

Tudor Life

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THE
TUDOR
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TUDOR NOBLEWOMEN

The Treasonous Love
of Margaret Douglas

Anne Boleyn – her music
and her song book

Mary Howard,
Duchess of Richmond

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TUDOR NOBLEWOMEN

Born into financial and social privilege, daughters of the Tudor elite were nonetheless legal property of their fathers and then their husbands; they were often placed in arranged, loveless, or even abusive marriages. A historian once referred to Tudor noblewomen, shockingly, as nothing more than “animated title deeds”. For years, Tudor elite women were dismissed and under-studied. Now, we can appreciate the tenacity, courage, individuality, and importance of these remarkable women. Tragedy followed many of them, yet only a fool would now say they were not central to the experience of Tudor politics and government. We have articles and reading recommendations on some fascinating Tudor noblewomen, as well as, as ever, the century that they shaped and which shaped them in turn.

On a personal note, this issue also contains the obituary for our dear “Tudor Life” colleague, Ríognach O’Geraghty, who sadly passed away in summer. At the time of going to press, this news is still fresh to us and so we would like to pay tribute to Ríognach’s brilliant essays which brought to life for our readers the everyday reality of Tudor people - the sights, tastes, smells, food, joy, and pain they experienced. As editor of this magazine and as a reader, I can say that Ríognach, a great writer and researcher, will be missed in the Tudor community and I send our heartfelt condolences to her loved ones.

FRONT: Jane Seymour by Hans Holbein
ABOVE: Anne Boleyn

**GARETH RUSSELL
EDITOR**

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Camelot and the Tudor Court/ The Once and Future Kings

By Sarah Gristwood

The Tudors were a fantastical family - if you doubt it, just look at any picture of Elizabeth I. In love with legend (their own legend, particularly!); skilled manipulators of their own image; but avid consumers, also, of the existing tropes of story and fantasy which held the collective imagination of the late fifteenth and sixteenth centuries.

Though we think of the Tudors as the first modern dynasty, their own preferred currency was the past. That, after all, was their most urgent need - not to convince England they could lead it into the future, but to assume legitimacy by cloaking themselves in tradition. Welsh Johnnies-come-lately, with a dubious blood claim to a contested throne? Good heavens, no! They were the heirs of the legendary King Arthur, weren't they? This, at a time when there was only just beginning to be acknowledged any real difference between legend and history.

Thomas Malory's *Morte d'Arthur* - the epic which encapsulated more than three centuries of Arthurian writing; and would indeed carry it through into

the present age - was published by William Caxton in 1485; the year that launched the Tudor dynasty. Before the Battle of Bosworth, Henry Tudor adopted as his standard the Red Dragon Dreadful: the dragon of Wales - but, perhaps no coincidence, Malory's *Morte* also described how King Arthur dreamt of a fight where a dragon beat down a tyrant boar. The boar, of course, was the symbol of Richard III.



There was recent precedent for putting a fictional spin on an often-harsh reality - yes, and for remembering the Arthurian stories, too. When Henry Tudor's Lancastrian predecessor Henry VI was contracted to marry Marguerite of Anjou, her father celebrated her betrothal with a tournament where the knights dressed up as Round Table heroes, the wooden castle was named for Lancelot's Joyous Garde, and a bound volume of Arthurian romance was presented to the bride. When Henry VI was overthrown, the meeting of his supplanter Edward IV and the beautiful Elizabeth Woodville was couched in terms of story - not specifically Arthurian, perhaps, but redolent of the literature of courtly love with which Camelot had become inextricably linked.

It was said the pair met, under an oak tree, on May Day - the day of love, par excellence in the courtly calendar. (As Malory put it: 'all ye that be lovers, call unto your remembrance the month of May, like as did Queen Guinevere.') Elizabeth defended her virtue against the young king's assaults, thus demonstrating the nobility of worth not birth that was one of the tenets of the courtly creed.

Elizabeth said that if she was not good enough to be Edward's wife, she was too good to be his mistress ... Anne Boleyn, NB. (Cardinal Wolsey would try to sell his king's unlikely match on the grounds of Anne's virtue: 'the approved, excellent virtuous [qualities] of the said gentlewoman, the purity of

her life, her constant virginity, her maidenly and womanly pudicity, her soberness, chasteness, meekness, humility, wisdom... be the grounds on which the King's desire is founded.') On the same tack would be Jane Seymour's performative display of virtue when she kissed the purse the still-married Henry had sent her, but returned it, saying that if the king wished to make a gift, he should do so when she wed.

