

# Tudor Life

TUDOR  
SOCIETY

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## TUDOR WINTERS

Frost Fairs

The Last Days of  
Henry VIII

The Portraiture of  
Katherine of Aragon

PLUS

Noblewoman:  
Female musicians

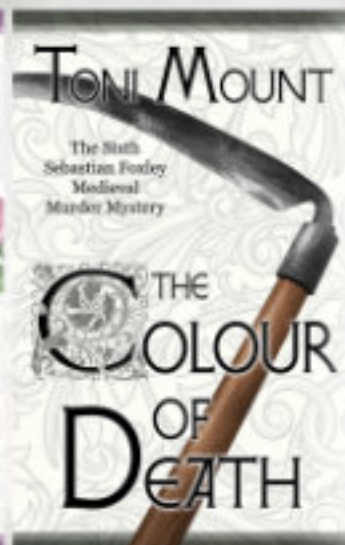
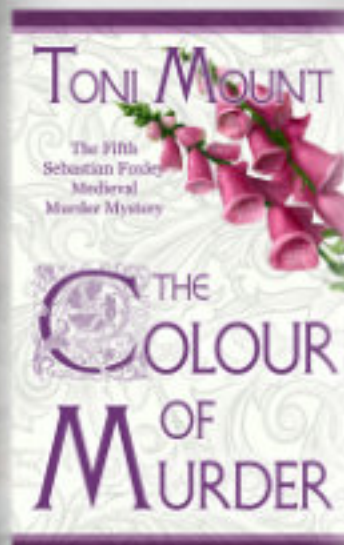
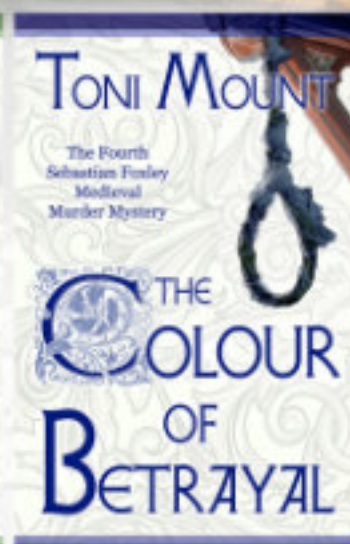
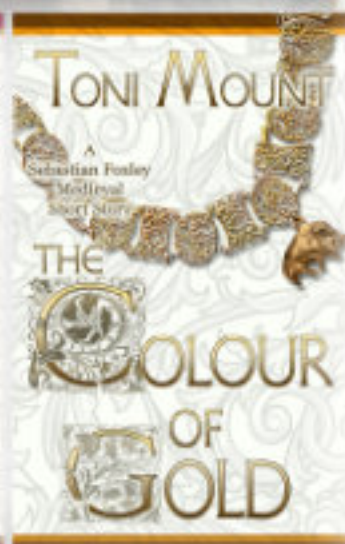
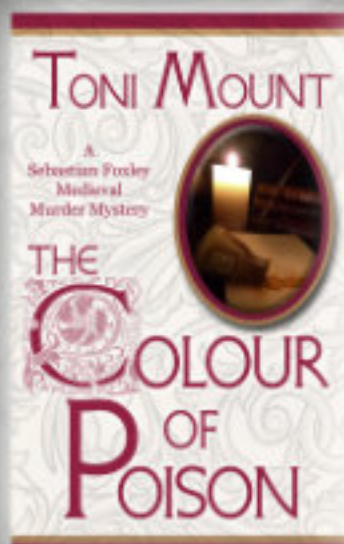
AND MUCH MORE



VISIT ARUNDEL CASTLE  
A PHOTO TRIP WITH SIMON BURROWS



# Perfect winter reading...





## TUDOR WINTERS

November, for me, is when autumn yields to winter, at some uncertain point I always feel, here in Belfast where I'm writing, that the season perceptibly shifts. Others instead feel winter arrives with panache on the first day of December. For the Tudors, it was an easier line of demarcation with the religious festival of Martinmas, on the eleventh day of November, marking the point at which the farming season shifted from autumn into winter. Some animals were culled for their meat, many more were moved inside - to barns or stables - to keep them safe from the chill and frosts. Wherever in the world you're reading this issue, I hope you enjoy our look back at sixteenth-century winters.

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**ABOVE:** Frost fair on the Thames in the reign of Charles II.

**GARETH RUSSELL**  
**EDITOR**



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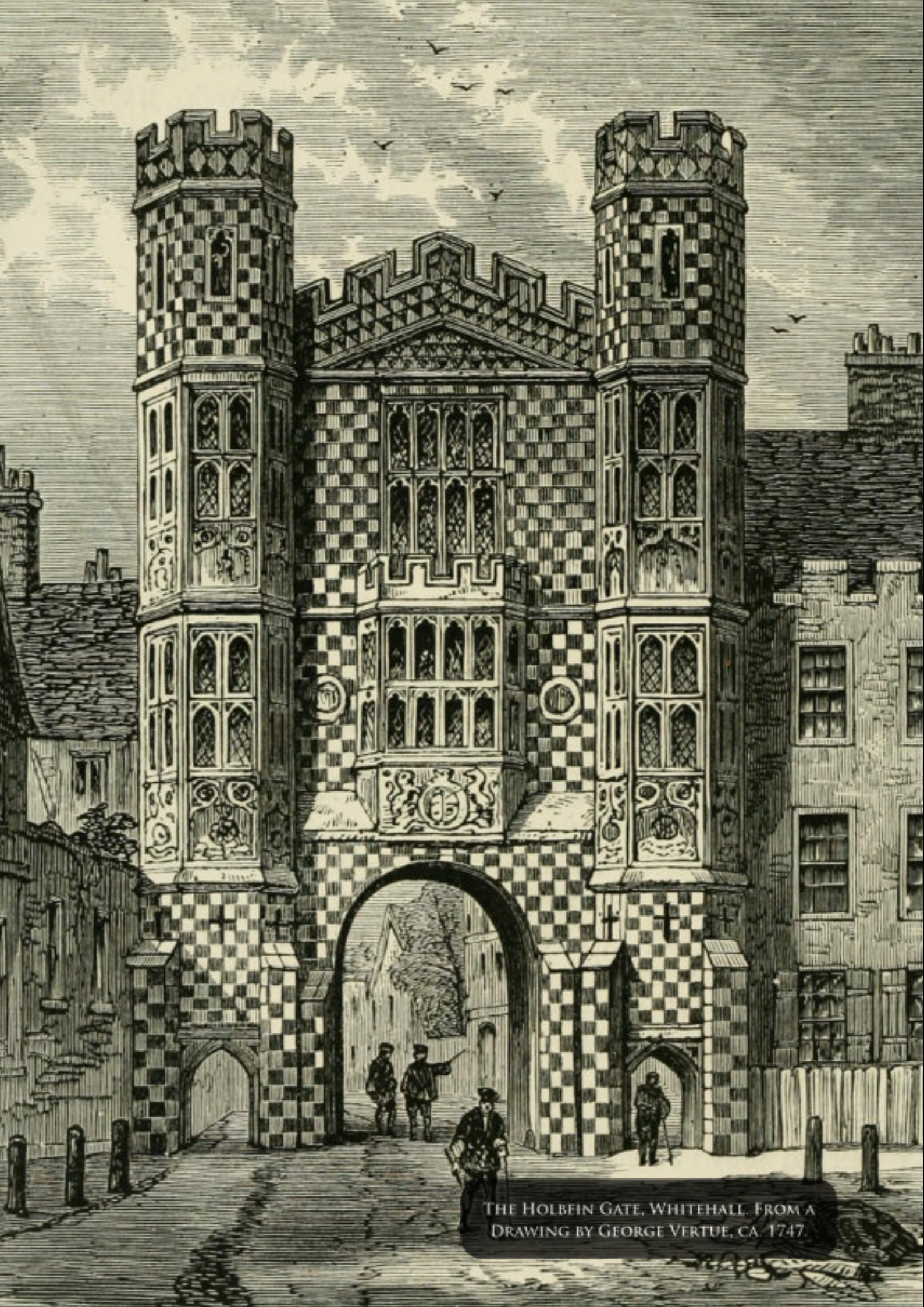
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THE HOLBEIN GATE, WHITEHALL. FROM A  
DRAWING BY GEORGE VERTUE, CA. 1747.



# The Six Weddings of Henry VIII

by Elizabeth Jane Timms

‘Henry VIII and his Six Wives’. Metaphorically, these six women still follow behind the man who not only was the dominant figure in their lives, but the ultimate regal (and later, spiritual) authority in the land. Scholarship has done much to bring them out of his shadow, to stand as subjects not only of that King, but as fascinating subjects in their own right. Even Jane Seymour, Henry’s ‘most dear and most entirely beloved wife’, showed herself capable of behaviour far from submissive. ‘The Six Wives of Henry VIII’ puts the women first, yet ties them collectively to the man that is the reason for their shared history. Henry’s total supremacy is thus accurately reflected in these phrases, because his six wives – whatever their different fates - remain wedded to him. And whilst the second Tudor monarch famously made six marriages, we know actually very little about those weddings.

**T**HE IMMEDIATE reason for this is because the royal wedding as a public spectacle is a comparatively recent notion. Henry VIII’s marriages were quietly celebrated in the privacy of his palaces and it is precisely this fact which provides the natural explanation as to why such little information was ever recorded. The growth of this phenomena in British terms was a gradual development across the long reign of Queen Victoria, who in 1840 married Prince Albert of Saxe-Coburg-Gotha in the chapel royal at St James’s Palace, whose magnificent ceiling is attributed to Holbein and in which the ciphers of Henry VIII and his fourth wife, Anne of Cleves may still be seen. It is only at Henry’s sixth marriage that any real amount of wedding guests are documented. Historically, the royal wedding formed no part of the art of display and participation was extremely privileged. Later

artworks and engravings lend their own respectful silence to what was a hidden and family-centred moment. By total contrast, the events surrounding a coronation, including the processional route from the Tower of London on the eve of the crowning (which ceased with Charles II), was an event of intense public interest, attracting enormous crowds to witness its ancient proceedings. With the advent of technology, this was first televised with the coronation of George VI, although the most sacred moment of the ceremony - the anointing - was (and is) never filmed, either for George VI in 1937 or his daughter, Elizabeth II in 1953. A latter-day royal wedding seems to combine all the elements of a coronation’s national publicity with the privacy of the actual marriage ceremony, including the arrival at the building in question.

Fortunately, in the foreign and domestic Letters and Papers of Henry VIII, it is still possible to explore the small, yet fascinating amount of primary material which does survive, describing the six weddings. Fleshing this out with other source material, we are able to quietly eavesdrop on these ceremonies, learning such details as to where the weddings took place, which of the clergy officiated and even, what was worn for the occasion.

Much later, works of art were commissioned to commemorate these royal weddings. Prior to this, there were large dynastic paintings of moment such as the departure of a foreign princess from her native homeland, or of the sea vessel carrying her to the shores of her new country. (Anne of Cleves' proposed sea voyage survives in the form of a chart at the British Library, although in fact, Anne travelled the majority of her bridal journey to England over land). All this again emphasises the fact that historically, the wedding ceremony was only ever intended to be a private one. Importantly however, the arrival of any foreign bride was public, as was the welcome given to her, stressing the political importance of the alliance and the role of the princess as part of this process. Her entry into the capital would provide rich occasion for spectacle and splendid pageantry, which the populace could attend in great numbers.

When Princess Catherine of Aragon was presented to the City of London in 1501, she appeared for the first time as the bride of Arthur, Prince of Wales, dressed in a hat 'of carnation colour', (1); and her beautiful, thick hair was worn loose. At her wedding to Prince Arthur on 14 November 1501 at (old) St Paul's Cathedral, Princess Catherine appropriately wore a mantilla as a royal princess of Spain, a daughter of the 'Catholic kings'. Her veil, according to Spanish custom (and the remonstrance of Catherine's formidable duenna Dona Elvira) should have remained in place for that first

meeting at Dogmersfield until the actual marriage ceremony, although the time-honoured ordinances set out by the Lady Margaret Beaufort decreed that after the wedding banquet, a royal bride should be put to bed - in her veil (2).

Princesses simply wore magnificent dresses at their wedding: the 'modern' (white) wedding dress was popularised by Queen Victoria's gown of cream Spitalfields silk satin. Princess Catherine of Aragon wore a dress heavily embroidered with jewels in white and gold, (3) itself a tribute to the rigid, Spanish fashion silhouette of the period: we might recall how another royal Spanish princess, the Infanta Maria Teresa - daughter of Philip IV and bride of Louis XIV of France - was painted in the late seventeenth-century, showing the kind of stiff dress of the 1660s at the court of Spain at the time of her marriage.

When in 1509, Catherine married the newly-acceded Henry VIII, she married that same younger brother of Prince Arthur who had led her down the aisle at St Paul's, as Duke of York in 1501. Importantly, for the intense legal and ecclesiastical scrutiny that Catherine's marriage bed(s) would be subject to later, Princess Catherine was in white, wearing her hair loose. Historically, only unmarried women and queens were generally permitted to wear their hair in this way; for a bride, it has been argued that this emphasised her continued state of virginity. (4) Those deeply recurring themes in Henry's marital history - virginity and validity - are particularly poignant here, when recalling Princess Catherine's bridal attire. Deliberately or accidentally, Princess Catherine's apparent virginity certainly seemed to be reflected in her appearance and whilst the full truth of this can never be known, it remained her version of her own story and was the one she maintained for the rest of her life.

According to Ferdinand of Aragon's words to the Spanish Ambassador



Fuensalida, his daughter Catherine had written that her marriage would take place soon, were only Henry VII to die and indeed, once the King had died, the wedding duly took place less than two months later: a speedy end to some seven years' wait since the death of Prince Arthur. It was Henry VIII himself who wrote to Catherine's father, King Ferdinand (echoing the King's words to Fuensalida) that the marriage ceremony had been concluded after the death of the King. The association seemed unmistakable for both Henry and Catherine: with the death of Henry VII, their wedding could at last take place.

Incredibly, the actual form of words to be pronounced during the wedding ceremony between Henry and Catherine of Aragon are printed in the Spanish Calendar, translated from the Latin original. The words are extremely revealing, as they directly refer to the original marriage treaty made between Henry VII and Catherine's parents, Ferdinand of Aragon and Isabella of Castile ('the Catholic kings'). Interestingly, prior to asking Henry whether it was his will to take Princess Catherine, there is a notable reference to the papal dispensation. (5)

The quiet wedding between Princess Catherine of Aragon and the young Henry VIII took place in the Queen's Closet at Greenwich on 11 June 1509, performed by the Archbishop of Canterbury, William Warham; the Princess Catherine's jointure had been signed by Henry from Westminster the day before: written on two sides of parchment and tied with a silken ribbon. (6) Greenwich therefore had deep personal meaning for Catherine, as it was where she finally became the wife of the man she was convinced it was her destiny to marry. That position of Henry's queen was one which she would never relinquish as her royal identity, even referring to him as her 'most dear Lord, King and husband' in the letter which she dictated from Kimbolton: hardly the words of a Princess Dowager. In 1890,

the Lord Willoughby de Eresby lent an (undated) object to an exhibition in London, which depicted the marriage of Henry VIII with Princess Catherine of Aragon as a memorial picture, surrounded by their families; this family provenance is convincing, as the Lady Willoughby de Eresby at the time of Catherine of Aragon had been none other than her devoted Spanish lady, Maria de Salinas, who married William, Lord Willoughby d'Eresby in 1517. (7)

Back in London for their Coronation, Henry's new queen could be publicly observed in all her state, wearing white satin and her hair 'hanging down her back'. (8) The loose hair surely denoted her regal status, for virginity would now presumably be abandoned to fulfil what was, her foremost duty as queen. Much later, the mortally ill Queen Catherine was to be found at Kimbolton, still combing this same hair without the assistance of her ladies; although by now, that most beautiful of her assets was not left to hang long and the Queen was tying up her tresses herself. (9) On Catherine's death, her Will mentioned nothing which directed related to her marriage to Henry, but requested the King to allow her to have the monies owed to her, touchingly bequeathing to the Princess Mary a gold collar which she had brought over with her from Spain. (10) Chapuys wrote indignantly to Charles V two days after Catherine's death, that he had been informed the late Queen would be given an honourable funeral, as she had been the wife of Arthur, Prince of Wales. (11) Arguably, this was the final insult: Catherine was being buried as his brother's bride, not as his divorced wife, for that would admit a former marriage which had been legally valid. In other words: in death, Catherine was being treated purely as Prince Arthur's widow. That text in Leviticus still echoed, even here. The secret ceremony which was performed between Henry VIII and



Anne Boleyn is thought to have taken place in late January 1533. Archbishop Cranmer for his part, considered it had been concluded 'about St Paul's Day', 25 January. (12) The following day – 26 January – Henry signed a commission at Greenwich for Anne, referring to her by her new official title of 'Anne, Marchioness of Pembroke', ordering George Tayler, John Smyth and Wm [William] Brabazon, to take possession of those lands recently granted to Anne in the north and south of Wales on her behalf. (13) Unsurprisingly for such a private affair, there is tactful silence as to any recent wedding, if we are to believe Cranmer's date. Given his close association with the Boleyns, it is likely that he was well informed (although he was not actually present). Chapuys was already referring to a new marriage by 27 January in a letter to Charles V; the King for his part, as if to hammer the point home, was writing to his Ambassadors in Rome in late January – not of his own recent marriage but – of the marriage between Catherine and Prince Arthur, enclosing a full transcript on this matter for the express perusal of the Pope. (14) By February 1533, Chapuys had heard the King and Anne were still discussing their plans to marry and that Anne had just told a priest he would have to wait until she had wedded the King before he could enter her household. (15)

The King's wedding to Anne is thought to have been celebrated early in the morning at York Place [Whitehall Palace], in one of the rooms above the Holbein Gate; perhaps performed by the King's Chaplain, Dr Rowland Lee. (16) The Holbein Gate stretched across Whitehall and was built sometime between 1531 and 1532. The artist Anton van den Wyngaerde sketched the Palace (with the Holbein Gate) in about 1544; Morden and Lea's map of London shows the Gate in some detail in 1682. The

Holbein Gate survived the devastating fire which destroyed most of the Palace

of Whitehall on 4 January 1698 (the diarist John Evelyn wrote with powerful simplicity: 'Whitehall burnt!'). Yet remarkably, the Holbein Gate survived and it appears in Canaletto's 1747 view of Whitehall as seen from the Privy Garden at Richmond House.

