpopular in certain quarters, how else to explain Sir Thomas Wyatt's revolt? However, the extent and nature of the opposition is debatable. The rebellion against Mary was a tenth of the size of the Pilgrimage of Grace and a third of the size of the Prayer Book revolt. Only one of its four strands came to anything.'

Mary and Philip: The Marriage of Tudor England and Habsburg Spain is a masterpiece in scholarship. Alexander Samson puts a new perspective on Mary and Philip's relationship, as well as how historians have changed the narrative over the years, putting more focus on things like anti-Spanish sentiment and religious feeling which have impacted our view. I would recommend it to anyone researching the couple and Mary's reign. It may not be any easy read, but it is well worth it for those wanting a new view of Mary and Philip.



The House of Dudley

By Joanne Paul



The Dudley family are one of several families that appear constantly throughout the Tudor dynasty, from Henry VII to Elizabeth I. However, they tend to be studied individually, with the likes of Edmund and Robert Dudley being the subjects of biographies, instead of looking at the family as a whole. Joanne Paul takes on this task in her latest work, The House of Dudley: A New History of Tudor England. As the title suggests, it looks at the reigns of the Tudor monarchs through the experiences of the Dudley family and, through seeing these interconnections, provides fresh insight into the period.

The prologue starts by addressing the notorious Leicester's Commonwealth, a work which accused Robert Dudley of 'plots, treasons, murders, falsehoods, poisonings, lust, incitements and evil stratagems'. Crucially to this study, it also accused his ancestors, allegedly resulting in Robert having been 'nuzzled in treason from his infancy'. It shows us how the family were seen by the time of Elizabeth I's reign and how the various intrigues and connections at court had affected their reputation. Paul then moves on to look at the family chronologically, starting with Henry VII and Edmund Dudley's controversial elevation under him, which would subsequently lead to his execution at the start of Henry VIII's reign. The book is in four parts, reflecting the prominent figures in different reigns.

One of the strangest things about this book is that it is almost written like a novel at times. For instance, this passage detailing an exchange between Edmund Dudley and William Clopton:

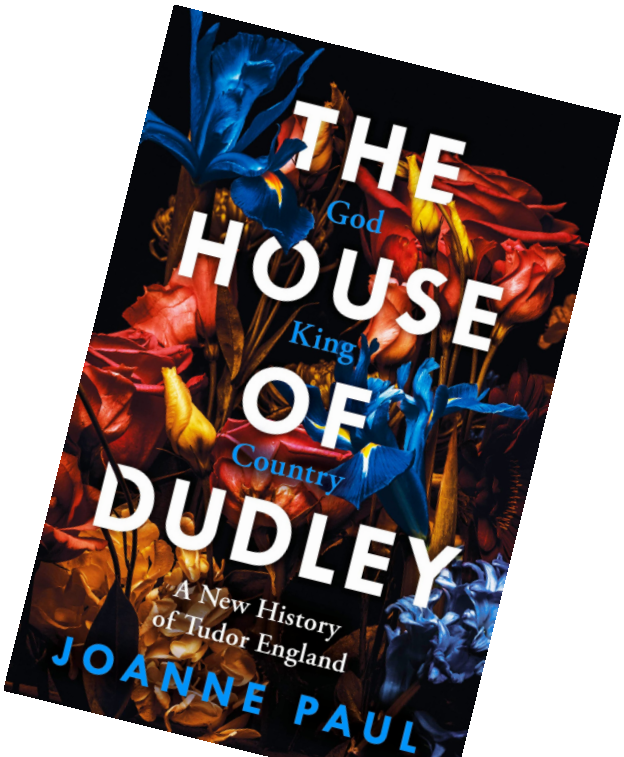
'Dudley offered Clopton a choice: 'If you take fifty marks and go on your way, and let me continue the suit in the Exchequer, you can have your fifty marks, or else you'll have never a penny.' It was not a good deal, at least not if you were Sir William Clopton.

Drury stepped forward to intercede on his friend's behalf. 'Considering the king's grace had no right but by the grant of William,' he interjected, 'the end that William has taken with the Earl of Derby should stand."

This is unusual for a non-fiction work and takes some getting used to, but it is supported by meticulous referencing throughout, which makes it a little easier to handle.

The House of Dudley: A New History of Tudor England is an interesting work on one of the families that managed to stay at the centre of court politics in the sixteenth century. This was no mean feat, as other families like the Boleyns and the Seymours struggled to stay in favour and had all but faded into the background by the time Elizabeth I came to the throne. I would recommend it to anyone interested in the family or the court politics of the period.

CHARLIE FENTON



REALLY EXPERIENCING TUDOR HISTORY

By Brigitte Webster

History is often regarded as a dead subject, boring, dull and repetitive by those who fail to engage with it. Luckily, everyone on this forum can strongly disagree as we all have been able to connect to Tudor history at some stage in our life. Many have had engaging and enthusiastic teachers, interested parents taking their children to see museums, exhibitions and castles but I guess most of us have experienced the initial 'spark' by reading a book, watching a movie or having watched a re-enactment display or performance.

So, what have all these in common? What is the magic ingredient that put this spell on us to happily engage with people who have been dead for half a millennium? All these encounters propel history to life, and we are forever, happily hooked on the Tudors.

The key to loving history is to 'experience' it. As every teacher can tell, to spark an initial interest you need to address all the senses: History needs to be seen, heard, tasted, smelled and physically as well as emotionally felt. Luckily, these days it is very easy to do that and



there is a growing industry to support and 'nourish' this hunger for experiential history.