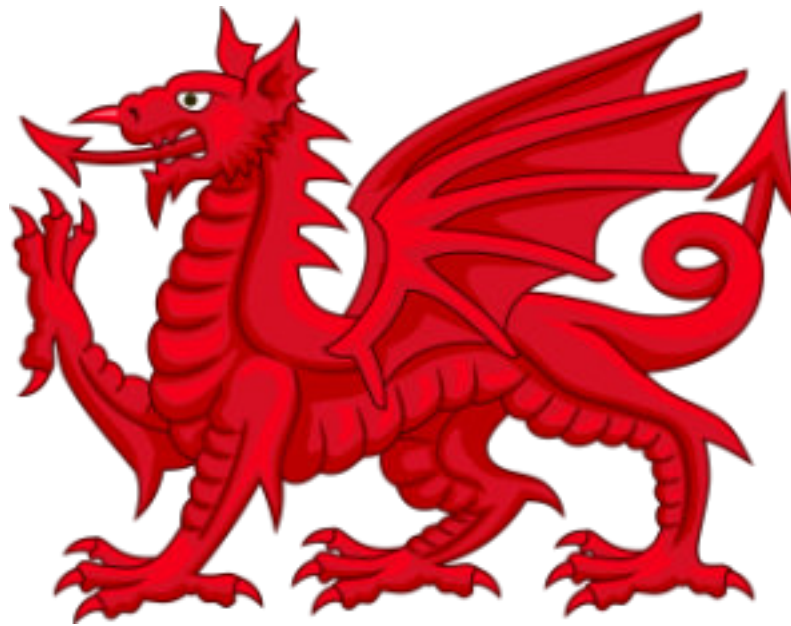
In fact, that pretty tale of the May Day meeting between Edward and Elizabeth Woodville doesn't stand up to much scrutiny. But the way the legend was promoted shows how Henry VIII's grandparents already knew how to use the tropes of literature and mythology. And it was probably during the 'Redemption', when Edward was briefly deposed for a restored Henry VI, that Malory finished his *Morte*. He described a world the royals of his own day would have recognised; not least for the fact that his Round Table finally falls to factional fighting. Lancelot swims across the Thames from Westminster Bridge to reach Guinevere, Guinevere feasts the London merchants - and takes refuge in the Tower as, with her husband fled



abroad, Elizabeth Woodville was forced to do.

(When the fellowship of the Round Table is broken because of Lancelot and Guinevere's love, Malory's Arthur can say he is more sorry for loss of knights than of his queen; 'for queens I might have enough, but such a fellowship of good knights shall never be together in any company.' With hindsight, the 'queens enough' sounds oddly prophetic, in view of Henry VIII's marital history!)

But the precedents for the English monarchy making use of Arthurian myth went a lot further back. When, in 1190, monks digging in the abbey grounds at Glastonbury claimed to have identified the grave of King Arthur and Guinevere, the royals rushed to the scene. Henry II, after all, was first king of England's new Plantagenet dynasty; as contested as the Tudor dynasty would be in its day. This was a wonderful way to bolster his line - it was even reported he had told the monks where to dig. Henry's wife Eleanor of Aquitaine was credited with having helped inspire the popular portrayal of King Arthur's Guinevere. Their son Richard 'the Lionheart', stopping at Sicily on his way to the Holy Land in 1191, exchanged gifts with Sicily's ruler Tancred. Tancred gave him fifteen galleys and four transport ships; Richard gave Tancred 'Excalibur'; the sword found within the Glastonbury grave. To contemporaries, it clearly seemed a fair exchange.



Edward I, the 'Hammer of the Scots', took a keen interest in King Arthur: would write to the Pope urging his claim to be ruler of all the British Isles as this 'ancestor' had been. In evidence, he cited the chronicle of Geoffrey of Monmouth, clearly fictional to our eyes, but treated by Edward as fact. So



it's no surprise that, two centuries on, the new Henry VII named his eldest son Arthur (Malory had described how the words 'the once and future king' were inscribed on Arthur's tomb); ensured that the prince was born at Winchester, which Malory had identified as Camelot.

Entertaining Philip of Burgundy (himself a star of the tournament) Henry proudly showed him the Round Table hanging in Winchester Castle; told him he hoped the table at which they dined would be as worthy of display one day, as representing an alliance between their two countries. (When, half a century later, Mary I went to Winchester to marry Philip of Spain, his courtiers rushed to see the same tourist sight.)

Perhaps, under the influence of Renaissance learning, the stories of

King Arthur were no longer universally being taken as fact, by Henry VII's day. The Italian humanist Polydore Vergil, Henry's favourite historian, dismissed Geoffrey of Monmouth's chronicle as nothing more than a 'fable'. But the ghost of Arthur had by no means disappeared. Elizabeth of York may have passed on to her children something of the romantic streak she had inherited from her Yorkist forbears. Her signature as a girl, 'Elysabeth, the kyngs dowther', with that of her mother Elizabeth Woodville, appeared on one of the Arthurian romances in the royal library.

The young Henry VIII, when he came to the throne, was described in Flanders as being of a nobility and fame 'greater than any prince since King Arthur.' Certainly he was in love with the idea of chivalry (and Caxton's preface to *The Order of Chivalry* beseeched knights to return to the old days, and 'read the noble volumes of the holy grail, of Launcelot, of Galahad, of Tristan'). Perhaps it was the dream of courtly love - originally an adulterous fantasy, after all - that allowed him to pursue Anne Boleyn convinced of his own moral right.

But of course, in the end, the adultery of Lancelot and Guinevere had brought down Camelot. Henry too believed (or was convinced - or persuaded himself) that he had been betrayed by his wife and some of the men closest to him. And surely as, in the Tower, Anne speculated she might be allowed to retire to a convent - as she recalled

predictions a queen of England would be burnt, she would have remembered stories of Guinevere, sentenced to the flames or to a nunnery - Even Henry's decision that Anne should die by the sword may itself have been influenced by the fact the sword was so potent a symbol of chivalry.

The utility of the Arthurian stories did not end with Anne Boleyn's death. The Duke of Norfolk would invoke Arthur's supposed victory over the Roman Empire to justify Henry VIII's break with the Roman church. Conversely, envoys knew how to prod Henry on this weak spot ... When, after Jane Seymour's death, he asked if the royal ladies of France could be brought to Calais for him to choose among them, the French ambassador asked the abashed king whether this was how the knights of the Round Table had behaved? But it is notable that when the Dissolution of the Monasteries brought the wreckers to the abbey of Glastonbury, Henry seems to have taken no special care for the graves of Arthur and Guinevere. Perhaps something of that dream had died with Anne Boleyn.