The so-called Holbein Gate was constructed on two storeys and its carved panels were ornamented with various royal emblems, including the Tudor rose. It has been suggested that the Gate is so named because Holbein may have used one of the rooms over the Gate as a studio (17), but there is no evidence to support such a claim. If Henry did marry Anne Boleyn in the main room above the Gate, it was a fitting choice as it was mounted with the Royal Arms, as well as Tudor roundels. Its chamber was used in 1605 in connection with preparations for new installations of Knights of the Bath. (18) To the west of the Holbein Gate, Henry constructed a magnificent gallery to overlook the Royal Tiltyard, the present site of Horse Guards Parade. The lower storey of the Gate consisted of one main room as well as three closets; the upper half by the mid-eighteenth century contained the Paper Office. (19)

The Holbein Gate was demolished in 1756. A reconstruction of the first floor of the Palace of Whitehall for 1669-70 shows the Holbein Gate spanning King Street with the King Street Gate as its end; the Holbein Gate adjoined the first-floor apartments of Charles II's mistress, Barbara Villiers, Lady Castlemaine (after 1663). (20) Using a late 1660s reconstruction of Whitehall Palace alongside the modern London map, the present author has attempted to plot the approximate location of the lost Holbein Gate – somewhere just over halfway down modern-day Whitehall but before its end at Parliament Street: roughly where the Women of World War Two Memorial now stands. Thus, Whitehall's vanished geography enables us to grasp just how





WHITEHALL PALACE, FROM THE RIVER. FROM A COPY BY SMITH OF A VIEW TAKEN SHORTLY AFTER THE FIRE.

WHITEHALL, FROM THE RIVER. (From a Copy by Smith of a View taken shortly after the Fire.)

truly gigantic the Tudor palace was in its original scale.

Henry's third wedding was – like his previous others – celebrated in privacy. There was also a highly politic reason for it to be so. For Henry VIII married his third wife only weeks after Anne Boleyn had been beheaded in that same Tower of London now decorated for his new bride. (21) Indeed, the King and Jane Seymour were partially repeating that same river route taken by a terrified Anne Boleyn from Greenwich to the Tower the month before. (That journey was a tragic evocation in fact, of the very gift which Anne Boleyn had given to the King for New Year 1528: a 'ship', in which sat a 'lonely damsel', (22) tossed on the waves: that gloomy May day in 1536, Anne Boleyn was that same 'lonely damsel', being rowed upriver to the Tower). It helped with the general attitude of obliteration which took place after the execution of Queen Anne Boleyn: the third marriage was intended to erase its

memory, just as the vessel carrying the King and Jane Seymour went on past the Tower – the setting for his second wife's scaffold.

The betrothal between the King and Jane Seymour took place at Hampton Court Palace; their private wedding was held elsewhere, on 30 May 1536. (23) The dispensation for their marriage is preserved on parchment, signed by Cranmer – without banns – on 19 May 1536. This was the date of Anne Boleyn's execution, thereby literally, replacing Anne with Jane: a chilling example of how the 'vacant' office of queen could quickly be simply filled by another. The wedding was celebrated at the Palace of Whitehall, also known as York Place and first recorded as White Hall (or, Whitehall) in 1532, and so: the same palace in which Henry is believed to have married Anne Boleyn. We may suppose that the King's happy ability to trick himself could have enabled him to forget this single fact, just as his betrothal was timed the day after the execution of Anne Boleyn. Bishop



Gardiner officiated at this, his third wedding. (24) The primary sources for late May 1536 draw interesting attention to the awkward confusion that prevailed in this month of May whenever the word 'queen' is used - either the 'late' Queen (Anne) is being referred to, or the 'new' Queen (Jane). On 31 May, John Husee was at last able to write to his Calais correspondent, Lord Lisle that the King's wedding had taken place in the Queen's Closet at York Place. (25) Henry did not marry Jane Seymour in the Holbein Gate and perhaps characteristically, chose a new room for a new wife. The Holbein portrait of Jane Seymour now in the Kunsthistorisches Museum in Vienna, is thought to have been painted at or around the time of her wedding to the King.

The fourth wedding to Anne of Cleves was the singular occasion we must believe, that the King ever walked unwillingly to the altar. The marriage contract was dated from Greenwich on 5 January 1540; a facsimile of the original with its seal entered the Royal Collection when the Minister-President of North Rhine-Westphalia, Peer Steinbrück presented a copy to Queen Elizabeth II in Berlin in November 2004. The King signed letters patent that same day at Greenwich regarding the grants of land to be made to Anne of Cleves, in view of the marriage which was about to take place. (26) The wedding was celebrated in none other than the Queen's Closet at Greenwich where Henry in fact, had married his first wife, Catherine of Aragon. Whatever Henry may have felt privately, he publicly chose to forget. State marriages after all meant that one princess could simply be substituted for another and this was the only political union without love that the King ever made (the other political marriage being Catherine of Aragon).

This fourth ceremony took place on 6 January 1540. Anne of Cleves wore a ring engraved with the words 'God

send me wel to kepe'; later, after she understood that her marriage to Henry was over, Anne of Cleves sent Henry the ring she had been given, requesting that it be broken up because she now knew it to be a thing without use. (27) Archbishop Cranmer officiated. Whatever his personal feelings, the King was most sumptuously dressed: in cloth of gold embroidered with silver and edged with black fur, over which he wore a cloak of crimson-coloured satin; Anne of Cleves wore cloth of gold studded with pearl flowers. Her collar and belt were encrusted with jewels. (28)

With far greater enthusiasm, Henry VIII married his fifth queen, Katherine Howard at Oatlands Palace on 28 July 1540. The day of the wedding was the same day on which Thomas Cromwell was beheaded at the Tower. Clinically, Cromwell's things had been delivered to Hampton Court Palace the day before, including his crimson and purple velvet Garter robes, which were to remain at Hampton Court, by order of the King. (29) Typically for Henry, he always 'forgot' by physically removing himself: his choosing the date of Cromwell's execution as his wedding day could therefore enable Henry to avoid it by replacing it with a celebration of his own. The young Katherine Howard swore the old vows and in some ways at least, she did fulfil them: namely, to be 'bonair and buxom in bed and at board' and to live with the King in sickness and health (bearing in mind the ulcerated leg). All this she would maintain until her own private conduct forced its own tragic slant to her end vow: 'till death us depart'. (30)

A beautiful Holbein miniature from around 1540 has been suggested as representing Katherine Howard; it survives in the Royal Collection. This is largely based on the fact that the lady in the miniature is wearing the magnificent ruby, emerald and pearl jewel which Jane Seymour wears at her neck in the Kunsthistorisches portrait,



which was a present from the King.

Information in the Royal Collection further suggests that if it does indeed show Henry's fifth queen, the jewel and the encrusted band on which it hangs, may have been a wedding present to Katherine Howard from the King, (31) yet Jane Seymour's personal jewels were certainly distributed after her death and therefore left exclusive royal ownership. Henry VIII and Katherine Howard were married by the Bishop of London, Edmund Bonner; the King even commissioned a 'pearl bed' from France, (32) for use on his fifth wedding night. We know of course, that pearls have their symbolism for virginity in the language of jewellery; sadly for Henry, he clearly assumed that Katherine Howard was his own Virgin Queen - his 'rose without a thorn'.

We must remember that Henry's last wedding produced – in Tudor, not only Henrician terms – the highly unusual situation that this time, both royal bride and bridegroom processed to the altar having been married more than once before. For Henry VIII, it was of course, the sixth and final time that he would do so, but in marrying the King, Katherine Parr, Lady Latimer, was to have her third wedding day. And nor would it be her last. For after the death of Henry VIII in 1547, she was free to marry the man she loved - Thomas Seymour - and did so some five months later, with perhaps too much haste. For with this sixth marriage, not even Henry could raise any realistic anxiety regarding virginity or sexual impediment, with a mature woman who had already been married twice.

The fourth marriage of the Queen Dowager with Thomas Seymour would be her last, and whilst the exact date of that remains unknown, the date of her royal wedding is recorded. An original letter in private ownership and lent by one 'A. Huth Esq' featured in the same exhibition in 1890; this letter to her brother, William Parr

was written to relay the news of her wedding to the King. It was dated 20 July 1543 and is signed 'Katernyn the Quene'; a copy of a letter written on the same date is now in the British Library, written from Oatlands Palace. (33)

This wedding took place at Hampton Court Palace - where the King's betrothal to Jane Seymour had been celebrated. We are fortunate that a relatively detailed description of it is contained within the Letters and Papers of Henry VIII. The ceremony was performed on 12 July 1543 in the Queen's 'Privy' (Holy Day) Closet at Hampton Court. (34). Bishop Gardiner officiated at the wedding in English, but gave his speech in Latin. The marriage licence signed by Archbishop Cranmer was brought into the Queen's Closet, dated 10 July 1543. The King took Katherine Parr's right hand and repeated the Bishop's words. After the vows, the wedding ring was put on and the Bishop made prayers and pronounced the blessing. (35) This last of the King's weddings was more social than any of his previous nuptials. There were a number of guests present, which included the King's daughters, Lady Mary and Lady Elizabeth and the Lady Margaret Douglas; the latter, of whom Henry was particularly fond, carried the wedding train of Katherine Parr. (36) Today, a small display by Historic Royal Palaces recreates the moment of marriage in the surviving Queen's Holy Day Closet, opening onto the Royal Pew.

Uniquely, this last – the Queen's Closet at Hampton Court's chapel royal - is the only single venue of Henry's six weddings to have survived. The Queen's Closet at Greenwich (Catherine of Aragon and Anne of Cleves) disappeared with the palace. The site of the former Royal Hospital is now approximately, the Old Royal Naval College, the University of Greenwich and the Greenwich Maritime Institute; excavations in 2006 revealed the tiled floor of the Tudor chapel and vestry, taking us perhaps as close as possible to





HENRY VIII HOLDING ANNE BOLEYNE'S HAND; CLERIC SEATED  
BY A THRONE ON THE RIGHT HAND SIDE. ENGRAVING BY T.  
COOK AFTER W. HOGARTH, OCTOBER 1804.

*King Henry the Eighth & Anna Boleyn*

*London: Published by J. & A. Colman, Strand, near St. Dunstons Church.*



the weddings of 1509 and 1540. A plaque in the pavement at Greenwich commemorates the site of this one of Henry's favourite 'greater' houses and one of the most important palaces of his dynasty. This same plaque forms a memorial also to the fact that it was here at Greenwich that Henry VIII himself was born in 1491, as were his daughters Mary I and Elizabeth I, in 1516 and 1533 respectively.

The Holbein Gate (Anne Boleyn) was demolished as has been stated, in 1756. The Queen's Closet at the Palace of Whitehall (Jane Seymour) was destroyed in the fire of 1698 and was not among those parts to be preserved which today comprise integrally of Inigo Jones's resplendent Banqueting House and the undercroft known as Henry VIII's Wine Cellar, which forms part of the premises of the Ministry of Defence. Other structural remnants of the Palace of Whitehall are now part of other governmental buildings in Whitehall, including sections of the former Tudor tennis courts, now located within the Old Treasury and the Cabinet Office. A reconstruction of the first floor of Whitehall Palace in the late 1660s shows the Chapel as adjacent to the King's Oratory and King's Closet, which led onto Whitehall Stairs – somewhere roughly backing onto the present-day Victoria Embankment (37) and Whitehall Gardens.

Oatlands (Katherine Howard) survived into the reign of Charles I but was mostly destroyed during the Interregnum when Cromwell sold much of the Crown estate, which then included the contents of Oatlands Palace. According to the Weybridge Society, only the Tudor gateway survives in Palace Gardens, whilst the bricks from the demolished Oatlands Palace were sold to Sir Richard Weston, who used them to construct bridges and locks on the Wey canal. (38) A 1950s housing estate occupies most of the present site of the actual palace, whilst the aptly-named streets

of Old Palace Road, West Palace Gardens, Tudor Walk and Palace Drive recall more royal times. Somewhat touchingly, the present author discovered a small residential close located near the site of the former palace called Catherine Howard Court.

One surviving object may possibly recall Henry's six marriages. A gilt-bronze clock in the Royal Collection is traditionally believed to have been given by Henry VIII to Anne Boleyn, on the morning of their wedding. It is impossible to confirm this attribution as it has been much altered over time. Whatever the clock's provenance and history, it is surmounted by a leopard – Anne Boleyn's personal heraldic beast – and a shield upon which are the Royal Arms of England and the Garter. According to information in the Royal Collection, the clock was gifted by Lady Elizabeth Germaine to Horace Walpole and thus entered the great Strawberry Hill Collection; Queen Victoria purchased the clock on 13 May 1842, for the sum of £110, 5s. (39)

With this information, the present author was able to consult a copy of the catalogue of the Strawberry Hill sales, in which the clock is described as having stood in Strawberry Hill's Library. The catalogue repeats the tradition about its having been a wedding-morning gift; it further adds that the weights of the clock are chased with lovers' knots, one of which has the motto 'The Moost Happi' – Anne Boleyn's motto on her 1534 medal. Equally romantically, the catalogue tells us that this clock 'still goes' (1842) but reminds us that it 'should have stopped... when Anne Boleyn died!' (40) Consulting the catalogue, it is possible to see that the date on which Queen Victoria bought the clock was the seventeenth day of the sale (such was the amount of treasures that the sales stretched over some twenty-four days). The clock was listed and sold as 'the celebrated clock of silver gilt, presented by Henry VIII to his Queen, Anne



Boleyn, on their Marriage'; perhaps interestingly, Horace Walpole's Bed Chamber at Strawberry Hill contained a large piece of stained glass which featured the arms of Anne Boleyn. (41) According to the catalogue, Walpole had also owned a copy by Frederick Zuccherro of a Holbein picture entitled 'The Triumph of Riches', depicting Henry VIII as Croesus and Anne Boleyn following him. (42)

The clock is still listed in the Royal Collection inventory and is probably still held at Windsor; it was photographed in 1876 (as the 'Anne Boleyn Clock') in situ in Room 192 at the Castle and is listed in Windsor Castle's Inventory of Clocks and Candelabra. Windsor Castle nurses a sentimental tradition with the memory of Anne Boleyn: Anne Boleyn's Window, in The Dean's Cloisters at Windsor is so called because the ghost of Anne Boleyn has supposedly been seen looking out of the window, perhaps because this part of the Cloisters is not so very far from St George's Chapel, in whose Quire Henry VIII's tomb

is to be found. Yet no wedding of Henry VIII took place at Windsor.

The tombs of Henry's queens do achieve a kind of posthumous independence of their own from Henry, with each wife accorded her own royal status through marriage in the inscription. (It is only the tomb of Anne of Cleves at Westminster Abbey, whose appearance is original to the time of death). Interestingly, some of these graves refer to the women as 'Katherine, Queen of England', 'Queen Anne Boleyn', 'Queen Katherine Howard', instead of whose wedded wife she was. Nor is this the simple result of later memorials, as the faded gilt lettering on the original tomb of Anne of Cleves demonstrates: 'Anne of Cleves. Queen of England'. Only the slab marking Jane Seymour's communal grave (installed in 1837) refers to her as 'Queen of Henry VIII' and the copy of Katherine Parr's tombstone: 'quene Kateryn, Wife to Kyng Henry the VIII'.

**ELIZABETH JANE TIMMS**

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# Frost Fairs

It might seem impossible in our lifetime that the River Thames would freeze over with ice so thick that you could hold a fair on it but I remember in my own childhood when the river at Richmond would burst its banks in the dead of winter and the water that flowed into the surrounding fields turned into an ice rink. Local kids would rush to find skates, sleds and makeshift toboggans to enjoy nature's gift.