The number of academic historians who turn their nose at experimental history is declining and experts like Dr Lucy Worsley and Dr Ruth Goodman are prime examples, both enthusiastically showing their support for history immersion.

As Professor Suzannah Lipscomb confirmed in one of the episodes of her latest TV programme 'Walking Tudor England' when slipping into a Tudor costume to 'experience Tudor life": 'It's like physically walking in a Tudor lady's shoes.' She was surprised to find, that she had to learn how to walk in Tudor shoes and found that even getting a book from a shelf or picking something up from the floor would require the help of somebody else. Very much to her amusement she also noted that 'impulsive romance would definitely not take place undressed' as even getting undressed required assistance and took time. Even to this accomplished Tudor expert historian, the value of physically stepping back into history was a totally new discovery.

Immersive history is not just fun, it also aids to understand the past better. Experiencing social Tudor history helps to fill in the gaps we



know little about, as contemporary writers failed to share it for the future. No document, manuscript or book can tell you what food tasted like. There are plenty of accounts telling us what food was bought and served at lavish feasts but unless you actually prepare and taste the dishes, you cannot even begin to imagine what a culinary delight it must have been. Experimental Tudor cookery also helps to prove that even the poor did not necessarily eat badly. Growing, gathering and preparing long forgotten produce from the wild such as Jack-by-the hedge, wild garlic or Alexanders certainly enrich my understanding about what the Tudors from the lower classes would have used, consumed and even enjoyed.

There is also nothing more enjoyable than to physically engage in Tudor leisure activities yourself. Whether that is game of cards, chess or backgammon or learning how to 'work' with a falcon or archery. The one that gets everybody's attention is music. The musically gifted amongst you can learn how to play a period authentic instrument such as the lute as a growing market for replica Tudor instruments opens up so many possibilities. I myself completely lack such talent but thoroughly enjoy a Tudor voice bring to life and perform Tudor period songs to a completely smitten audience.

One of the most rewarding ways to engage regularly with Tudor history is to join an early dance group. I have the privilege to be a member of one for many years and it really makes one understand, why dance was part of everyday life amongst all layers of society. Rest assured, there is a Tudor dance for everyone from those with two left feet (me) to the most agile that could easily take it up with young Robert Dudley and Elizabeth!

If theatre is your thing, there is no better place than experiencing Shakespeare live at the Globe but remember, to 'get' Shakespeare, you benefit from experiencing Tudor history beforehand.

Some authentic Tudor pastimes such as embroidery are not just very therapeutic but again, you can make it work for you. Authentic Tudor embroidery stitches are very complicated and require not just excellent eyesight but also a good mathematical understanding to calculate the correct moves of your design. Luckily, there are numerous modernised, easier cross stitch designs for beginners.

The green-fingered amongst us could step into the world of gardens and not just grow Tudor period authentic vegetables, fruit or flowers but create a version of a Tudor garden in their backyard.



There are several Tudor buildings that offer 'sleep over' nights (Hampton Court Palace used to before covid) or various Experience days, some more authentic than others. One of the longest running and most educational Tudor re-enactment scenes takes place at Kentwell, an Elizabethan manor in Suffolk. Hundreds of volunteers dress up in Tudor costume and re-enact typical life at the manor. The public enters as visitor to Tudor England, encouraged to engage with the re-enactors and ask questions but they do not actually take part in any of the activities, nor are you allowed to wear Tudor costume yourself. This is the perfect setting for people who wish to experience Tudor England as an onlooker and was certainly one place that started my love for 'living' Tudor history many years ago.

I am often asked, what made me start a Tudor Experience from my own home and rather unexpectedly, it was not a conscious step but more an evolvement and an amalgamation of many skills. As a qualified teacher of cookery, embroidery, sewing, woodwork(!), childcare and history, I am the perfect Tudor housewife. My parents nurtured my love for gardening from when I was a child. When I took up furniture restoration over a decade ago, I soon started to bring home basket-cases of furniture from the early 1600s that nobody else wanted and I gave it a new life. As my children grew older, so did the furniture and at some stage I started to realise that we had created a Tudor living history museum. In the early days we just offered open days but soon it became clear, that people wanted more. There was a clear interest and desire to fully step back into history and become a guest to a



Tudor household with authentic food, entertainment and furniture and hence the Tudor Experience was born.

Our home dates to 1500 and features open fireplaces instead of modern central heating. Daily Tudor living without modern heating









is essential for experiencing authentic Tudor winters but it is not comfortable nor can it be described as 'cosy.' The wearing of up to four layers of clothing as standard in Tudor times starts to make sense.

The great thing about experiencing Tudor history is, that it comes in so many forms that there is bound to be something that fits your interests and requirements. You can spend as much or as little as you want to. You can dip in and try different angles, but it will most definitely get you to immerse yourself deeper. History knows no boundaries. Go out there and taste it!

Some suggestions to find out more about 'experiencing' history in the UK:

www.tudorexperience.com
www.kentwell.co.uk/events
www.hatfield-house.co.uk/events/category/experiences-in-the-park/
ww.layermarneytower.co.uk/events/
www.penshurstplace.com/whats-on/events-and-activities
www.rockinghamcastle.com/featured-events/tudor-history-day/
www.tudortailor.com/events
www.maryrose.org www.hertsearlydance.org.uk
www.earlydancecircle.co.uk/early-dance-groups-and-societies/
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