When it came to making use of mythology, of course, Henry and Anne's daughter Elizabeth would be the mistress. Examining the patterns of her reign for *The Tudors in Love*, I found the similarities with those of courtly love almost uncanny. The

midpoint of that reign saw a resurgence of interest in King Arthur, and Elizabeth's supposed descent from him - a family tree in the Cecils' house traced the route. The idea was allied to the promotion of the queen's imperial claims by men like Hackluyt and John Dee.

Elizabeth herself, however, seems not to have fostered the images of Camelot in quite the way she did those of classical heroines, or of the Virgin Mary. The Arthurian was after all a masculine model of kingship - and Anne Boleyn's daughter had the best of



all reasons not to relish reminders of queens condemned for treason and adultery.

But Anne and Guinevere would continue to be linked. A young Diana Spencer, contemplating marriage with Prince Charles, invoked both names; all too aptly. The Tudors had used the image of Arthur to serve the safe establishment of their dynasty. But in the end perhaps - for the Tudors, as for the Windsors - the subversive elements within the Arthurian story could yet represent a disruptive influence within the British monarchy.

SARAH GRISTWOOD

Sarah's new book is *The Tudors in Love: The Courtly Code Behind the Last Medieval Dynasty*:

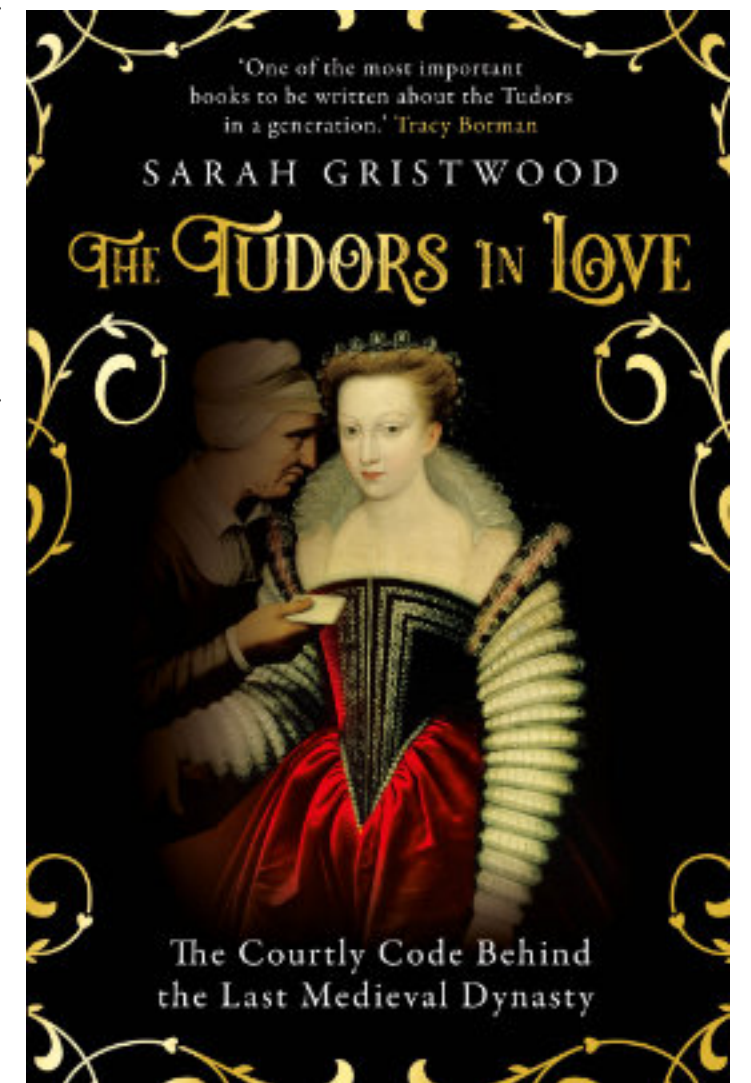
Why did Henry VIII marry six times? Why did Anne Boleyn have to die? Why did Elizabeth I's courtiers hail her as a goddess come to earth?

The dramas of courtly love have captivated centuries of readers and dreamers. Yet too often they're dismissed as something existing only in books and song - those old legends of King Arthur and chivalric fantasy.

Not so. In this ground-breaking history, Sarah Gristwood reveals the way courtly love made and marred the Tudor dynasty. From Henry VIII declaring himself as the 'loyal and most assured servant' of Anne Boleyn to Elizabeth I's poems to her suitors, the Tudors re-enacted the roles of the devoted lovers and capricious mistresses first laid out in the romances of medieval literature. *The Tudors in Love* dissects the codes of love, desire and power, unveiling romantic obsessions that have shaped the history of this nation. In the #MeToo era, re-examining the history of the social codes behind modern romance has never been more vital.

'A riveting, pacy page-turner... the Tudors as you've never seen them before.'

— Alison Weir



QUEEN MARGARET: MARRIAGES AND MAYHEMS BETWEEN ROYALTY AND NOBILITY

If there is one Tudor whose life story and place in popular memory are in their different ways anomalous it is Queen Margaret...