Most frost fairs were held between the early seventeenth and early nineteenth centuries during the period known as the Little Ice Age, with the main fairs occurring in 1683-4, 1716, 1739-40, 1789, and 1814. Winters were harsher then and the river was wider and slower, impeded by the Old London Bridge with its nineteen arches. The first recorded frost fair was in 695 AD when the river froze over for six weeks although the term 'frost fair' itself wasn't used until 1608. Of course now with the Thames Water

Barrier this rarely happens but back in the sixteenth century it was still something to be enjoyed by nobles and common people alike.

The Thames froze over several times during the reign of the Tudors. Edward Hall recorded in his chronicle in 1536:

*This yere in Decembre was the Thamys of London all frozen ouer, wherefore the kyges Maiestie with his beautifull spouse quene Jane, roade throughout the citie of London to Grenewich.*

Some have suggested that King Henry VIII travelled some of the way in a sleigh. If true, the banks of the river would have been lined with people wanting to see their king and marvelling at his mode of transport!

In Strickland's *The Lives of the Queens of England*, she even notes that Jane Seymour, 'crossed the frozen Thames to Greenwich-Palace in the severe January of 1536-7, on horseback, with the king, attended by the whole court' although we also don't know whether this is true, it would have



been a fantastic sight to see!

Queen Elizabeth I delighted in a frozen Thames in 1564 when she took to the ice to practice her archery. Young boys practised their archery too and had great fun trying to play football on the ice. There was music and dancing in the evening – which must have been tricky! One source states that boys ‘plaied at the football as boldlie there as if it had been on the drie land; divers [courtiers]...shot dailie at [targets] set upon the Thames and the people, both men and women, went on the Thames in greater numbers than in anie street of the City of London.’

Just a few years after Queen Elizabeth’s death in 1608, the Thames froze for six weeks. Vendors used the opportunity to hastily construct booths selling their wares including warming drinks and snacks. Meat was roasted and fires were

lit on the ice for cooking and to keep warm.

Thomas Dekker, the famous Elizabethan writer, wrote a pamphlet entitled ‘The great frost. Cold doings in London, except it be at the Lotterie. With Newes out of the Country. A familiar talk Betwene a Country-man and a citizen touching this terrible frost and the great Lotterie, and the effects of them.’ It was an imagined conversation between a Londoner and a countryman but included the Londoner’s tale of ‘being shaved in the middle of the frozen Thames: an experience to be remembered in the afterlife!’

Probably the greatest Frost Fair recorded was in the Stuart period when in 1683–84, the most severe frost was recorded in England. The river froze solid for two months, with the ice as thick as 11 inches in some parts of the Thames. There were

streets of stalls selling all sorts of wares. John Evelyn recorded:

*The frost continues more and more severe, the Thames before London was still planted with booths in formal streets, all sorts of trades and shops furnished, and full of commodities, even to a printing press, where the people and ladies took a fancy to have their names printed, and the day and year set down when printed on the Thames: this humor took so universally, that it was estimated that the printer gained £5 a day, for printing a line only, at sixpence a name, besides what he got by ballads, etc. Coaches plied from Westminster to the Temple, and from several other stairs too and fro, as in the streets;*





Thames Frost Fair, 1683-84,  
by Thomas Wyke

*sleds, sliding with  
skeetes, a bull-  
baiting, horse and  
coach races, puppet  
plays and  
interludes, cooks,  
tipling and other  
lewd places, so that  
it seemed to be a  
bacchanalian  
triumph, or  
carnival on the  
water. Whilst it  
was a severe  
judgement on the  
land, the trees not  
onely splitting as if  
lightning-struck,*

*but men and cattle  
perishing in  
divers[e] places,  
and the very seas so  
lock'd up with ice,  
that no vessels  
could stir out or  
come in.*

The last Frost Fair  
was held on 5th  
February 1814 and  
little keepsakes or  
tokens were printed  
on the river with the  
message 'Notice  
Whereas you J Frost  
have by Force and  
Violence taken

possession of the River  
Thames I hereby give  
you warning to Quit  
immediately' and was  
signed by A Thaw!  
Amazingly the  
Museum of London  
has in its collection a  
piece of gingerbread  
cake, bought at the  
fair and possibly  
baked on the ice, now  
over two hundred  
years old!

**SARAH-BETH  
WATKINS**



# Tudor Winter Quiz

by Catherine Brooks

With this month's topic being Tudor Winters, let's take a look back at things that happened in the various winters of the Tudor Period. There are 5 questions each from December, January, and February. I am not a fan of the cold, so I think I'll stay in with my Tudor books!

## December

1. There were three special days during advent during the Tudor period. Name one feast day and its date.  
\_\_\_\_\_
2. 1st December 1541 saw the trial and condemnation at Guildhall of which two men?  
\_\_\_\_\_
3. 2nd December 1546 saw the arrest of Henry Howard, Earl of Surrey, on what charge?  
\_\_\_\_\_
4. 8th December 1542 saw the birth of which future monarch, the granddaughter of Margaret Tudor?  
\_\_\_\_\_
5. 17th December 1538 saw the announcement of what by Pope Paul III? \_\_\_\_\_

## January

1. 1st January 1511 saw the birth of which Prince, who tragically died at the age of just 52 days old?  
\_\_\_\_\_
2. 3rd of January 1541 saw which visitor to Hampton Court Palace, who went to exchange New Year gifts with Henry VIII and Catherine Howard?  
\_\_\_\_\_
3. 7th January 1536 saw the death of which Queen Consort, who had been told she should restyle herself as Dowager Princess?  
\_\_\_\_\_
4. 15th January 1559 was the date of the coronation of Elizabeth I. Who did she consult with to choose this date?  
\_\_\_\_\_
5. 18th January 1486 saw the marriage of which royal couple?  
\_\_\_\_\_

## February

1. 1st February 1514 saw Henry VIII grant two dukedoms. What were they and who got them?  
\_\_\_\_\_
2. 8th February 1587 saw the execution of which member of the Scottish royal family at Fotheringhay Castle?  
\_\_\_\_\_
3. 13th February 1542 saw the execution at the Tower of London of which two ladies?  
\_\_\_\_\_
4. 16th February 1547 saw the interment of Henry VIII next to his 3rd wife, Jane Seymour. Where was this, which is also where they can still be found today? (St. George's Chapel, Windsor Castle)  
\_\_\_\_\_
5. 20th February 1547 saw the coronation at Westminster Abbey of which King?  
\_\_\_\_\_



The image is a book cover featuring two portraits of Katherine of Aragon. The left portrait is a pale, somber face with a gold headpiece and a dark, jeweled necklace. The right portrait is a more vibrant, golden-toned face with a dark, patterned headpiece and a dark, patterned dress. The title 'The Portraiture of Katherine of Aragon' is centered over both portraits in a large, white, serif font.

# The Portraiture of Katherine of Aragon

*By Roland Hui*

Katherine of Aragon (?),  
attributed to Michael Sittow

Katherine of Aragon (?),  
by Juan de Flandes

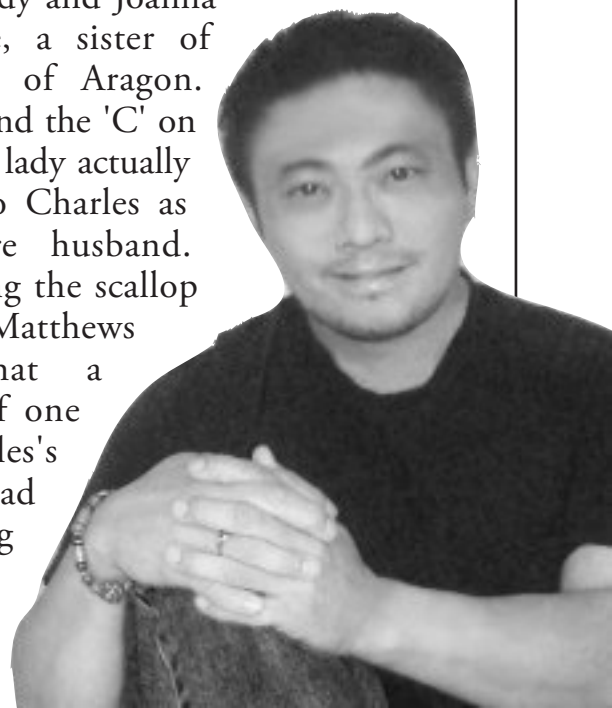
Of Henry VIII's six queens, Katherine of Aragon was unique in two ways - as an Infanta or Princess of Spain, she was the highest ranking of his wives, and as the king's consort of almost twenty five years, she was married to him the longest.

Because of her great status as the daughter of the renowned Ferdinand of Aragon and Isabella of Castile - the so-called 'Catholic Kings' - Katherine was almost certainly painted as a girl at her parents' court. One picture, accepted as of her since 1915, is at The Kunsthistorisches Museum in Vienna (Fig. 1). Attributed to the artist Michael Sittow, it depicts a young lady in a reddish brown dress, probably velvet, wearing a black hood trimmed with goldsmith's work. Behind her is a halo, which was almost certainly a later addition. Around the sitter's neck is a jewelled necklace consisting of 'K's, as well as alternating red and white flowers. Supposing the picture is indeed of Katherine (there are now reservations), these have been interpreted as representing the red rose of Lancaster and the white rose of York; references to the princess's future husband Arthur Tudor, the very embodiment of the hard won peace between the warring factions of the kingdom. There is also a small golden 'C' at Katherine's breast, probably denoting her name in Spanish - Catalina. Around the neckline of her dress are scallop shells which are said to evoke Saint James, the patron saint of Spain. The shell had associations to the Camino de Santiago, the pilgrimage route to the tomb of the saint at the Catedral de Santiago de Compostela.

The picture was mostly likely created when Katherine was still in her native country, rather than in England as has been also suggested. Sittow was once thought to have also been the painter of a picture of Henry VII now in The National Portrait Gallery in London, but new

studies have shown that Sittow was not the artist, hence he was probably never in England to depict both the king and his daughter-in-law.

Despite the portrait's long standing as a depiction of Katherine of Aragon, it has not been without controversy. In 1969, Roy Strong, the Director of the National Portrait Gallery, thought that 'there is no definite evidence to prove this.' Strong offered no opinion as to who else the sitter might be, but in 2008, the scholar Paul G. Matthews proposed that she was not Henry VII's daughter-in-law, but his daughter Mary Tudor, the future Queen of France and Duchess of Suffolk. According to Matthews, Sittow, not known to have visited England in the time of Henry VII, was not in the position to paint Katherine of Aragon, assuming that the picture was done in her new country. Like Strong, who apparently saw no facial resemblance between pictures of the mature Katherine as Queen of England and the Sittow young lady, Matthews compared the image to another portrait said to be of Katherine as a girl by Juan de Flandes (Fig. 2). He noticed no likeness between the two. As well, the jewellery shown in the painting could well have belonged to Mary Tudor, Matthews argued, who at the age of twelve was affianced to Charles, the future emperor and the son of Philip of Burgundy and Joanna of Castile, a sister of Katherine of Aragon. The 'K's and the 'C' on the Sittow lady actually referred to Charles as her future husband. Concerning the scallop shells, Matthews noted that a portrait of one of Charles's sisters had her wearing







Katherine of Aragon,  
attributed to Lucas Horenbout

them too. Another observation was that the other Mary Tudor - the daughter of Henry VIII and Katherine of Aragon - was known to have similar types of ornaments to celebrate her betrothal to the emperor - he had previously rejected her aunt - in the 1520's.

Matthews' arguments were convincing enough that the Kunsthistorisches has now labelled the painting as Mary Tudor.

However, doubts still linger. While the sitter's jewellery could well have belonged to Mary as the fiancée of the future Emperor Charles, the same argument can be made for her sister-in-law Katherine owning the same ornaments. Also, there is no evidence that Sittow ever visited England to paint Mary, even though Matthews believes the artist did indeed



As Queen of England, Katherine's portraiture was plentiful owing to her long marriage to Henry VIII. One of her earlier likenesses, done in the mid 1520's, is attributed to the limner Lucas Horenbout (or Hornebolte). Horenbout, a Fleming whose artistic family (which included his father Gerard and his sister Susanna) specialized in manuscript illumination, portrayed the queen in miniature (Fig. 3). Katherine is shown wearing English style costume, exemplified by her uniquely English gable headdress. Following the current fashion, Katherine has one of the two hanging veils pinned to the peak of her hood. With her right hand she offers a piece of food to a marmoset on her left arm. This portrait would inspire a reworking of it, done after Katherine's death in 1536. Instead of a treat for her pet, the Queen holds out a silver coin. The marmoset

come in the earlier part of Henry VIII's reign in 1514.

It would be useful to evaluate the painting against known pictures of Mary Tudor. One of the earliest depictions of the English princess is a French drawing done during her brief time as Queen of France (October 1514 - January 1515). In comparing this sketch to the Sittow portrait, it cannot be said that the two sitters are the same person. A portrait, though probably posthumous, of Mary with her second husband Charles Brandon, seems to show a different lady than Sittow's also.

While the point could be made that the Kunsthistorisches sitter does not resemble the other so-called portrait of Katherine by Juan de Flandes either, thus making a case that Sittow's young lady was indeed Mary Tudor, it should be mentioned that the picture is not irrefutably of her. It may well be of one of her three sisters instead. So did Sittow paint Katherine of Aragon or Mary Tudor? Perhaps future studies of the painting will decide conclusively.

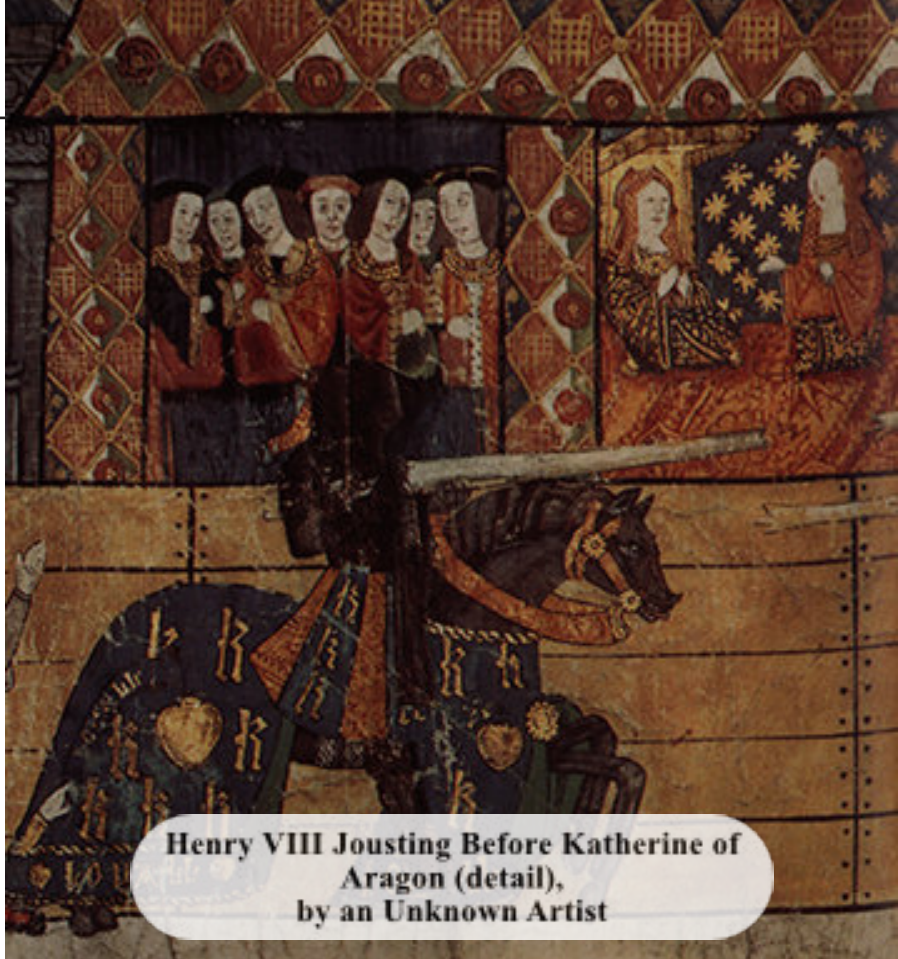




ignores it and reaches for the golden cross at her breast instead. This has been taken to imply that even a monkey, though only an animal, is intelligent enough to reject the riches of this world for the next.

Another miniature attributed to Lucas Horenbout is of Katherine wearing a red dress with a white cap trimmed with gold atop her head (Fig. 4). The inscription, translated from Latin, reads 'Queen Katherine his wife'. The picture was made in conjunction with one of Henry VIII. That husband and wife were often paired was evident in other works of them together. Although a panel portrait of herself with the King, found among her possessions after her passing, is now lost, a picture (once identified as Katherine Parr) formerly at Lambeth Palace (Fig. 5) has recently been reunited with one of Henry VIII that it may well have been a companion piece to. Other than in paintings, Katherine has also appeared with her husband in stained glass windows, in a woodcut showing them crowned together in 1509, and a beautifully painted document roll from 1511 showing Henry jousting in celebration of their new born son. Katherine can be seen watching proudly with her ladies (Fig. 6).

Even though she reigned long as queen consort in comparison to Henry VIII's later wives, Katherine of Aragon's portraits were not diverse in their representation of her. The main image type was that derived from the miniature of her with her monkey. Successive pictures - two miniatures attributed to Horenbout and various panels - all used the same face-mask. Her costume too is similar, with only differences in the details of her gable hood and her dress with its square shaped



Henry VIII Jousting Before Katherine of Aragon (detail), by an Unknown Artist

neckline. By the late 1520s when the end of Katherine's marriage was inevitable, it is highly unlikely that any new images of her were made.

It was with the accession of Katherine's daughter Mary I in 1553 that there would be renewed interest in her likeness as the mother of the reigning queen. Some posthumous paintings of Katherine are from this period. The reign of Elizabeth I would also see a revival of her portraits interestingly enough. The demand for sets of 'Kings and Queens of England' to decorate the long galleries of the homes of the well-to-do would often have included a likeness of Katherine in the series. That she continued to be a popular subject was evident in that the well known painting of her in the National Portrait Gallery (Fig. 7), with a copy in the Museum of Fine Arts Boston, has been dated to the early 1700s. Long after she was dead, Katherine of Aragon was still in demand.

**ROLAND HUI**





Katherine of Aragon,  
attributed to Johannes Corvus



# The Last Days of Henry VIII

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**Gayle Hulme** investigates the winter of 1546/47 and how the health of King Henry VIII was failing.

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In the winter of 1546/47, the health of King Henry VIII was failing. A line engraving (1547) by Metsys's (c1508-1580) displayed at the National Portrait Gallery in London shows Henry vastly overweight, with a puffy face and narrow eyes. Prince Edward, Henry's longed-for male heir, was nine years old, and the state of the reformed religion in the recently formed Church of England was still in its infancy. Even though Henry VIII had been careful to leave clear instructions in his will for the management of his kingdom after his death, the various factions at court were sharpening their knives for a battle the languishing king would have no influence over. 'Woe to you, O land, when thy king is a child' (Ecclesiastes 10:16).

The king's health had been in decline for some years, with courtiers recording that he could no longer walk unaided or manage to make his way up and down stairs due to his weight and the debilitating leg ulcers that had plagued him for years. In the final years of his life, Henry was reluctant to relinquish the activities he enjoyed, having platforms erected while hunting and even having his quarry driven towards him.

Despite his determination to enjoy the sports of his youth, in August 1546, the king was forced to retire to Windsor after the exertions of his hunting progress left him exhausted. In December

of the same year, he was laid low by a fever at Oatlands Palace. At the time, it was publicly played down by the Council as a cold, while in private, '...his doctors battled to keep him alive' (Weir 2001). A cover story was later made up for foreign ambassadors that the king's ulcerated leg brought on this latest trouble. In the latter part of the reign, England's relationship with its European neighbours was strained, and news of a weak or dying king could have left England vulnerable to attack.

Once the king was considered sufficiently recovered for travel, the royal party made its way slowly back to Whitehall Palace at Westminster. On 22 December 1546, Henry VIII retired to his private apartments, but he did appear in public on 16 January 1547 and 'was well enough to meet with ambassadors.' (Ridgway 2012). However, the life and reign of this remarkable monarch was drawing to a close. On Friday 28 January, Sir Anthony Denny, the king's recently appointed Groom of the Stool, advised his ailing master 'in man's judgement, he was not like to live. Talking of the king's death was a treasonable offence, and given the ageing king's quick and unpredictable temper, no one was keen to risk his wrath by breaking the terrible news.

The king accepted the news from Sir Anthony and replied, 'After judges have passed sentence on a criminal there is

Portrait of King  
Henry VIII







Prince Edward

no more need to trouble him. Therefore be gone'. The time had now come for the 55-year-old king to turn his attention to the salvation of his soul, but the king did not send for Archbishop Cranmer till midnight, and by the time his chief prelate arrived two hours later, the king was unable to speak. With verbal communication impossible, Cranmer asked the king to give him a physical sign that he died in the faith of Christ, and the king responded by squeezing

Cranmer's hand in affirmation. Shortly afterwards, Henry VIII surrendered his soul to God.

Even before the king had passed away, the court factions had begun to intensify their lobbying over who would control Henry's son during his minority. Not only were the spoils associated with proximity to the boy monarch in waiting up for grabs, but the religious settlement was on the line too. At one stage in 1546, things became so

heated that the Protestant John Dudley struck the Catholic '(Stephen) Gardiner full in the face during [...] a Privy Council meeting.' (Hutichinson 2005).

Many years after her father's death, Elizabeth I (r.1558-1603) said, 'there are more that look...to the rising than to the setting sun'. As Henry VIII neared his end, two powerful factions were jockeying for control over his successor. On one side, there was the religious conservative Stephen Gardiner, Bishop of Winchester backed by the powerful Thomas Howard, 3rd Duke of Norfolk and his hot-headed son the Earl of Surrey. On the opposing side were the reformists Edward Seymour, Earl of Hertford and John Dudley. Bad blood already existed between Hertford and Surrey from ten years before, when Surrey had been incarcerated for two weeks for punching Hertford when he accused him of sympathising with the Pilgrimage of Grace.

The reformist faction was in favour with the king, so they could control access to the private royal apartments, blacken their enemy's name, and had a definite advantage over their conservative adversaries. Plus, Hertford, of course, had one clear familial advantage over his opponents as he was the maternal uncle of Prince Edward. Another point in Hertford and Dudley's favour lay in the amendments the king made to his will. On 26 December 1546, in the presence of Hertford, Dudley, Paget and Denny, the king removed Gardiner from the Regency Council, which he wished to govern till Prince Edward reached eighteen. Still smarting from Gardiner's scheme to arrest Henry's sixth wife Catherine Parr, the king described Gardiner as '...a wilful

man, not meet to be about his son, nor trouble his Council anymore.

Gardiner's disgrace over the mis-handling of Henry's wife deprived him of any influence he may have had over Prince Edward. However, Gardiner's absence was not enough to guarantee success, and at the beginning of December, a deadly plot was being hatched against the Duke of Norfolk and his son, the Earl of Surrey. As well as his political and religious motives, Hertford had another reason for wishing to vanquish the Howards from any new government. The Duke of Norfolk attempted to bolster his position by marrying his daughter, the Dowager Duchess of Richmond, to Hertford's captivating and ambitious younger brother Thomas Seymour. The Howards could not be allowed to gain a familial foothold of this nature, and Hertford did not relish the possibility of his control of his young nephew being challenged by his charismatic brother.

To neutralise the Howards, the plan formulated was to go straight to the heart of Henry's paranoia over the succession. Surrey was accused explicitly of displaying the arms of his forbear St Edward the Confessor, which suggested he thought himself of royal blood. This infuriated Henry as he was acutely aware of the constant threat of would-be pretenders around every corner like his father before him. Norfolk was accused, along with Surrey, of discussing the king's death when Henry was ill at Windsor six weeks before and discussing the king's death was grounds for a charge of High Treason.

When the blow came, it was swift and merciless. On 12 December, three royal commissioners, John Gate, Sir Richard Southwell and Wymond



Carew' (The Tudor Travel Guide 2020), presented themselves at Kenninghall in Norfolk to collate a detailed inventory of all the items in possession of the occupants. According to Van Der Delft's dispatches to Charles V and Mary of Hungary, Surrey 'was led publicly through the streets to the Tower' and 'the Garter and staff were taken from the father (Norfolk)'.

Depositions were taken from both men, with Norfolk claiming he had always been loyal to the king, 'that if I had 20 lives I would rather have spent them all than that he [The Bishop of Rome] should have any power in this realm' and that the crown was welcome to all his goods and lands 'that he may recover the King's favour'. Surrey, in his deposition, unsuccessfully petitioned his examiners that he might be heard by the king 'to whom I intend to discharge my conscience in such matter of importance' He also expressed regret that 'mine old father brought in question by any stir between Southwell and me'.

At Surrey's trial on 13 January 1547, it was laid out in no uncertain terms that 'the arms and ensigns with three labels called the labelles sylver' which had been used by Edward the Confessor belonged solely and were for the exclusive use of 'his progenitors in right of the Crown of England'. Surrey's fate was further sealed by the confession of his father on 12 December when he admitted to 'conceal[ing] high treason in keeping secret the false acts of my son, Henry earl of Surrey, in using the arms of St. Edward the Confessor, which pertain only to kings of this realm'.

Henry Howard, Earl of Surrey, was convicted and executed on Tower Hill on 19 January 1547. His father, who helped to seal his fate, narrowly escaped the block as Henry VIII died one day before the sentence was to be carried out. In one winter season, Hertford, aided by Dudley, had managed to clear an undisputed path to control the new boy king of England.

**GAYLE HULME**

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# The Men in Catherine Howard's Life

The Musician,  
the Pirate,  
the King,  
and the Rake

*November's  
Expert  
Speaker*

with GARETH RUSSELL





# Female Tudor Musicians

For those that don't know, as well as researching and writing on 16th century music, I'm also a musician and play in a group, PIVA – the Renaissance Collective. When performing, one of the questions I'm often asked by an interested audience member, is whether I would have played music had I been living back in Tudor times. Well, there's a short answer to that and a long one! It's a bit more complicated than a yes or no!

By Jane Moulder

For those that don't know, as well as researching and writing on 16th century music, I'm also a musician and play in a group, PIVA – the Renaissance Collective. When performing, one of the questions I'm often asked by an interested audience member, is whether I would have played music had I been living back in Tudor times. Well, there's a short answer to that and a long one! It's a bit more complicated than a yes or no!

Tudor society was highly ranked with clear lines of demarcation on what one could do, eat or wear



A portrait of Lady Mary Wroth, holding a theorbo (or chitarrone) which is a bass lute.  
Att John de Critz, c1620.

depending on one's level in society. Whilst there were certain laws and statutes in place to ensure that someone did not step out of line, what regulated society more than anything was down to economics. Sumptuary Laws may well have stipulated that unless you were a freeholder you could not wear silk but the chances are that no peasant could have ever afforded such a material even if they had wanted to wear it. The life of a commoner, servant or agricultural worker would have been a tough one and getting an income and enough food on the table would have been uppermost in most people's minds, not playing a musical instrument in order to relax after a hard day's toil in the fields. However, the life of someone from courtier class and in the elite of society would have been very different. With wealth came not only the luxury of goods, ample food and wine but also the time to indulge. The 'work' of a courtier was to

rise through the ranks of this structured society, to impress and to have influence and, ultimately, gain access to the inner royal circle in the hope of increasing income, lands and wealth.

For this to happen, it was necessary to be able to display the essential skills, attributes and behaviours expected of this level of society. The medieval view of the poet-knight gave way, under Henry VIII's rule, to that of the courtier. 'The Book of the Courtier' by Baldessare Castiglione was a hugely influential book which was widely circulated throughout Europe and translated into many languages. The book reflected discussions at the court of Urbino on how to behave and act as the perfect courtier and, amongst many others, being skilled in music was one of one of the ideals that needed to be attained. A courtier should be able to read musical notation, play several instruments well, especially the lute and viol, which could be used to

accompany their own singing. Such skills were to be used in the presence of women because, according to Castiglione, the sight and sound of the comely male performer "sweetens the minds of the hearers and makes them more apt to be pierced with the pleasantness of music and also they quicken the spirits of the very doers". In other words, being able to play and sing music is, if nothing else, particularly useful in the art of seduction! However, Castiglione not only emphasises the effects of music on women but also suggests that they themselves should have performance skills. Women should be able to sing, dance and play instruments "with the soft mildness that is comely for her". She must perform only when encouraged to do so and "with a certain bashfulness that may declare the noble shamefastness that is contrary to headiness". The instruments played must also help her to demonstrate "the





Joos van Winghe (1544–1603)  
Courtly women playing on virginals,  
lute and singing.

sweet mildness which setteth forth every deed that a woman doeth” through her technical prowess and the ways in which she presents herself.

The instruments of choice for the courtier class were predominantly, as mentioned above the ‘soft’ or ‘low’ instruments such as the lute and various keyboard instruments, the virginals being the principle one. By the late 16th century the list would have included the viol (a bowed string instrument), which went on to become very popular, not just in the upper classes but for the

middling sort. Woodwind instruments were sometimes played but these, for the upper classes, would be restricted to either the recorder or the transverse flute, as any other wind instrument, such as the sackbut (trombone), bagpipes or the reed instruments such as shawm or dulcian, would have caused the player to have to distort the face and potentially look ugly. Not a trait that Castiglione would have approved of. In fact, the goddess Athene came unstuck:

“I was once told by some men of learning that the goddess

Athene used to enjoy playing the bagpipes and had quite mastered the art. It happened one day as she was playing them for pleasure beside a spring she saw her reflection in the water, and when she saw how she had to distort her face to blow the pipes, she was abashed and threw them away. She did well to do this because the bagpipes are not an instrument for women and, in fact, are equally unsuitable for men, except those poor wretches who are paid to play them and make a trade of it.”

This advice, by Giovanni della Casa in his



book of manners, Galateo, explains why it was so unseemly for the cultured elite, male or female, to play such a base instrument. Generally, the majority of wind instruments were the domain of the professional musician.

With the Henry VIII and all of his courtiers

wanting to keep up with the Italian fashion and styling as promulgated by Castiglione and others (there were many books of manners and behaviour printed during this period, all saying much the same thing), young girls and women of high birth

would certainly have been taught to play, sing and dance.

The lutenist who had been assigned to Henry VIII as a young man, also taught his sister, Mary. His other sister, Margaret, was also recorded as playing the lute and the clavichord on her formal progress to Scotland in 1503 and she was clearly a gifted player.

Henry also ensured that his children played music and there is a letter from Catherine of Aragon to her daughter Mary in which she advises that “for your recreation, use your virginals or lute, if you have any”. She clearly took her mother’s advice as in Mary’s personal privy purse accounts, it shows that she received lessons for eight years on the lute from the court musician, Philip van Wilder. She also had keyboard lessons from both a Mr Paston and



Master of the female half lengths,  
c1530.





Engravings from the late 1500s by Tobias Stimmer showing female musicians. The three above are instruments one would expect to see being played by a woman (lute, organ and viol). It would have been highly unusual for a woman to play the three below (trumpet, shawm and cornetto), especially as these are from the courtier class, judging by their attire.



the court keyboard player, Simon Burton. In fact, on Henry's death in 1547, the inventory of his personal instrument collection notes that a lute in its case was currently on loan to Mary. Mary was recorded as playing the virginals in

front of the court at the age of four and a half and she clearly continued to play throughout her life. Henry's other daughter, Elizabeth, was well known for her musical prowess. As queen she became a leading patron of mu-

sic and was clearly a gifted musician in her own right and she played the lute and virginals amongst other instruments. However, she did not like to flaunt her musical talents in front of an audience. The Scottish ambassador, Sir James

Melville, wrote "My Lord of Hunsdon drew me up to a quiet gallery where I might hear the Queen play upon the virginals. After I hearkened for a while, I took by the tapestry that hung before the door of the chamber and stood a pretty space hearing her play excellently well, but she left off immediately, so soon as she turned her about and saw me. She appeared to be surprised to see me and came forward, seeming to strike me with her hand, alleging she used not to play before men, but when she was solitary to shun melancholy." It is no surprise that Elizabeth was a gifted musician for as well as Henry, Anne Boleyn was also a keen and talented musician as was explored in last month's Tudor Life.

It was just not royal women who received a musical education, other elite, courtly women did so as well. By studying the household accounts of some wealthy households, it is clear that a musical education was import-

ant for the upper classes, both boys and girls, men and women. The accounts of the Kytsons of Hengrave Hall gives us a fascinating insight into a family which took lessons in music as well as purchasing and repairing a number of musical instruments. By 1570 the Hall had appointed a 'musicions chamber', (we know this as the door-lock needed repairing) and lutes and strings were purchased for 'Johnson the musician'. This was Edward Johnson, who composed music for the entertainments for Queen Elizabeth I and staged by Robert Dudley at Kenilworth Castle in 1574. Another musician, Robert, was put in charge of the bass viols and, amongst other stringed and keyboard instruments, the household acquired a curtal or dulcian (an early bassoon). In the accounts, it states that some of the lutes belonged to 'my lady' and payments were made for music lessons on the virginals for the

children and these included two daughters, Catherine and Dorothy. The household records also note that several music books were bought including 'v old books covered with parchment, with songs of v partes' and 'v books containing one sett of Italyan fa-laes' as well as a collection of six part consort music containing dances. It is clear that this was a musical family who not only played and sang themselves, including the female members, but were also patrons and supporters of the musical arts.

Singing was considered to be as important a skill as playing a musical instrument and, again, lessons were paid for by the aristocracy being an essential attribute according to Castiglione. In the 1590s, Thomas Morley, the renowned composer, dedicated two books of canzonets (a type of madrigal), one to Lady Mary Sidney Herbert, the Countess of Pembroke and the other to Lady Periam and Lady





Nevell. The songs were for two or three unaccompanied voices and would have required some skill in reading music and vocal ability and all of them fitted in the range of the female voice. Likewise, John Wilbye dedicated a book of madrigals to Lady Arabella Stuart who, according to his dedication in the front, had “particular excellency in this of Musicke”.