JAMES BARESEL INVESTIGATES

If there is one Tudor whose life story and place in popular memory are in their different ways anomalous it is Queen Margaret, daughter of England's King Henry VII and consort of Scotland's King James IV. The five Tudors who ruled England had famously eventful lives. The younger daughter of Henry VII, named Mary like her more famous niece, is remarkable among the Tudors only for a life about as mundane as that of any early 16th century princess could be. Prince Arthur, the oldest son of Henry VII, has as his two claims to lasting remembrance the facts that his death put Henry VIII on the throne and that his marriage to Catherine of Aragon provided his brother with a pretext to get rid of her. Most assume Margaret Tudor played a similar role in history—giving the House of Stuart a place in the English royal succession by giving birth to a Scottish king's son and heir. In fact, her life north of the Anglo-Scottish border was tumultuous and dramatic in some ways exceeded Tudor standards and nearly approached that of her granddaughter, Mary, Queen of Scots.

When Princess Margaret first entered Scotland in 1503, the country was experiencing an unusual period of stability after a century during which no king of Scots had died leaving an adult heir to the throne. For her husband's

reign to have begun when he was fifteen was actually an improvement over his father and grandfather, James II and James III, who had respectively become kings at the ages of seven and ten. Both as underage monarchs and as adults ruling in their own right, their lives had been marked by almost incessant conflict between noble factions which included every form of violence from assassination to pitched battles. Both died in battle - James III while opposing a rebellion whose leaders included the fifteen-year-old heir to the throne.

By the mid-1490s, however, James IV had managed to bring something like stable government to Scotland. Localized feuds between tumultuous nobles and lairds couldn't be entirely stopped. But the national government was free from serious threats and ongoing domestic warfare was limited to the isolated and militarily-weak western highlands. Impulses towards violence had been channeled into war with England. Perkin Warbeck's bogus claim to be heir to the House of York was James IV's pretext. His real intentions were opportunistic plundering, prestige and strengthening his diplomatic hand. He was successful on all counts, laying the foundation for a marriage that Henry VII hoped would secure his northern border. The failure of the policy led to King James's death at the



1513 Battle of Flodden and Scotland's return to chaotic violence—with Margaret Tudor at the center.

According to James IV's will, Queen Margaret was to act as regent for the 18-month-old King James V, as long as she remained unmarried. While Scotland's parliament promptly accepted Margaret's new role, her chances of success were relatively weak. This wasn't because of her sex. For queen mothers to act as regents was a common practice, as was kings' and nobles' delegation of power to their wives. The real prerequisite for power was royal or noble status. Different issues caused Margaret's difficulties. Where most national governments of the time had some degree of military self-sufficiency, Scotland's had to depend upon the goodwill of at least one noble faction. Unlike in much of Europe, rebellion and assassination were habitual elements of factional strife rather than last resorts. Margaret's home country was known to Scots as the "old enemy." Its army had just killed not only Scotland's king but much of its nobility.

Unless she was content to be a figurehead, Margaret had two choices: establish herself as leader of an aggressively anti-English regime that could command broad support. Or ally with a minority pro-English faction headed by the 6th Earl of Angus—thereby alienating the majority of Scots on the grounds of both factional power politics and foreign policy. Margaret might not have consciously chosen the second option, but she was determined to make peace between England and Scotland. Scotland's military prostration after the Battle of Flodden made that task easy enough but Margaret found herself widely distrusted and dependent on the Angus faction. Her infatuation with Angus led her to compound the problem by marrying him—in her own

words, "against all Scotland's will" and "at my own pleasure." But while she shared her brother Henry's reckless willfulness, she lacked his ability to act on it with impunity. Scotland's privy council declared that she had forfeited the regency by marrying and replaced her with the Duke of Albany.

Albany was a grandson of King James II. His father, the first duke, was a brother of James III who had been exiled to France. The new regent had spent his entire life in France but was next in line to the Scottish throne after the child-king and Margaret's soon to be deceased younger son. His arrival with a French naval squadron as reinforcement for his Scottish supporters assured his success. While Henry VIII loudly rattled his saber on his sister's behalf, Albany was imprisoning some of her more prominent supporters. He then laid siege to Stirling Castle, where she had taken refuge with her children. Not long after its inevitable surrender, Margaret fled to England. While there she gave birth to Angus's daughter, Lady Margaret Douglas (whose son, Lord Darnley, was the second husband of Mary Queen of Scots). Angus, however, had little interest in a wife who had lost her power and remained in Scotland, transforming himself into a loyal adherent of Albany's government. He soon regained lands that had earlier been declared forfeit, then took control of Margaret's dower lands and their revenues.

Understandably regretting her marriage, Margaret tried to free herself from Angus through an expedient that made her brother look like an amateur in the art of concocting bogus annulment cases. After Flodden, a story spread throughout Scotland claiming James IV had not been killed but had secretly fled, either into hiding or to a penitential life as a pilgrim in Palestine.



Margaret initiated annulment proceedings on the grounds that James was therefore still living and her marriage to Angus thus bigamous. Though her case was promptly dismissed by the Catholic Church, Margaret continued to search for factors that might have invalidated her marriage to Angus. Her tenacity was rewarded almost a decade later, when she discovered grounds for an annulment that was granted 1527. She married again the following year and Henry VIII (then in the early stages of his relationship with Anne Boleyn) condemned her on the grounds that divorce is immoral and her new marriage was adulterous.

By that time the political situation in Scotland and the Tudor siblings' relationships to it (and to each other) had undergone drastic changes. Since Margaret's loss of the regency, Scottish politics had been dominated by three

major power groupings—centered on Albany, the 1st Earl of Arran and Angus. Both of the former were pro-French. The childless Albany was the king's heir apparent. Arran was next in line for the throne. Albany, however, would have been content to live the comfortable life of a French nobleman had circumstances not called him to Scotland and had he not been committed to three policies: 1) Maintaining rule by the House of Stuart. 2) Preserving the Franco-Scottish alliance. 3) Assuring that if James V dies his succession would not be interfered with by Arran.