It is clear that aristocratic women were taught the skill of music, both singing and playing of instruments,

and that it was considered to be an important attribution. However, the music making was for their own enjoyment or for the personal delight of the household but not for displaying to guests or in open court.

Whatever the upper classes did was soon followed and mimicked by the middling sort. As the 16th century progressed, the increasing numbers of the middle classes and wealthier gentry were keen to develop the style and habits of those of a higher social

rank. The influence of Castiglione’s writings spread throughout England with the book’s translation into English in 1561 by Sir Thomas Hoby and it became a best seller. From the 1570s onwards, the teaching and practice of music spread from just being the preserve of the rich elite, down to gentlemen, landowners and business men, and, therefore, their wives and children. They, too, wanted to aspire to greater things and amongst others, have the fashionable Italian



manners.

Music lessons would have been obtained from local professional musicians. Musical instruments, such as viols and lutes, were becoming more affordable and made in greater numbers and therefore more attainable for those on a more modest income. Learning and playing music was again for personal enjoyment and betterment rather than for public performance. Writing at the end of the century, Peter Erondell in *The French Garden*, described a gentlewoman's daily routine "Our dancing master commeth about nine a clocke: one singing Master, and he that teacheth us to play upon the virginalles, at tenne: he that teacheth us on the Lute and the Violl de Gamo, at foure a clocke in the after



Lucas van Leyden, 1524, privately owned. A peasant couple playing lute and fiddle.

noone." This was probably a bit extreme but certainly not out of the way as Richard Burton, writing in *The Anatomy of Melancholy*, said that music was "a thing frequently

used, and part of a Gentlewoman's bringing up, to sing, and dance, and play on the Lute, or some such instrument, before she can say her Pater noster, or ten command-





Jan Massys or Metsys (Antwerp) "A Merry Company" (1564)  
The woman on the left is playing a three-holed pipe and tabor. The pipe and tabor was used to accompany dancing, along with the bagpipes such as those played by her partner.

ments, 'tis the next way their parents think to get them husbands." This approach to gaining musical accomplishments may have worked for the urbane, city dweller with access to competent musicians but was clearly less successful for those in rural areas. They, according to Richard Flecknoe, "have the worst Masters can be got, for love or money, learning to quaver instead of singing, hop instead of dancing and rake the

Guitar, rumble the Virginals and scratch and thumb the Lute, instead of playing neatly and handsomely".

It is quite clear that gaining musical accomplishments was a means for a young lady from the middling classes to gain a good husband. She could appear sophisticated and well versed in the arts. For those that know *The Taming of the Shrew* by William Shakespeare, they may remember the scene where Hortensio and

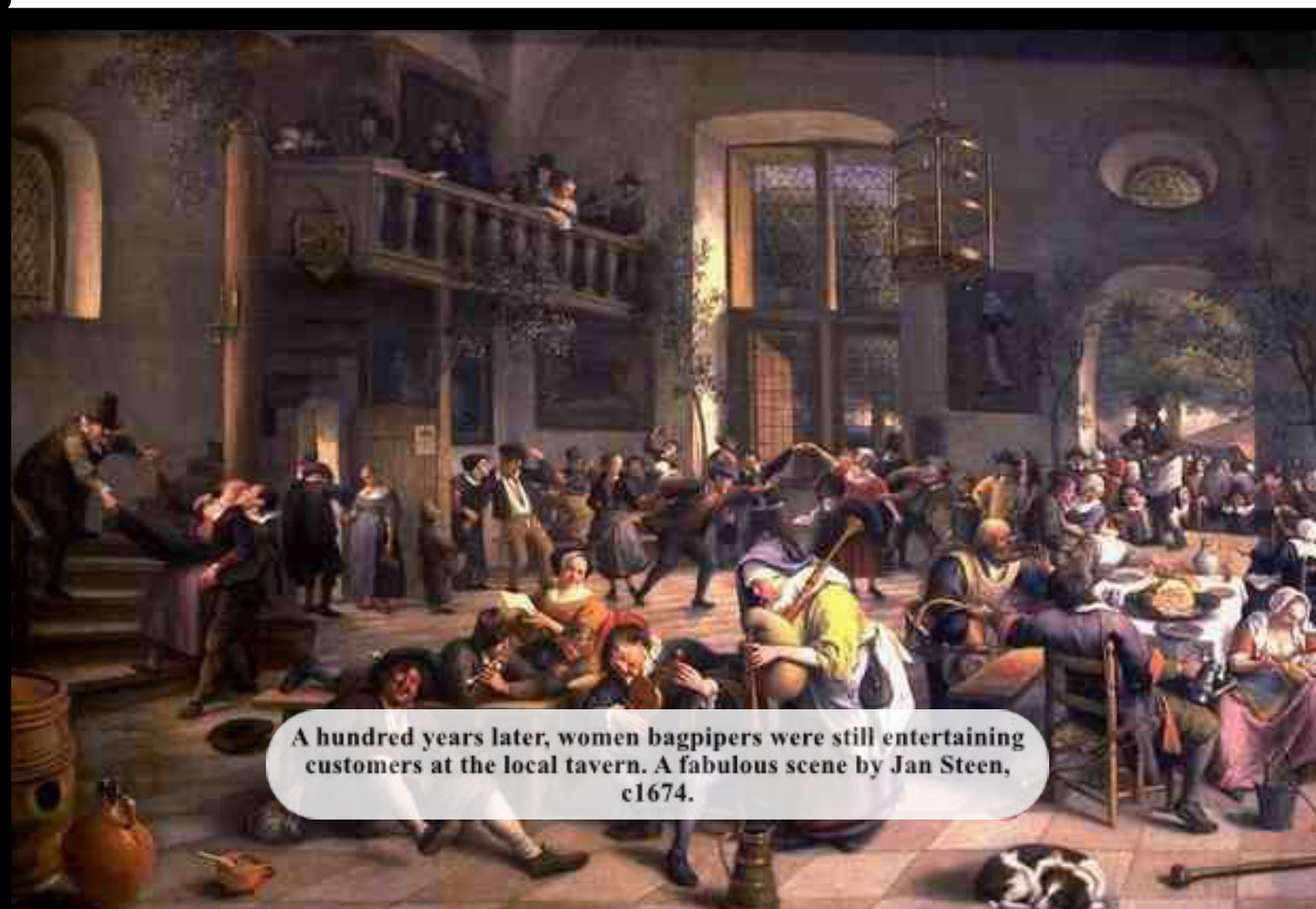
Lucentio, as suitors to Bianca, the attractive sister to the wild Katherina, pretend that they are music tutors. There is some lively interplay between the four of them but it includes, at one point, Katherina being uncooperative, as she does not want to take musical instruction just in order to gain a partner, and smashing her lute over Hortensio's head.

Music has always been connected with romance and was often used as allegory for

love. This was no doubt acceptable when only the highest echelons of society played music but with the middle classes entering the musical sphere, concern began to be expressed by the church about the possible dangers of women playing music. Following on from the Reformation, the protestant zeal of the growing puritan movement began to combine controversies of religion with women's proper upbringing. There was real concern that 'light and trifling

pleasures' such as songs and dances were a real danger for young Christian women. A number of English writers began to link the performance of music with the seduction of men, and music began to be associated with 'shameless curtezans'. Phillip Stubbes, the well-known Puritan pamphleteer, in typical hyperbolic style wrote, "If you would have your daughter Whorish, baudie, and uncleane, and a filthie speaker, and suche like, bring her up in Musicke and

Dancyng". Thankfully, this view was countered by the educational theorist, Richard Mulcaster, who named singing and instrumental music, along with reading and writing, as being the four essential subjects for girls to study and added that both Henry VII and Henry VIII had encouraged likewise. For all of their religious zeal, whilst it may have prevented a number of women learning and playing music, it did not prevent the growth of the amateur female



A hundred years later, women bagpipers were still entertaining customers at the local tavern. A fabulous scene by Jan Steen, c1674.



musician who performed for their own pleasure and betterment. A trend that was to continue and develop into the 17th century and beyond.

Coming down to the lowest ranks of society, where there are scant written records, it is pretty safe to assume that they were not being influenced by humanist approaches to learning the skill of music! Musicians would have been playing primarily to earn some money rather than for social betterment or even leisure. It is unlikely that anyone would have had professional tuition and the majority were probably self taught. It is also probable that there were relatively few female musicians. But there were definitely some women players and the records that we do have mainly come from court cases. In an ecclesiastical court in Dorset we find that "old Bright with his boy and his daughter played at Cowgrove with their fiddells and Continued there all

Evening prayer time with much companie". In nearby Somerset, a vagrant female fiddler played on her instrument throughout the service and was consequently placed in the village stocks. The records do not seem to indicate that it was unusual for the woman to be playing music so it can be assumed that these were not the exception to the norm and so perhaps female musicians were a familiar sight after all. The crimes mentioned above were equally committed by men and many more times over! We also have accounts where an alehouse keeper has been in trouble due to excessive drunkenness on his premises and the wife was also accused of encouraging the proceedings by playing the bagpipes or other instrument by which to entertain the customers. From the continent, there are a number of paintings which show peasant woman playing an instrument, such as pipe and tabor, fiddle or drum, so it clearly wasn't that un-

usual. Slightly later than our period, in 1620, there was a very interesting woman, Mary Frith, alias Moll Cutpurse, who entertained Londoners by cross-dressing and singing provocative songs accompanied by the lute. She confessed to indulging in blasphemy, hard drinking and theft 'to the disgrace of all womanhood'!

Although there were some female composers on the continent, I have been unable to find any record of a professional female musician in England from this period. There are comprehensive records of all the musicians playing for the royal courts, and they exclusively men - unless there was a cross-dressing performer, such as Mary Frith, who managed to go undetected. However, research still continues in this area and maybe some evidence will be uncovered in the future.

How then do I answer the question as to whether I would have

played music in the Tudor period? I reply that as a woman, I could well have played music but I would never have played in a group of musicians for public entertainment or for money. I'm a middling sort, so I may well have been lucky enough to have been

taught the skill of music by a private tutor. But as an educated woman in the aspiring classes I would never have played the bagpipe, the curtal or the shawm as I do in the group. As a woodwind player, I would have been confined to playing the recorder or

flute. As a woman I could have played the bagpipes but only if I was of peasant stock. Oh dear, I think I might just have made myself redundant!

**JANE MOULDER**

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## Tudor Winter Quiz ANSWERS

### DECEMBER

- 1) 26th – Feast of St. Stephen.  
28th – Holy Innocents Day or Childermas.  
29th – Feast of St. Thomas of Canterbury
- 2) Frances Derham and Thomas Culpepper
- 3) Improper Heraldry
- 4) Mary Stewart (Mary Queen of Scots)
- 5) Excommunication of Henry VIII

### JANUARY

- 1) Henry, Duke of Cornwall
- 2) Anne of Cleves
- 3) Catherine of Aragon
- 4) Her Astrologer, Dr. John Dee
- 5) Henry VII and Elizabeth of York

### FEBRUARY

- 1) Duke of Suffolk – Charles Brandon.  
Duke of Norfolk (2nd) – Thomas Howard
- 2) Mary Queen of Scots
- 3) Queen Catherine Howard and Jane Boleyn, Lady Rochford
- 4) St. George's Chapel, Windsor Castle
- 5) Edward VI



# JANE SEYMOUR AND THE WINTER OF 1536

BY GARETH RUSSELL

It was a tense time for Jane Seymour, as she prepared to celebrate her first Christmas as England's queen. Married into the Royal Family at the end of May, eleven days after her predecessor's execution, Jane remains something of an enigma, thanks to fewer comparative sources for her than all of Henry's other five queens. Yet, it is perhaps revealing that after several conversations with her, the Habsburgs' ambassador to England, Eustace Chapuys, revised his previously contemptuous opinions of Jane. Having initially dismissed her as someone whom he assumed to be the intellectually-limited pawn of those around her, Chapuys soon reached the conclusion that England's new queen was, in fact, substantially more intelligent than he, and many others, had previously given credit for.

Pale and of medium height, Jane cut a particularly magnificent figure that Christmas. We know from surviving inventories that Queen Jane's clothes were often studded with jewels and, as the winter frosts set in for 1536, she utilised these superbly. And what a winter it proved to be, with the snow and ice pummelling England so intensely that the River Thames at the heart of London froze over. This happened throughout the Middle Ages and into the eighteenth century, but this was the only time it had done so since Henry VIII sat on the throne. The ice was so thick that people skated across it and, on 22nd December, after hearing Mass at Saint Paul's Cathedral, Queen Jane - wrapped in furs and glittering in jewels - rode her white horse across it. So thick was the frozen river that she, her husband, and their court

were able to ride their horses across it towards Greenwich, where they kept Christmas that year. A white horse, a fur-trapped queen atop, riding through the snow - it's certainly an arresting image.

For Jane, however, the rest of the Christmas season proved even more nerve-wracking than the thought of the Thames thawing. Among the many guests invited to court was Robert Aske, the lawyer who had recently led the Pilgrimage of Grace rebellion against her husband. Most of the north had risen in support of the rebels. The uprising had protested against the introduction of Protestantism with its corresponding closure of the abbeys; it was rumoured that Queen Jane herself sympathised with the rebels' aims, to the extent that it had placed a strain on her marriage. Her husband had even, brutally, reminded Jane of Anne Boleyn's fate after meddling in politics, a telling indicator that he knew his second wife had been framed and how far he was willing to go to intimidate his third.

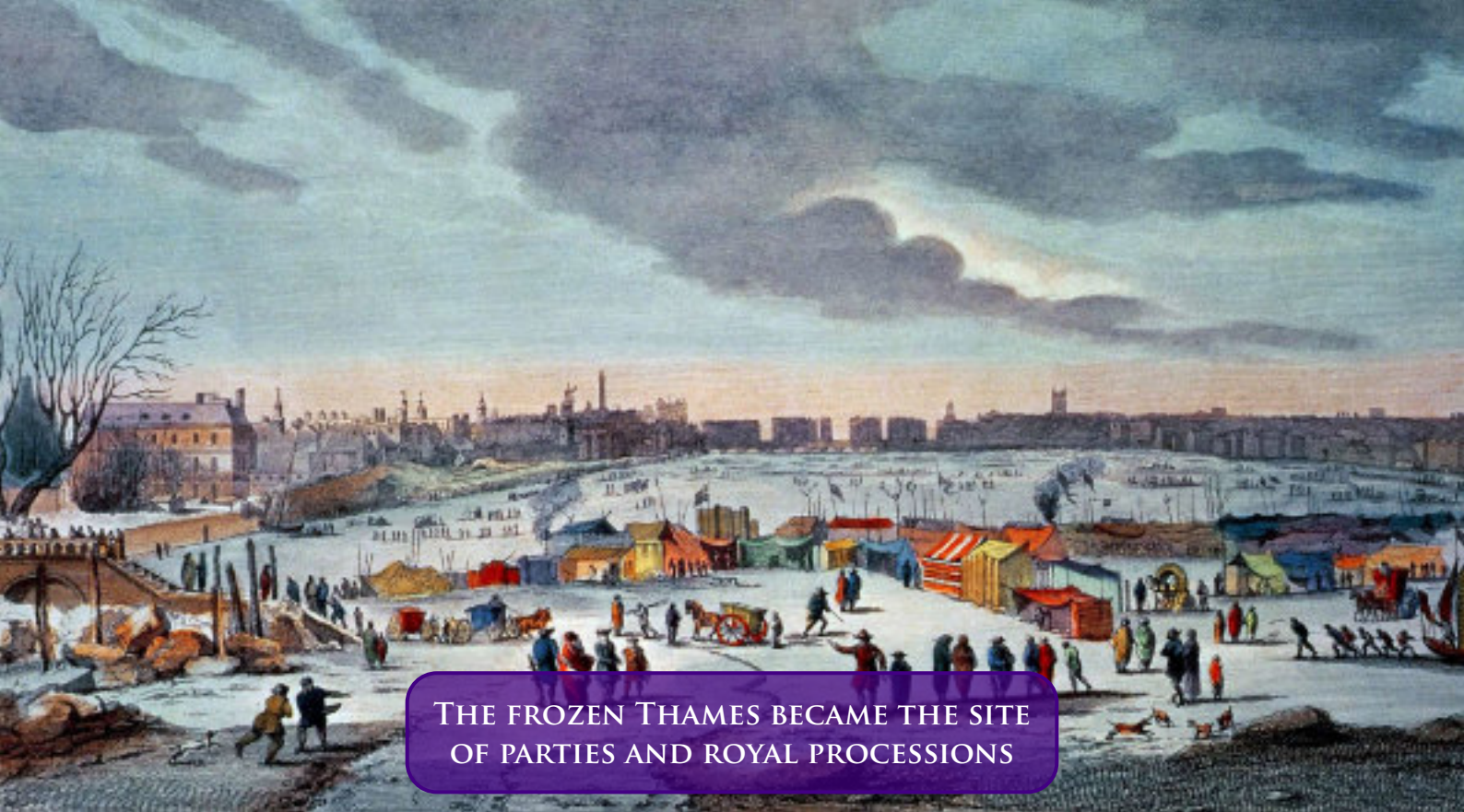
Aske had surrendered on promises of negotiation and royal pardons. His submission was crucial in persuading other rebels to lay down their arms, since they trusted Aske and he trusted the King. Aske was feasted and honoured that Christmas as the King's cherished guest, with Queen Jane used by Henry to further woo the former rebels. She would, at some point, have to be crowned queen, it was assumed, and Henry held forth the possibility of the glittering ceremony happening in the northern city of York, as yet another sign of no ill will towards the north.

It was, of course, as we now know, a charade, through which Henry



JANE SEYMOUR,  
QUEEN OF ENGLAND





THE FROZEN THAMES BECAME THE SITE  
OF PARTIES AND ROYAL PROCESSIONS

hoped to politically seduce Aske and his allies. Scattered and surrendered, they proved easy pickings when Henry's forces pulverised the north in the new year. Whether Jane knew that she, and her coronation, were being used to trick the ex-rebels, we will never know. To me, it seems unlikely that she willingly went along with so horrible a deception, especially when one considers Henry VIII's famous boast that if he thought his own hat knew what he was thinking, he would throw it into the fire. This was a man with a pathological impetus to secrecy, so there is no difficulty in believing that Jane, like Aske, was tricked into believing what her husband sat at the 1536 Christmas court.

On the one hand, the story of the winter of 1536 is that of splendid snow-dusted court, celebrating Christmas with feasting and parties, magnificent gifts, and lavish receptions. The new Queen presided over it with confidence and decadence that won much applause. Yet,

it was also a time of political uncertainty, deception, and sectarian tensions barely concealed beneath the opulence of King Henry and Queen Jane's court. In many ways, Christmas 1536 is the perfect aperture into the juxtaposing tragedy and splendour of Henry VIII's era.

**GARETH RUSSELL**



SEAN BEAN AS ROBERT ASKE  
IN THE 2003 MINI-SERIES  
"HENRY VIII"

# THE TUDOR SOCIETY



## *Members' Bulletin*

Brrrr. Isn't it turning cold now? Every year I forget how cold winter is. Is your heating on yet? I know many members have turned on theirs! We hope you're keeping warm.

Of course, that then gets you thinking about the Tudors and how they kept warm during the long dark winters. A log fire is a wonderful way to keep warm, we have one in our house and it looks beautiful burning away. However, someone has to fetch the logs, chop the logs, store the logs to keep them dry and (for me at least) the worst bit is when the store next to the fire has nearly run out and you have to go outside to bring in more from the store. The Tudors had lovely warm woollen clothing, so that helped, but then you have to remember all the smells of the smoke from the fire.

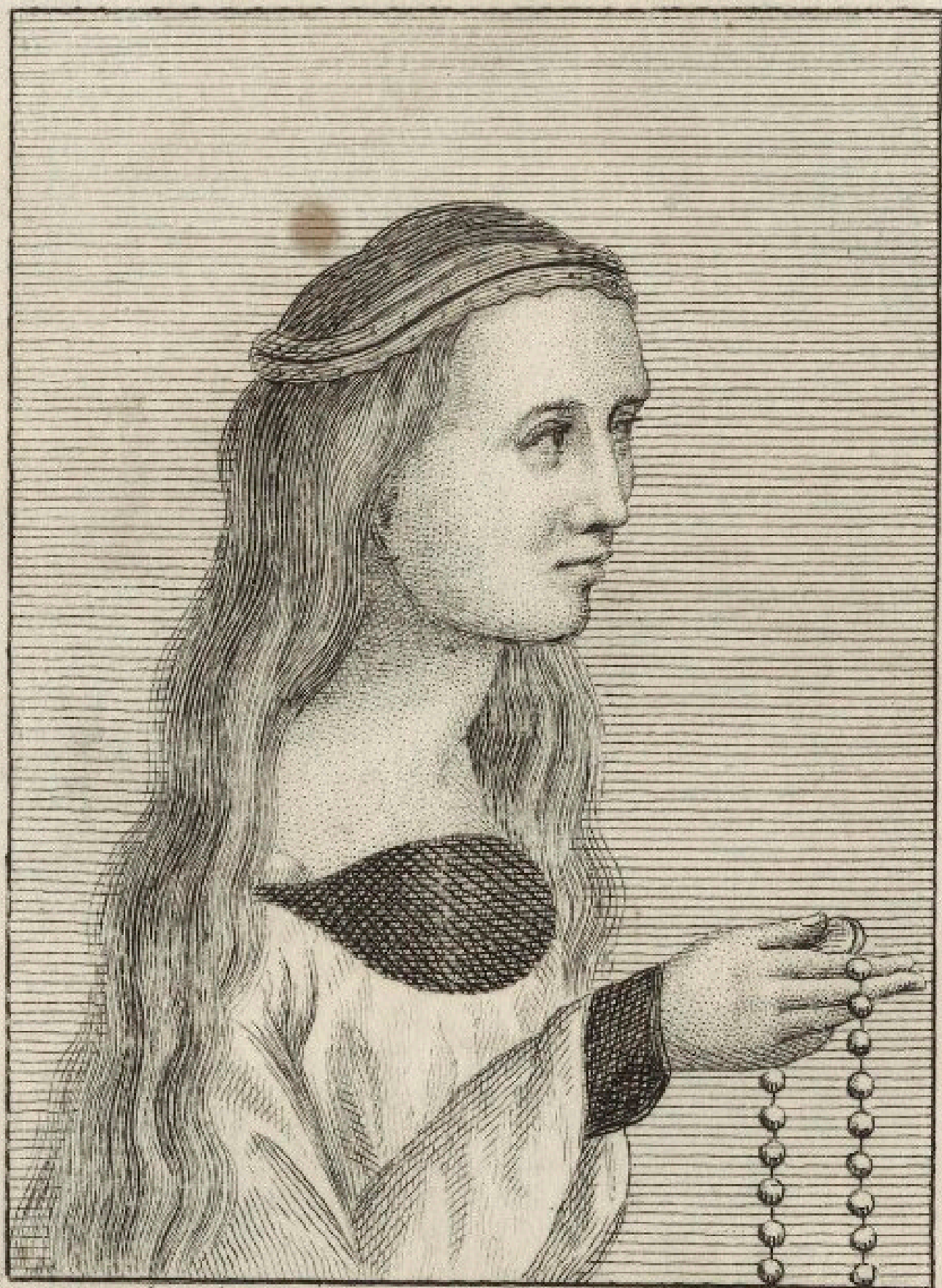
I also then get thinking about Tudor great halls like those still in existence at Hever Castle and Hampton Court Palace. These days the fire is just for looks and it's lit in a chimney built into the walls. The Tudors would have a fire hearth in the centre of the room, with an opening in the roof above to let the smoke out. Can you imagine how smokey that must have been!

Continuing along this line of thought, wouldn't it have been amazing to see one of the frost fairs on the river Thames! I remember when I was a child and our local lake froze over. There was always the one kid who was brave enough to try out the ice to see if it was strong enough. By the end of the day everyone would be out sliding around (don't try this!). Can you imagine being that person to first go out onto the Thames, and by the end of the day there would be stalls selling all sorts of things actually on the ice. Amazing.

Stay warm and safe wherever you are, and for all our members from the southern hemisphere, stay cool!

**TIM RIDGWAY**





Agnes Tilney, Dutchess of Norfolk,  
Second Wife of Tho.<sup>s</sup> Howard, 2.<sup>d</sup> Duke of Norfolk.  
*From an original Picture by Hans Baldung, 1513 in the  
Collection of Dr. Farmer, Eman. Coll. Cambridge. —  
Pub.<sup>d</sup> Nov.<sup>r</sup> 20. 1793 by J. T. the Spur Street, Leicester Square.*

Susan Abernethy talks about...

# Agnes Tilney Howard, Duchess of Norfolk



Agnes Tilney is one of those women who wittingly or unwittingly had a considerable impact on events in Tudor history. She married into the rich and powerful Howard family and would have great influence at the court of King Henry VIII. Queen Anne Boleyn and Queen Catherine Howard were her step-granddaughters.

The Howard's, magnates who supported Kings Edward IV and Richard III during the Wars of the Roses, were known at the time as the Earls of Surrey. Thomas Howard married first Elizabeth Tilney and together they had ten children. Their eldest son, also Thomas, was first married to Anne, the daughter of Edward IV. When she died, Thomas married Elizabeth Stafford, the daughter of the Duke of Buckingham. His sister Elizabeth married Thomas Boleyn. Other sons of the Earl of Surrey included Edward and Edmund who were promising knights. Edmund was the father of Catherine Howard, Henry VIII's fifth wife.

After the Battle of Bosworth, the fortunes of the Howard family declined but eventually they turned things around with loyal service to King Henry VII. During the reign of King Henry VIII, Surrey was in command of the victorious army that met James IV, King of Scots at the Battle of Flodden on September 9, 1513. As a reward for this tremendous success, he was given the title of Duke of Norfolk.

The newly named duke's wife Elizabeth had died in the spring of 1497. Agnes Tilney was her cousin and it is believed she lived in the Howard household. Agnes, born c. 1477, was the daughter of Hugh

Tilney of Lincolnshire and her mother was the daughter of Walter Tailboys. There is some discrepancy regarding the year Norfolk married Agnes but judging by the dates of the birth of Agnes' children, the year 1509 seems likely. Agnes and Thomas had seven children together. In 1516, Agnes acted as godmother for Princess Mary, daughter of Henry VIII and Katherine of Aragon.

The second Duke of Norfolk died in 1524 at the age of eighty-one. He bequeathed to Agnes various items, money and revenues from his lands, resulting in Agnes, as Dowager Duchess of Norfolk, becoming extremely wealthy and one of the highest ranked women in the land. Agnes now lived in Chesworth House at Horsham in Sussex, and in the Howard suburban residence of Lambeth.

She is described as testy, kind-hearted, short-tempered and old-fashioned, living an almost fanatically religious life and wearing a hair shirt under her pious clothing. There is evidence in 1528 that she provided the king's principal minister Cardinal Thomas Wolsey with recipes for medicine. She was the patron of the poet John Skelton who had served as tutor to King Henry VIII.



Agnes was the first lady of the Queen's household after the king's sister Mary and her high rank gave her some influence at court regarding the giving and receiving of favours from the king. Agnes did not approve of Henry's efforts to end his marriage to Katherine of Aragon but she was the step-grandmother of Anne Boleyn, thereby retaining her high status at court. She participated in Anne's coronation and carried the newborn Princess Elizabeth at her baptism, as well as acting as the infant's godmother.

Agnes' stepson Edmund, being the younger son of an aristocratic family, had a hard time earning a living and providing for his ten children. Consequently, some of the children were placed in different aristocratic households which was a common practice at the time. Edmund's daughter Catherine Howard came to live in Agnes' home in 1536 to receive discipline and training in good manners, a rudimentary formal education along with music and dancing lessons, and other accomplishments. Catherine would be expected to perform light household duties and sleep in a communal dormitory.

Agnes had a busy and complex life running her vast household. Her home at Chesworth included five great rooms downstairs and five rooms and a garret upstairs, a malt-house, stable, cow barn and four acres of orchards and gardens as well as several fish ponds and a large deer park. There were one hundred servants in her household. All of this took up the Duchess' considerable attention. She had the help of her steward, secretary and her cellarer but the ultimate responsibility remained hers alone.

Agnes hired Henry Manox to teach the virginals and lute to Catherine and the other girls in the household. Manox took advantage of Catherine during her lessons

but eventually he left the household. Francis Dereham was working for Agnes and began an affair with Catherine, actually being admitted to the girl's dormitory at night and sleeping with her. Agnes may have frowned on the antics of the youth under her care but she tolerated the behaviour and most likely knew more than she let on. She definitely knew Dereham took advantage of Catherine because she caught them kissing in the corridor and punished both of them.

Catherine was not the only young lady to entertain men at night and it is surprising that Agnes didn't hear of it sooner. Her dalliance with Frances Dereham provoked envy from her prior love interest Henry Manox. Manox, with the help of a friend, wrote a letter to Agnes revealing the amorous nighttime adventures in the lady's dormitory and left it in the Duchess' pew in the chapel.

Agnes castigated her servants for their negligence but she may not have recognised Catherine's participation and didn't take the warning all that seriously. Catherine had noticed the letter in the pew and afterwards stole it from the Agnes' coffer and showed it to Dereham. The couple acted as though they would marry even though they didn't have Agnes' permission.

In the autumn 1539, Thomas Howard, third Duke of Norfolk arranged for Catherine to take a position at court as one of the maids-in-waiting for Henry VIII's new wife, Anne of Cleves. Catherine was sent to further the interests of the Howard family and dutifully came to the notice of King Henry and the rest is history. Henry annulled his marriage to Anne of Cleves and married Catherine, his "rose without a thorn".

Agnes released Dereham from her household and he went to Ireland to seek his fortune but later returned. He had

always been a favourite of Agnes and she asked Queen Catherine to find a place for him in her court. In August of 1541, he was made private secretary and usher of the chamber. It was about this time Catherine embarked on an affair with her distant cousin, Thomas Culpeper.

During the summer of 1541, the king and queen went on progress. After their return to London in October, the council received the news of Catherine's liaisons with Frances Dereham and Henry Manox. While those who opposed the influence of the Howard's were pleased with the news, everyone agreed the situation was dangerous. The council asked Thomas Cranmer, Archbishop of Canterbury to break the news to the king.

John Lassells reported to the archbishop that his married sister Mary Hall, who lived in Agnes' household with Catherine, had revealed the details of the mischief in the women's dormitory. The archbishop wrote these revelations down in a letter and presented it to the king during his devotions in the chapel at Hampton Court, urging him to read it in private. He asked for an investigation and went on with life as usual for about a week. After interrogations of John Lassells, Mary Hall, and confessions by Manox and Dereham, the king ordered Catherine to remain in her chambers to await his orders. Henry would never see her again, leaving for London to meet with his Privy Council in an emergency session.

Later in the investigation, Catherine's affair with Thomas Culpeper was revealed and Catherine was imprisoned and eventually executed on February 13, 1542. When Agnes was implicated, she opened Dereham's coffers which were in her keeping and destroyed several documents, causing her to look guilty. They intensely interrogated her and she feared all of her goods would be confiscated. At one point during the questioning, she fell on her knees weeping, asking God to save the king and give him a long and prosperous life, at the same time revealing where she had about £800 hidden in her chambers.

Agnes was accused of presumptive treason with the charges eventually downgraded to misprision due to her failure to divulge the truth about Catherine's past sexual activities and deliberately deceiving the king when she assured him Catherine was pure and chaste. She was convicted and put in the Tower in January of 1542. She made her will while she was in prison. It was believed that the strain of the indictment would be too much for her and the loss of her goods so devastating, that she was pardoned in early May. Agnes died in 1545 at the age of sixty-eight. By 1546, her stepson, Thomas Howard, third Duke of Norfolk had regained all of her jointure consisting of twenty-four manors in Suffolk, Surrey, Essex, Lincolnshire and Sussex.