He was, therefore, preferred by those outside the Arran and Angus orbits and those who favored a balance between factions. Arran was on the one hand more inclined to factional dominance, on the other hand dependent upon whatever alliance might assure his place in the succession. Angus's quest for

power was based on nothing more than his status as a leading noble and his own ambition. He could only dominate Scotland as a power behind the throne or with the support of Henry VIII—whose own goal of making the northern kingdom subservient required a powerful ally among the Scottish nobility.

In principle Henry and Margaret would both have preferred an Anglo-Scottish alliance, within which Margaret ruled Scotland as regent with Henry's support. Practical politics was a different matter. If Henry could only maintain his influence in Scotland by allowing Margaret to be marginalized then that was precisely what he would—and did—do. To Margaret, however, the only acceptable option was her own return to power as regent. If that meant joining the pro-French and anti-English factions in Scottish politics then that was a price she was willing to pay—especially once her brother had demonstrated that he considered her expendable.

Margaret was also clear in her attitudes towards the three leading men in Scotland. Though at first (while still hoping for Henry's support) she briefly reconciled with Angus, Margaret soon determined that he was her chief enemy and that crushing him would be her first order of business. To do that, she allied with Albany. Angus was charged with treason, was sentenced to death, and had his lands again declared forfeit. Whether out of humanity, to keep her future options, or both, Margaret arranged for Angus's death sentence to be commuted to exile in France. Her next step—removing Albany from power—was even easier. During one of Albany's visits to France, Margaret and Arran took charge of the twelve-year-old king and declared that he would rule in his own right, the regency ended. Few were fooled by the charade, but most Scots were happy

about the outcome until it became clear that it gave the Arran faction dominance. By then, Angus had escape from France to England. With Henry VIII's backing he entered Scotland, put himself at the head of Arran's opponents, marched on Edinburgh, seized power, gave his family members and allies a dominant role in the government and made James V his prisoner.

That need to control the king was Angus's greatest weakness. His manner of doing so was his greatest blunder. Without royal blood, Angus needed the pretense of acting on James's behalf in order to have any credibility. The transparency with which James V was in reality a prisoner made that impossible. Angus's cruelty to James forced him to choose between keeping the king a prisoner (and increasing his hostility) or losing his power entirely. When James finally broke free in 1528, after three years of failed escape attempts and open war on his behalf, Angus and his Douglas associates were forced into exile.

Margaret remained in Scotland until her death in 1541. To say the last thirteen years of her life even approached the idyllic would be a gross exaggeration. By the standards of English royalty and nobility, she actually lived in relative poverty. For a variety of reasons, she wished to be out of Scotland. But the days of coups, counter-coups, battles and flights were over. The Catholic Margaret had no place in an England where her religious had been replaced by Henry VIII's Church of England. Margaret even developed a good relationship with her son's wife, Mary of Guise. By the standards of junior descendants of the Tudors and of 16th century Scottish royalty it was a surprisingly pleasant and peaceful end to a life.

JAMES BARESEL



John de la Pole,
2nd Duke of Suffolk

John Neville,
3rd Baron Latimer

Robert Dudley,
1st Earl of Leicester

William Carey

Thomas Seymour,
1st Baron Seymour

William Stafford

Henry Stafford

Walter Devereux,
1st Earl of Essex

Christopher Blount

Edward Burgh

Thomas Stanley,
1st Earl of Derby

Edmund Tudor,
1st Earl of Richmond

James Hepburn,
4th Earl of Bothwell

Henry VIII of England

Louis XII of France

Francis II of France

Charles Brandon,
1st Duke of Suffolk

Henry Stuart,
Lord Darnley

Match each lady
with her husband
(or husbands!).
They could have had
anywhere from 1 - 4!

Bess of Hardwick

Gayle Hulme uncovers the situation of Bess, who at the end was not fiscally confined by her male relatives or husband, but utilised her hard-won fortune to forge a lasting dynastic legacy.

No one who visits Derby Cathedral today could be in any doubt that the Tudor woman interred in St Katherine's Quire beneath the magnificent alabaster tomb was a person of means and influence. The inscription on her tomb reads '...This most renowned Elizabeth Countess of Shrewsbury [Bess of Hardwick], Builder of the houses of Chatsworth, Hardwick and Oldcotes, most famous by their splendour...' Two of her houses, Chatsworth and Hardwick Hall, survive today and are a testament to Bess's wealth and power and also her ability to fight for financial independence and the determination she showed in promoting her family's dynastic ambitions. Unlike other women of her station Bess, at the end of her life, was not fiscally confined by her male relatives or husband but utilised her hard-won fortune to forge a lasting dynastic legacy, which included the creation of two Dukedoms. Here we will uncover how Bess came to occupy her unique position in 16/17th century Tudor England and how she used her vast collection of artworks to reinforce her and her family's prominence and prestige.

Bess was born to John and Elizabeth Hardwick at the then 'small manor farmhouse in Hardwick, Derbyshire (Lovell, p.17). Little is known of Bess's childhood, although records show that a family disaster befell the Hardwicks

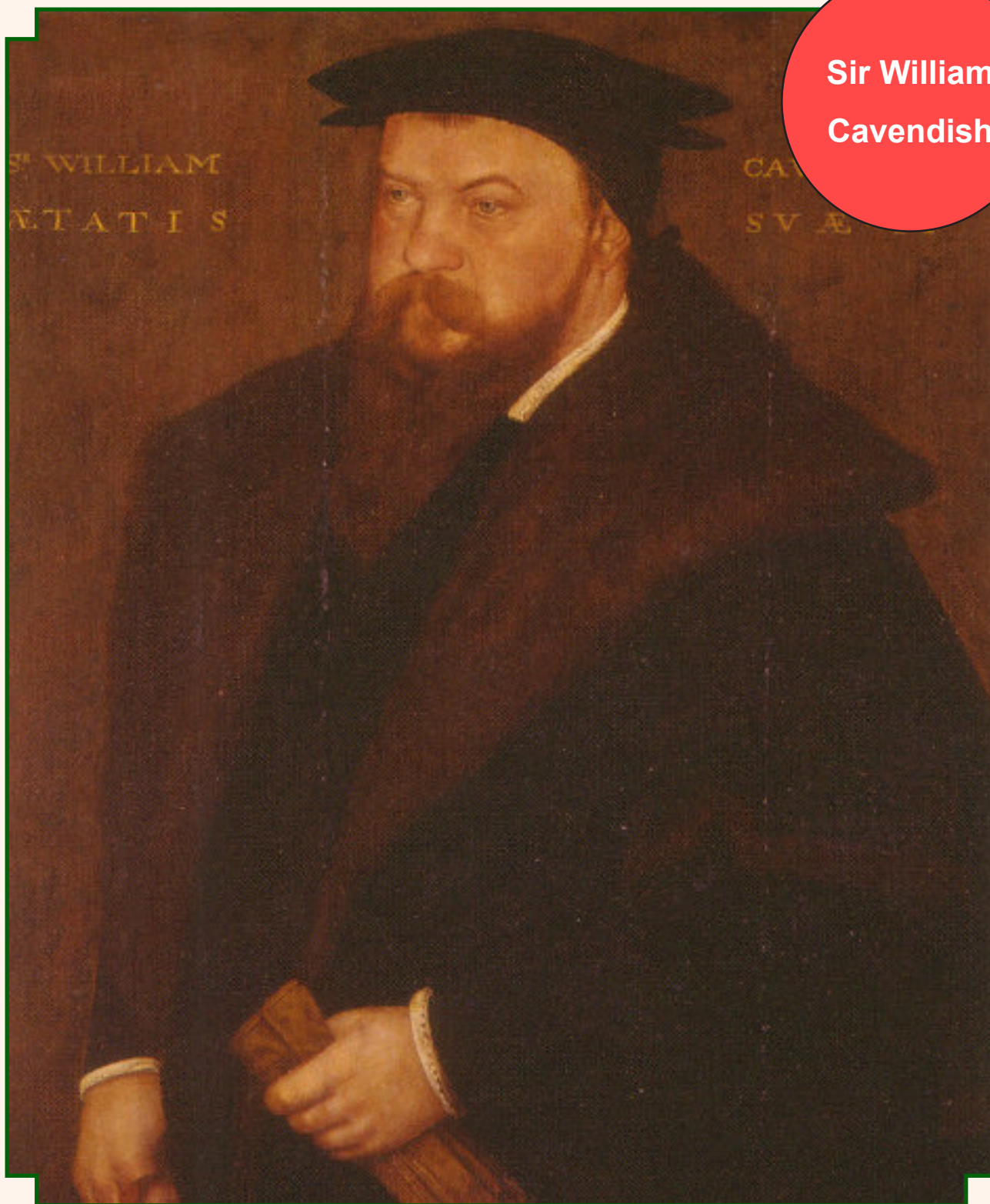
just months after Bess's birth when her father died, leaving behind his pregnant wife, Bess and her six siblings. The two years that followed proved to be uncertain times as the family were plagued by legal wrangling over whether John Hardwick had properly bequeathed his holdings to his oldest son. The case rested on whether John's brother Rodger had been promised the lands over John's son. However, in September 1530, the Office of Wards finally decided in John Hardwick's favour.

From her earliest years, Bess's upbringing followed the usual pattern for young girls of her generation and breeding. According to M S Lovell in *Bess of Hardwick: First Lady of Chatsworth*, Bess's mother used a distant familial connection with Lady Zouche (nee Gainsford) to place her daughter within her cousin's establishment at Condor Castle. Lady Zouche had previously been a Lady in Waiting to both Queen Anne Boleyn and Queen Jane Seymour. The benefits of such a connection were much sought after by the parents of gently born girls.

The contemporary evidence is sparse, but it was within this setting that Bess met and married her first husband, the teenage Robert Barlow, in c. May 1543. Although the Hardwicks and the Barlows knew each other, it seems the marriage was contracted out of financial expediency. Robert's father was

Bess of Hardwick





Sir William
Cavendish

mortally ill, and as his son was a minor, he wanted to secure the boy's future inheritance before his death. By ensuring his son's marriage to a girl whose family he knew, Robert's father could circumvent circumstances that could see his son forced to marry a woman chosen by whoever had funds and influ-

ence enough to buy his wardship. The couple did not enjoy a long union as Robert died on 24 December 1544. Once again, a member of the Hardwick family had to plead to the authorities to be granted the income they were due. Thwarted by the legal system and struggling for money, Bess eventually

reached a compromise with the owner of her brother-in-law's wardship. The income she received was less than she was legally entitled to but alleviated her financial distress.