**SUSAN ABERNETHY**

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Further reading:

- "The House of Howard: Volume I and II" by Gerald Brenan and Edward Philips Stratham
- "Wicked Women of Tudor England: Queens, Aristocrats, Commoners" by Retha M. Warnicke
- "Catherine Howard: The Queen Whose Adulteries Made a Fool of Henry VIII" by Lacey Baldwin Smith
- Entry in the Oxford Dictionary of National Biography on Agnes Howard, Duchess of Norfolk written by Catharine Davies





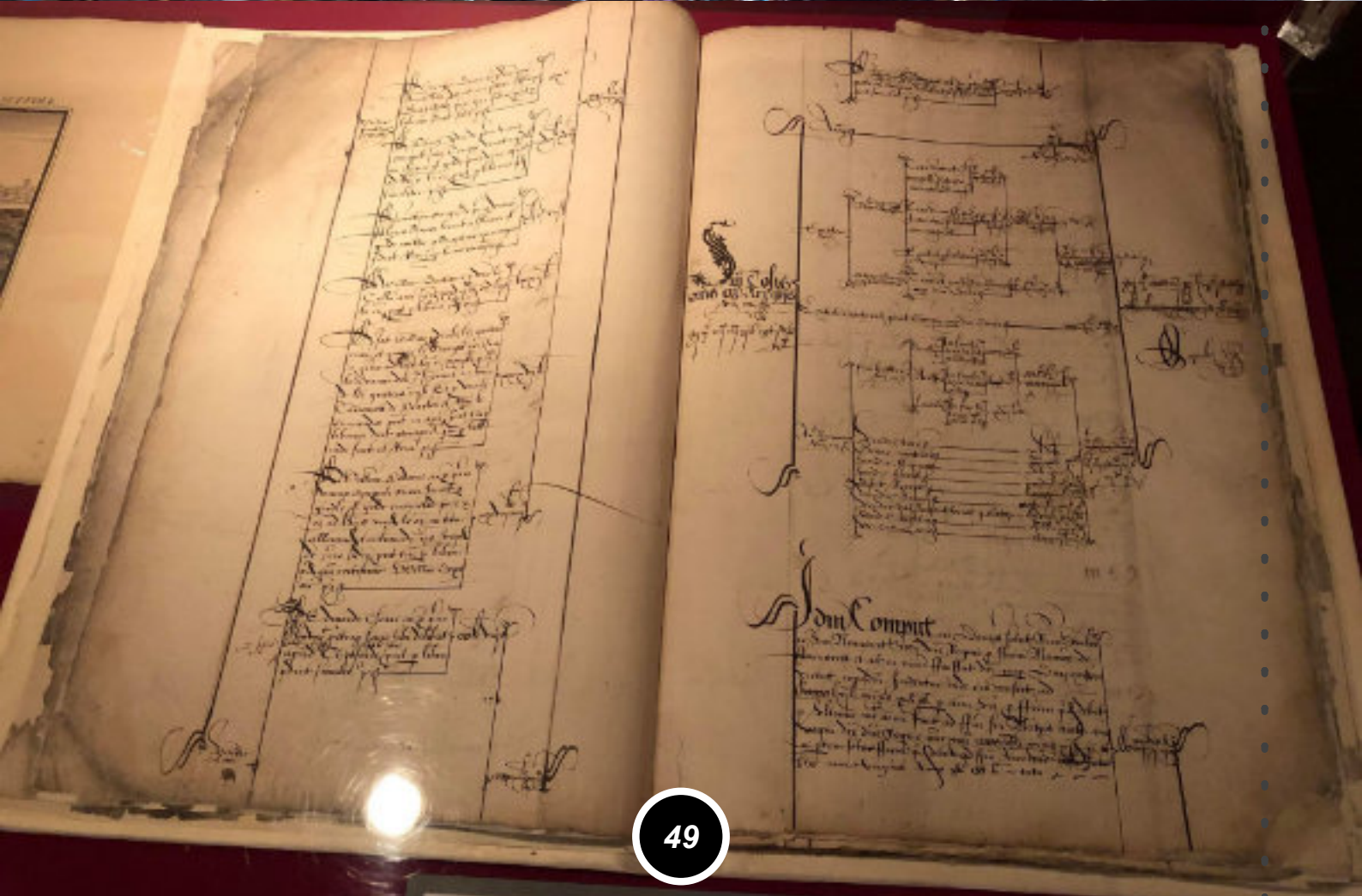
# Member Spotlight

## HISTORIC ARUNDEL CASTLE

- For over 1000 years a fortification has stood at the site where Arundel castle is today, gradually becoming more substantial in its construction and grandeur until the mighty castle which sits in around 40 acres of land today. Simon Burrows recently visited the castle and sent us this selection of photos for members to enjoy.
- Arundel Castle is known for its association with the Howard family. Thomas FitzAlan, 12th Earl of Arundel, married a daughter of King John of Portugal and the couple eventually became the first members of the FitzAlan family to be buried in the FitzAlan Chapel built by the 10th Earl. However, the male line ended on the death of Henry FitzAlan, 19th Earl of Arundel and his daughter married Thomas Howard, 4th Duke of Norfolk when the castle passed to the Howard family.
- Interestingly, the crown took Arundel castle for a period of time when Thomas Howard was executed because of his association with Mary, Queen of Scots. Eventually it was returned to the Howard family and continues to be the seat of the Duke of Norfolk to this day.
- Much of the modern day building was restored by Henry Fitzalan-Howard, 15th Duke of Norfolk. His restoration project was completed around the turn of the 1900s and electric lights and even lifts and central heating were installed. It is a wonderful and incredibly historic site to visit and, like many places around the UK, it is wonderful to be able to walk in the exact footsteps of the Tudors.
- Information from <https://arundelcastle.org/castle-history/>







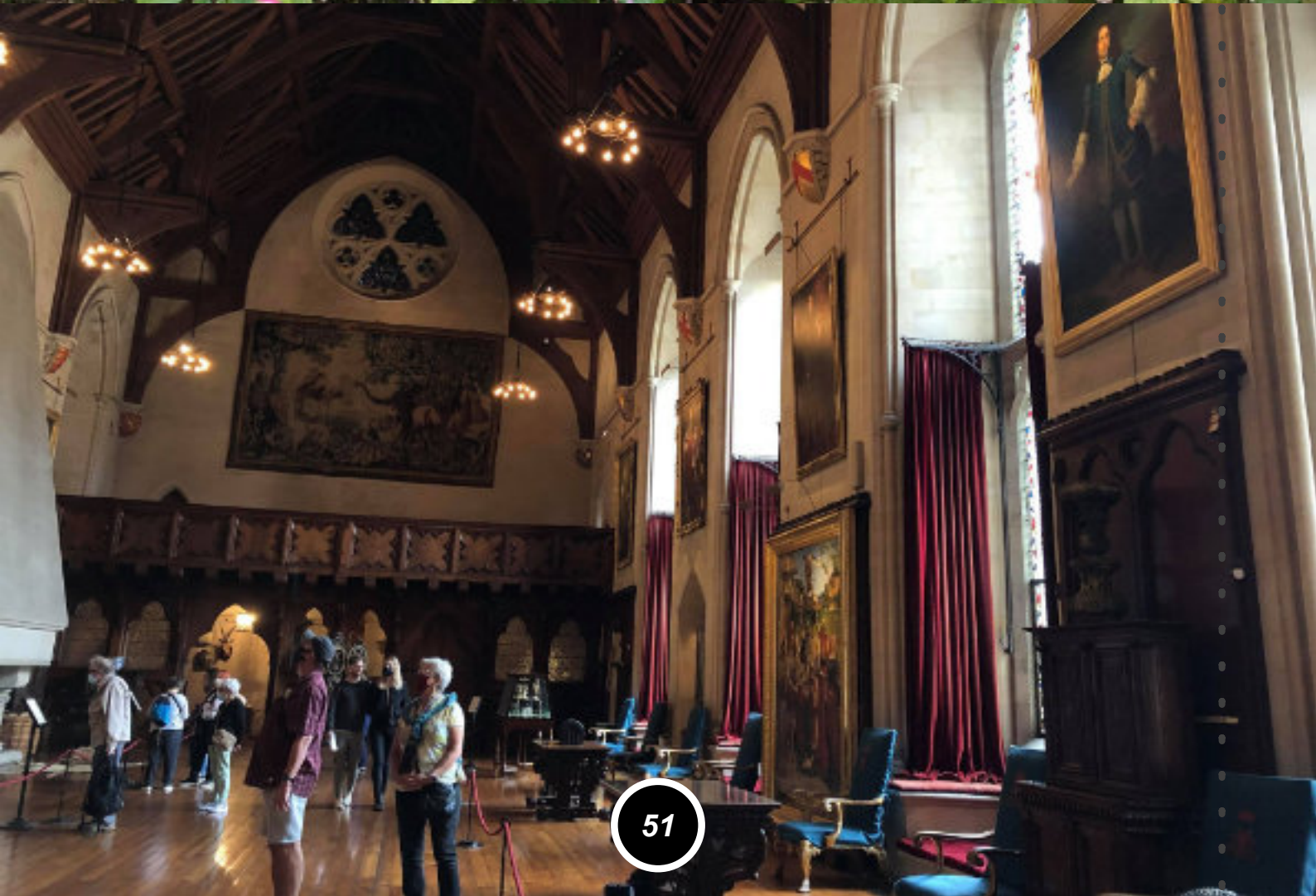








# Member Spotlight



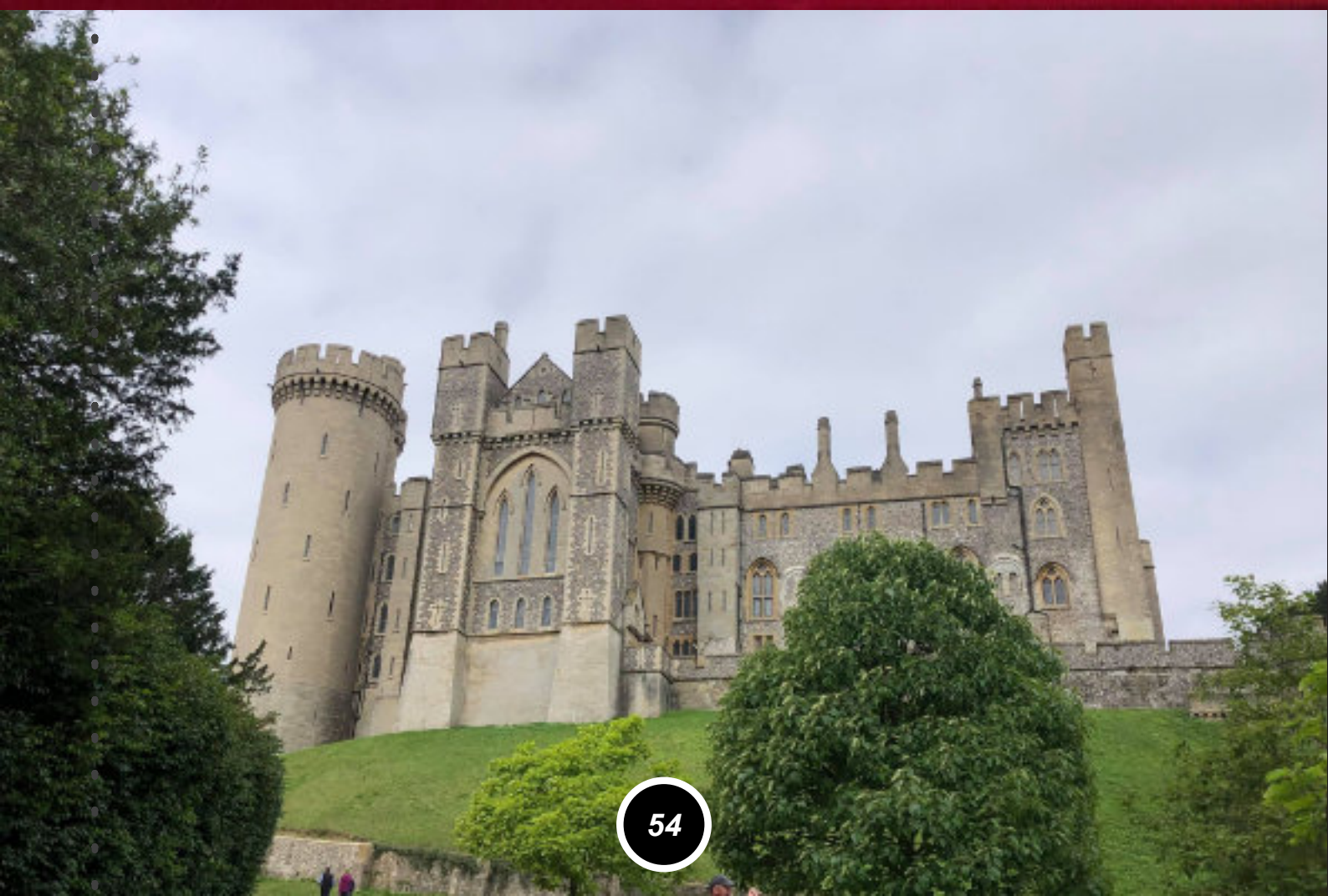




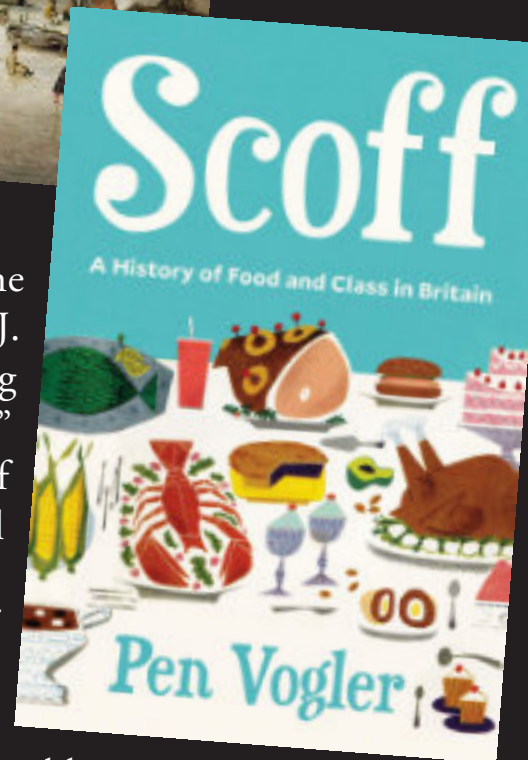
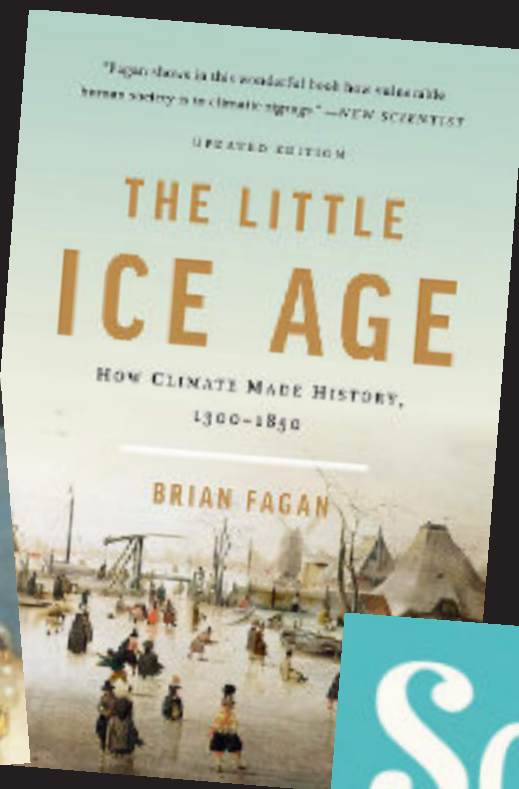












For novels that evoke the winters of Tudor England, try C. J. Sansom's snowstorm-featuring murder mystery, "Dissolution," set amid the dying days of monasticism at the fictional monastery of Saint Donatus the Ascendant, which finds itself caught in Thomas Cromwell's schemes. Janet Wertman's

"Jane the Quene" is also highly recommended, dramatizing the life of Henry VIII's third wife, including that fraught Christmas of 1536.

In terms of non-fiction, Brian Fagan's "The Little Ice Age," is contested by some scholars on climate history but it is nonetheless fascinating on how climate shaped history in the early modern era. For the ways in which Christmas food developed, Pen Vogler's new smash hit book "Scoff: A History of Food and Class in Britain" is, deservedly, winning rave reviews.

**GARETH RUSSELL**



# Charlie

## Henry VII and the Tudor Pretenders

Nathen Amin



Henry VII and Perkin Warbeck have captured the public's imagination over recent years, with shows like *The White Princess* leading people to want to know more about the Tudor pretenders. Nathen Amin's latest work *Henry VII and the Tudor Pretenders* examines the events of Henry VII's reign and how he dealt with the various claimants to his newly acquired throne. It is an excellent work that sheds some much-needed light on the misunderstood king.

Amin starts by telling the reader the official definition of a 'pretender'. This is an important point to establish, as many think of the term negatively, when in reality it means 'One who puts forth a claim, or aspires to or aims at something; a claimant, candidate, or aspirant'. This is a term that has been twisted over the years and has negative connotations, so it is good that the author finally puts things straight. The book then has one chapter that covers the end of Edward IV's reign, the Princes in the Tower, and Richard III taking the throne, before moving on to 1485 and the Battle of Bosworth. It is short and to the point, not dwelling too much on the details.

The author gives plausible explanations as to why certain people switched sides, like William Stanley, who had supported Edward IV and Henry VII due to his marriage to Elizabeth of York:

'Ultimately, William Stanley's loyalty to the Yorkist cause was reserved for Edward IV and

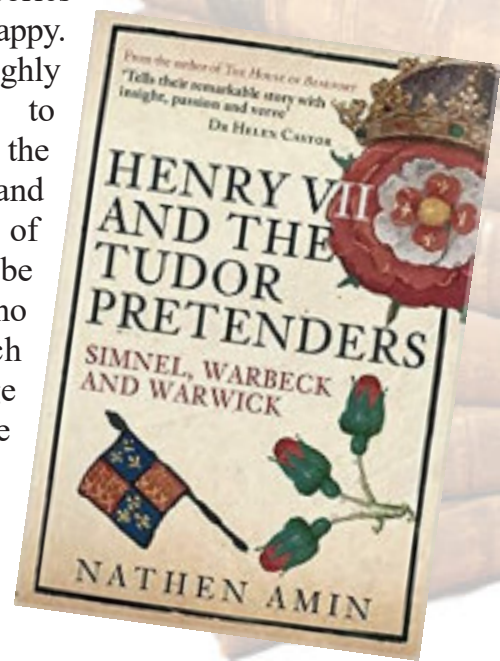
his progeny, as shown by his betrayal of Richard III in 1485 and failure to support Lambert Simnel's Warwick plot in 1487. Once a pretender who had yet to be conclusively ruled out as a son of his former master emerged, Stanley's head was turned.'