Bess's next venture into the Tudor marriage market would be to the twice married Sir William Cavendish, who was 20 years her senior. Sir William had come from humble beginnings as a younger son, but still, he showed himself to be a shrewd operator when he managed to hold his position at Henry VIII's court after the fall of his master Cardinal Wolsey. Seamlessly transferring his skills to Thomas Cromwell, he grew rich by participating in the dissolution of the monasteries. Exploiting his position at the Court of Augmentations, he would take part in undervaluing available monasteries then purchase them at the cut-rate price. He rose further in the ranks and eventually occupied the much-coveted position of Treasurer to the King's Chamber and Privy Councillor. Personal access to the sovereign was highly prized, and as an inner member of the King's circle, riches and influence followed.

Bess found herself in the orbit of Sir William when she moved to the service of Lady Frances Grey at Bradgate Park in Leicestershire. Lady Frances was the daughter of Princess Mary (Queen of France) and a niece to Henry VIII. The pair became engaged in 1547 and married in the summer of the same year 'at Bradgate Park instead of at her own family home' (Lovell, p. 48). The marriage seems to have been happy with Bess giving birth to eight children, six of whom survived infancy. It was Bess's influence on Sir William that persuaded him to 'sell the former monastic lands...[and buy] Chatsworth

Manor [Derbyshire] for £600 in 1549 (Chatsworth). Bess found herself a widow again ten years later, although this time there was no dubiety over her settlement; her children by Sir William inherited his lands, and she inherited her husband's money - but also his debts.

Although her husband's assets had been secured for the Cavendish family, the months after Sir William's death were bleak for Bess. Not only had she lost her much-beloved husband, she may have also suffered the loss of her youngest babe in arms as, after Sir William's death, there is no reference in her correspondence about Lucrece. To make matters worse, she had six children to provide for whilst she was trying to navigate a path through financial discrepancies in her husband's accounts which had left his estate heavily indebted to the crown.

Bess's found relief from her financial and personal misery in a third marriage, this time to Sir William St Loe, Captain of Queen Elizabeth's Guard. When the queen's older half-sister had died, Bess knew that it was 'within the gift of the sovereign' (Lovell, p 117) to forgive the £5,000 debt owed to the Exchequer and Sir William knew that the revenues Chatsworth attracted were considerable and certainly worth petitioning the queen for. Their combined efforts with the young queen reached an agreement where a £1,000 fine would be paid, and the debt would be cancelled. With the threat of bankruptcy lifted, Bess would finally settle down to her new life as Lady St Loe.

After only six years of marriage, tragedy struck once more. The death of Bess's third husband was shrouded in suspicious circumstances. Bess was in

Derbyshire at the time of her husband's death. In her absence, Sir William was attended by his estranged brother Edward. The latter immediately claimed to have received documents from his dying brother, which entitled him to a lifetime interest in several of his brother's assets. There was nothing Bess could do to prove any foul play, and so she swallowed down the bitter pill of hopelessness. The financial wrangling was not over, though. This time it was Sir William's daughter from a previous marriage who took issue with her father's wishes that Bess's offspring were to be his sole beneficiaries.

In 1568 Bess contracted her fourth and final marriage, which raised her to the rank of Countess. Marriage to the extremely wealthy 6th Earl of Shrewsbury may have been, on the surface, a glittering match for Bess, but the relationship between Bess and George Talbot was at best adversarial and at worst caustic. Relations between the two plunged to such depths that, on occasion, Queen Elizabeth was forced to insist that the two remained cordial to one another. This may have been partly because for fifteen years, the parsimonious queen had bestowed both the honour and the expense of housing the exiled Mary Queen of Scots on Shrewsbury. The wily Mary Queen of Scots was not averse to pitting husband against wife, and there were frequent bitter arguments over the appropriateness of Shrewsbury's interactions with the Scottish queen. Another bone of contention was the funds that Bess was lavishing on her house at Chatsworth.

When her marriage to the Earl of Shrewsbury 'broke down acrimoniously' (English Heritage) and irrevocably in 1584, Bess fled from

Chatsworth fearing that her husband's men were poised to attack her. Now in middle age, she amassed a valuable and influential collection of fine art, which included four portraits of Elizabeth I.

On the death of Shrewsbury, she undertook the building of the Hardwick Hall that we see today. In this house, she took great care that the finest portraits in her collection were displayed in an area of Hardwick Hall to which only the most influential guests were permitted. Behind the doors of the Great High Chamber and Long Gallery were the pictures that expertly emphasised Bess's status as a vital and integral part of the Tudor Court. Dr Nigel Wright, The National Trust House and Collection Manager at Hardwick Hall, explains that 'important guests' would not have lingered in the downstairs hall or been granted access to the 'family quarters' on the middle floor. Instead, these honoured guests would have been guided past the middle floor, up the South Tower's imposing staircase, before being invited to enter the Long Gallery, where the most reputation enhancing pictures were hung.

It would be easy to conclude that Bess of Hardwick was a woman from a modest family who climbed to the top of Tudor Society on the back of marriages to noble, wealthy or well-connected men. This is to disregard the intelligence, determination and temerity of a woman who had to pursue her rights and the rights of her children three times through the male-dominated snake pit of the Tudor legal system.

Lovell, M.S.. (2005) *Bess of Hardwick: First Lady of Chatsworth*. Hachette Digital

GAYLE HULME



If you'll pardon the socioeconomic pun, there is a wealth on Tudor noblewomen. Historian Lady Anne Somerset, acclaimed biographer of Elizabeth I and daughter of the late Duke of Beaufort, wrote about her forebears

in her book "Ladies in Waiting: From the Tudors to the Present Day".