This is an interesting take and finally gives the readers a possible answer to a question many have wondered over the years. Amin explains everything well, giving context to events and being clear as to what are his own theories and why he believes them.

A useful inclusion in this book is a list of key figures mentioned in the book, as well as brief biographies of each one. This is great for anyone new to the subject, as many people have similar names, especially those from the same family (like the Stanleys).

*Henry VII and the Tudor Pretenders* is very well-researched, as well as well written by the author, Nathen Amin. This can be unusual, as many books tend to be one or the other. Amin's work is readable but still has detailed references and enough new theories to keep academics happy.

I would highly recommend this to anyone interested in the reign of Henry VII and the end of the Wars of the Roses. It can be read by anyone, no matter how much previous knowledge they have of the time period concerned.



# King and Collector: Henry VIII and the Art of Kingship

Linda Collins and Siobhan Clarke



Henry VIII's patronage of art is well-known by those who study his reign, with Hans Holbein the Younger's iconic portrait of him coming to most people's minds when they picture the infamous monarch. Other works from his time tend to be more neglected, especially those by artists other than Holbein, despite their relative importance and the way in which different pieces represent different parts of his reign. Pieces differ depending on the reason for commission and the mood of the country at the time. Two historians, Linda Collins and Siobhan Clarke, look at the art collection Henry VIII amassed in their new book, *King and Collector: Henry VIII and the Art of Kingship*. It provides a good insight into the way art was used to different effects in Henry's reign.

*King and Collector* doesn't just include art from Henry VIII's reign, oddly enough, as it starts with a piece of art from c.1503, so nearing the end of Henry VII's reign. It is, however, still interesting to see, as the first piece is *The Family of Henry VII with St George and the Dragon*. The authors go through the different pieces of art, the context behind them and what they are trying to say. This is particularly useful with the more abstract ones, like *The Family of Henry VII*. The authors point out some interesting things

that may be missed at first glance, like the fact that all of Henry VII's children are included, despite the fact that several died in infancy. The children are painted as adults, 'as if they had lived'.

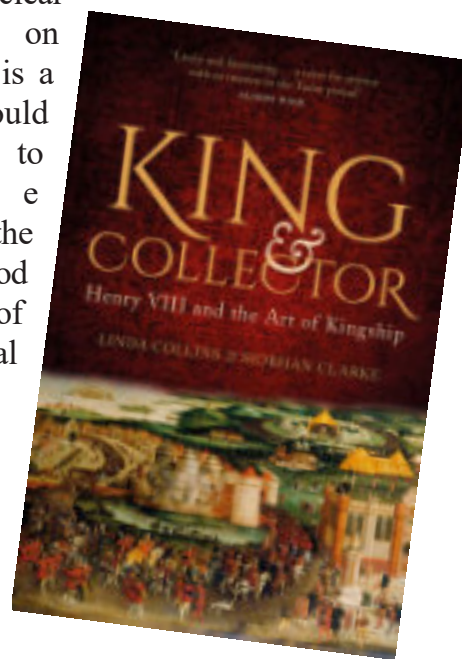
The authors make it clear early on that their book only provides a snapshot of works created during Henry VIII's reign. They tell us that:

'In a century rife with theological dispute, pictures of people tended to survive where overtly religious works did not, but even a conservative estimate assumes that 40 per cent of the portraits produced in the reign of Henry VIII are lost. We should therefore be aware that we are judging the genre on what we have left, rather than on what was produced within its time.'

This is disappointing but not unknown. However, it is good that the authors have made it clear to their readers. The book does also include miniatures, tapestries and stained glass, not just paintings. It provides a comprehensive overview of some of the key works of the Tudor period.

There is an interesting chapter at the end looking at the Royal Collection to the present day, which Henry VIII started. This ties the book together nicely and tells us why many of the works ended up where they did.

*King and Collector: Henry VIII and the Art of Kingship* by Linda Collins and Siobhan Clarke is an excellent book on the art of kingship. It includes numerous full-colour images and clear information on each one. It is a book I would recommend to anyone interested in the art of the period and the start of the Royal Collection.





# Queen Katherine Parr's other husbands.

We all know Henry VIII was a much-married monarch, famous for having six wives but his last wife, Katherine Parr, also married a number of times. She had four husbands, the king being spouse number three, yet we rarely hear about Katherine's other partners in life. In this article, I hope to fill that gap a little.

Katherine was born in 1512, probably in August, the elder daughter of Sir Thomas Parr [1478-1517] and his wife Maud Green. Sir Thomas was well educated, charming and athletic, so no wonder that the young king Henry VIII enjoyed his company at court and appointed Maud Parr as one of Katherine of Aragon's ladies-in-waiting. When Thomas and Maud's daughter was born, they named her after the queen.

When Thomas died in November 1517, he left £800 to be shared by Katherine and her younger sister, Anne, as their marriage dowries. Maud was granted the guardianship of her three children, including her son William who was a year younger than Katherine. Maud was perfectly capable of running the Parr estates until William was old enough to inherit them, as well as directing the education of all three children, choosing inspirational tutors.

Katherine became fluent in French, Latin and Italian and learned about medicine – which may have helped her in dealing with ailing husbands later on.

When Katherine was eleven, her mother tried to arrange a marriage for her with Henry Scrope, the son and heir of Lord Scrope of Bolton in Wensleydale but nothing came of it. Her next choice was more successful when, before her sixteenth birthday, Katherine was married to Edward Burgh [also spelled and pro. 'Borough'], the son of Thomas, Lord Burgh of Gainsborough in Lincolnshire. Katherine came to live with her husband's family at Gainsborough Old Hall but it was a household ruled by a tyrant.

Insanity ran in the family and Edward's grandfather was confined to his home at Gainsborough Old Hall, reckoned mad and incapable. He died around the time of Katherine's marriage to his grandson. Sir Thomas, the new Baron Burgh, was a bully with a ferocious temper with his family and household living in fear of him. But Katherine and her mother were not to be intimidated. Maud persuaded Sir Thomas to allow Katherine and Edward to set up their own household at Kirton Manor, a



Katherine Parr [1512-48]  
[sudeleycastle.co.uk]





**Gainsborough Old Hall can still be visited today [English Heritage]**

Burgh property about ten miles away. Katherine immediately took charge and made a happy home for Edward. But her husband was described as 'frail' in health, though whether the problems were physical or perhaps mental, inherited from his grandfather, isn't recorded. It was rumoured that he may have been homosexual which would have been regarded as a mental aberration at the time and it could be a reason why the couple had no children. Edward's frailty, in whatever form it took, overwhelmed him and he died before April 1533, in his mid twenties. Katherine, as his widow, had no claims on the house at Kirton and had to leave.

Her mother, Maud, had died on 1 December 1531, and with neither her brother nor sister being able

to take her under their roofs, Katherine went to live with her cousins, the Stricklands of Sizergh Castle in Westmorland. Being in the northern shires, Katherine looked locally for a new husband and the following summer of 1534 she married John Neville [1493-1543], 3rd Baron Latimer of Snape Castle, Yorkshire. He had been married twice before and had two young children.

Unlike the Burghs, who had Protestant sympathies, Latimer remained loyal to the 'Old Religion' of Catholicism. On 1 October 1536 the Pilgrimage of Grace, in favour of Catholicism, began in Lincolnshire. When the rebels moved north, they attacked Snape Castle, trying to force Latimer to join them. He was in an impossible situation. King Henry already considered him a Catholic



**Sir Thomas Seymour**

traitor and he didn't want to make things worse by joining the rebels. His lack of enthusiasm to support the rebels caused them to think he would betray them to the king and in January 1537, a mob stormed Snape, taking Katherine and her stepchildren hostage. Because Latimer then had to do a deal with the rebels to secure their freedom, when the revolt was crushed two months later, Latimer barely escaped being charged with treason. Fortunately, Katherine's family had stoutly opposed the

rebellion and put in a good word for her husband, arguing that he'd had no choice, if he was to save his wife and children. But the experience turned Katherine against the Catholic religion for life. The Latimers swiftly moved south to their manor of Wyck, near Pershore in Worcestershire, where Katherine preferred to remain even though her husband often returned to the north on both private and government business.

Latimer was known, personally, to the king, having served as a Gentleman-Pensioner. In 1513 during Henry VIII's campaign in France, Latimer was knighted. He was a member of the Council of the North and was among those who signed the letter, asking the pope to grant Henry a divorce from Queen Katherine of

Aragon. After his unintended involvement in the Pilgrimage of Grace he was able to negotiate with the Crown for an amnesty for some of the rebels in November 1536.

Returning to royal favour, the Latimers were at court and living in London in the winter of 1542. Katherine was now a lady-in-waiting to Princess Mary, Katherine of Aragon's daughter, also back in the king's favour. However, Lord Latimer, though only fifty, was in failing health. He died on 2 March 1543 and was buried in St Paul's Cathedral.



Katherine was now thirty – still young and attractive enough to marry but her body clock was ticking. She'd never had a child – at least, there is no record of any – but she now had her heart set on the dashing Sir Thomas Seymour [c.1509-49], brother of the king's third wife, Jane, their secret romance blossoming while her ailing husband was still alive.

Since Queen Jane had died as a result of childbirth complications, King Henry had wed and divorced Anne of Cleves, then married and executed Katherine Howard. He was now on the hunt for wife number six and his predatory eye noted the pretty widow in his daughter's household: Katherine, Lady Latimer, known to history by her maiden name of Parr.

The king's advances stalled her romance with Seymour as Katherine's Protestant family urged her that she would be flouting God's will if she didn't accept Henry's proposal of marriage. But she wasn't keen and, knowing the fates of his previous wives, it's hardly surprising. Also, it seems she truly loved Seymour because she wrote to him:

My mind was fully bent the other time I was at liberty to marry you before any man I know. Howbeit, God withstood my will therein most vehemently ... [and] made me to renounce utterly mine own will, and to follow his most willingly.

Katherine and the king were married on 12 July 1543 in the queen's closet at Hampton Court with fewer than twenty people present at the low-key ceremony. With little knowledge of what it meant to be

a queen, Katherine had so much to learn but she was quick and intelligent and did a great job. Already close to Princess Mary, she became a kindly and interested step-mother to Princess Elizabeth and young Edward, Prince of Wales, sharing their love of learning. Katherine also persuaded Henry to restore both his daughters to the line of succession, if young Edward should die without an heir.

In the summer of 1544, the king led one last military expedition against the French, appointing Katherine as regent-general in his absence. He hadn't given any other of his wives so much power since Katherine of Aragon. Although the new queen handled her elevation of rank brilliantly, signing five royal warrants as regent, this sudden rise from 'Yorkshire housewife', as one historian put it, to a woman of power, presiding over the royal council, brought criticism, especially from those who disapproved of her strongly Protestant faith.

Although Henry had broken away from the Roman Catholic Church and been persuaded to permit the Bible to be printed in English, regarding church services and worship, he was content to continue with the old ways for the most part. As the king's health began to deteriorate, the more conservative churchmen began to worry that Katherine's influence on young Edward, the king-in-waiting, might lead to more stringent Protestant reforms after Henry's death. Led by the Bishop of Winchester, Stephen Gardiner, a plot to remove the queen was set in motion



**Stephen Gardiner, Bishop of  
Winchester [1483-1555]**  
[National Trust Collections]

in February 1546, using malicious gossip and spreading rumours in order to turn the king against her. It worked, mainly because Henry was becoming weak-willed and easily manipulated in his infirmity. Katherine often debated religious matters with him and being lively and intellectual, occasionally won the arguments. The king resented this – a woman getting the better of him was surely an indication that his wits were not as sharp as they once had been.

Bishop Gardiner and others were determined to prove to the king that the queen was a heretic, hoping to condemn her. He managed to discover that she and her ladies possessed a small library of banned books and persuaded the king to issue a warrant for Katherine's arrest so that she could

be questioned on the matter. Somehow, the queen was warned in advance, hid the books in the garderobe [toilet] and retired to her bed, saying she was mortally sick. Henry rushed to be with her and she explained that she was so mortified at displeasing him, it had made her ill. She said the arguments with him had been the means of her learning from his far greater knowledge – flattery was always likely to win over the king – and to help keep his mind from dwelling on his physical pains and discomfort. Henry was convinced, tore up the warrant and Gardiner's scheme had failed but Katherine

wisely played down her more extreme Protestant ideas for the remainder of the king's life.

When the king died on 28 January 1547 at Hampton Court, Katherine wasn't there and within three days, Edward Seymour, Earl of Hertford and the new young king's maternal uncle, had proclaimed himself Duke of Somerset and Lord Protector of England. Despite what she and everyone else might have expected, Katherine was entirely excluded from the regency council that would rule until nine-year-old Edward VI was old enough to govern alone.

A few months after Henry VIII died, Katherine returned to her previous love and secretly married the reckless Sir Thomas Seymour, younger brother of the Lord Protector, in May 1547. The couple's





**Sudeley Castle, Gloucestershire**  
[sudeleycastle.co.uk]

impetuous behaviour caused a rift between the queen and her stepson, Edward VI, as well as family quarrels with the Lord Protector but, even so, Katherine was granted the guardianship of Princess Elizabeth. This also caused problems because some improper behaviour went on between Sir Thomas and the teen-aged princess. The details are uncertain but the matter was serious enough for Katherine to send Elizabeth away from Sudeley Castle in Gloucestershire where they had made their home.

By December 1547, Katherine was pregnant. On 30 August, she gave birth to a daughter, Mary. The baby was christened in the castle chapel but Katherine became ill with puerperal fever and died less than a week later, on 5 September. She was buried later the same day, also in Sudeley

chapel. She left all the properties she had acquired as queen to Thomas, making him one of the wealthiest men in England. He claimed to be 'amazed' and stunned by her death yet it didn't take him long to return his attention to fifteen-year-old Princess Elizabeth but she wisely avoided him.

But what of Katherine's fourth husband, Sir Thomas Seymour? Coming to the king's notice when his sister, Jane became queen, he had previously served Henry VIII as ambassador to France and escorted the king's fourth wife, Anne of Cleves, to England in the winter of 1539 before spending two years in Vienna as a diplomat. However, when the king determined to wed Katherine Parr, as her romantic liaison, Thomas had to be removed from court so in May 1543, he was sent to Brussels as ambassador at the Habsburg court.

## TONI MOUNT

But war broke out between England and France just a month later and Thomas was put in charge of a contingent to capture and destroy castles close to Boulogne. His military success ensured his promotion to Master-General of the Ordnance and Lord Warden of the Cinque Ports in 1545.

Thomas was back in England and at court just before King Henry VIII died in January 1547. His elder brother, Edward, having created himself Duke of Somerset, made Thomas Baron Seymour of Sudeley and Lord High Admiral, giving him the luxurious Sudeley Castle.

Anne Stanhope, now Duchess of Somerset and Thomas Seymour's sister-in-law, had been stirring up trouble between her husband, his brother and Katherine. Anne even kept the queen's jewels which Katherine had left in her apartments at Hampton Court and Whitehall and saw to it that the Lord Protector left Katherine out of the regency entirely. Bad feeling grew into resentment as Thomas watched Somerset making himself king in all but name and it seems he was making plans to overthrow his brother as Lord Protector. In order to achieve that, Thomas needed to be well in favour with young King Edward. Providing the young king with ready cash to buy gifts and personal items was a good start but Edward wasn't going to take up Thomas's cause. Frustrated and annoyed, rebellion seemed the only answer and while Somerset was pointlessly invading Scotland and running up huge debts for the Crown,

Thomas was attempting to organise a coup. Nothing came of it.

With Katherine no longer alive to advise caution, during the night of 16 January 1549, Thomas attempted to break into King Edward's apartments at Hampton Court. He was armed with a pistol and shot one of the king's pet dogs when it started barking and roused the guards. Quite what Thomas intended to do, if he reached the king, was never made clear but, next morning, he was arrested and imprisoned at the Tower of London. Having sneaked through the privy garden and been apprehended with a loaded weapon right outside the king's bedchamber door, there wasn't much doubt about the conclusion that would be drawn. The regency council questioned everyone who might have been involved. Even Princess Elizabeth came under suspicion, briefly.

On 22 February, the regency council accused Thomas on thirty-three charges of treason. He was tried, convicted and condemned to death. Katherine Parr's fourth and last husband was executed on 20 March 1549. Her brother William Parr, Marquess of Northampton, inherited her beautiful home at Sudeley castle. When Thomas's attainder was reversed in 1550, Sudeley wasn't returned to his and Katherine's little daughter, Mary, for she seems to have died aged just two.

I hope readers have found this article about the other men in Katherine Parr's life of interest.

TONI MOUNT





NEXT MONTH IN YOUR REGULAR

# Tudor Life

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## THE TWELVE DAYS OF CHRISTMAS

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Music and entertainment over  
the 12 Days of Christmas

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Sutton House

**GEORGE MCKINLEY**

The Frog - A Poem about  
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PLUS

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