If a biography of an individual Tudor noblewoman is something you'd prefer to read over a general history, there have been some great examples in recent years. Julia Fox's "Jane Boleyn: The Infamous Lady Rochford" springs right to mind, as does Nicola Tallis's "Elizabeth's Rival" on Lettice Knollys, Countess of Leicester.

For novels, Cynthia Harrod-Eagles's "The Dark Rose" imagines the life of fictitious Tudor aristocrat Nanette Morland and her friendships with Anne Boleyn and Katherine Parr along the way. Adrienne Dillard's debut "Cor Rotto" dramatizes the life of a historical person, Mary Boleyn's daughter, Katherine Carey. The late Olivia de Havilland co-starred as a Tudor noblewoman in the vintage Hollywood movie "The Private Lives of Elizabeth and Essex," which is the sumptuous kind of joy we can expect from old costume dramas.

Gareth Russell

JANE PARKER'S LATER LIFE AT COURT

Photos and report by **Charlie Fenton**

The life of Jane Boleyn (nee Parker), Lady Rochford, has been overshadowed by that of her husband, George Boleyn, for many years, with past historians often using her as a scapegoat for his downfall alongside his sister. This misconception of her role in the Boleyns' downfall, which is slowly being overturned, has resulted in a relative neglect of her life in the period between Anne Boleyn's execution and serving Katherine Howard, who Jane was executed alongside. Her life was very uncertain at this time, with several highs and lows between Anne's death and Katherine becoming queen in 1540, which will briefly be explored in this article.

Despite many modern historians and dramas assuming she bounced back quickly after George's execution, Jane did struggle after his death. She did eventually manage to climb her way back into the king's good graces, but this was not a foregone conclusion. For a while, she was an outcast and even had to write to Thomas Cromwell to intercede on her behalf with her father-in-law, Thomas Boleyn, for help with her finances. Jane's letter to Cromwell after the downfall of her

husband and sister-in-law is a desperate one, in which she calls herself a poor 'desolate widow' and begs for financial help:

'Mayster Secretary, as a power desolate widow wythoute comfort, as to my specyall trust under God and my Prynys, I have me most humbly recommendyd unto youe; prayng youe, after your accustomed gentyll maner to all them that be in such lamentabull case as I ame in, to be meane to the Kyngs gracious Hyghnes for me for suche power stuffe and plate as my husbonde had, whome God pardon; that of hys gracious and mere lyberalyte I may have hyt to helpe me to my power lyvyng, whiche to his Hyghnes ys nothyng to be regardyd, and to me schuld be a most hygh helpe and souccor.'

Thomas did begrudgingly agree to this, although he did complain about having to pay so much to his now widowed daughter-in-law. Jane had grown from the naïve young woman she had been when she first arrived at court, she knew how to play the game now and protect herself. She was able to obtain an Act of Parliament from the King, probably with the help of Cromwell yet again, and secure the

manor of Swavesey from Thomas Boleyn. With Thomas' death in March 1539, she was also entitled to the Boleyn family seat of Blickling and held onto it for the remainder of her life. However, she had lost any chance of becoming the mistress of Hever Castle, which would have particularly hit home with the death of her father-in-law and it having reverted to the Crown.

Thomas Cromwell as well. She was still Viscountess Rochford, managing to hold onto the title after her husband's death, but that would be one of few reminders of her previous life. Jane knew she would now have to learn how to conceal her grief. She could not express it due to her husband having been executed as a traitor, however, she was described by George Cavendish in his *Metrical Visions*, with

him saying that 'I aspied a widowe in blake full woo begon'. By all accounts, she continued to dress in black for the rest of her life and so continued to silently mourn a husband she may have loved or, at the very least, cared for. This is a very different picture to the woman we often see in fiction who did not care for her husband and happily helped Cromwell build a case against him and Anne.

Remarkably, Jane does not seem to have had not lost favour with the fall of the Boleyns and adjusted well upon her return to court. One other person who returned shortly after Jane Seymour became queen was Lady Mary, Henry VIII's eldest daughter. This was one thing that Jane Parker could be happy



It was not long after this before she was invited back to court to serve the new queen, a move probably made by

came queen was Lady Mary, Henry VIII's eldest daughter. This was one thing that Jane Parker could be happy

about and, despite her connection to the Boleyn family, there is a record of several gifts being exchanged between the two, suggesting a comfortable acquaintance, if not a friendship. We know that Mary kept at least one of the gifts Jane gave her, as there is a record of a repair for a clock given to her:

'Itm pated for mending of the Clocke whiche my lade gee hadof my lady rochford. v s.'

Mary paid five shillings (around £110 in today's money) to fix a clock that Jane had previously given to her as a gift. This shows that the gift obviously must have meant something to her and reveals that, despite the differences

between her and the Boleyn family, she did not hold any grudge against Jane for being married into that family.

Jane Parker became successful at court again under Jane Seymour and this is marked by the fact she was given a New Year's gift by the Queen in 1537. Sadly, this did not last, and she was part of the short-lived queen's funeral procession after her death in October that same year. Jane was one of the most prominent women in the funeral procession, second only to Lady Mary, who she was behind in the procession and held the train for. She was one of 29 mourners, one for each year of the late Queen's life. We can-



Cleves' arrival in 1539, Jane had seen the family she had married into virtually destroyed and her future in jeopardy. She had to beg the man involved in her husband's downfall for help with securing her finances and probably to restore her position as a lady in waiting, albeit under a new queen. After reintegrating herself successfully back into court life and maintaining a friendship with Lady Mary, she saw the king's longed-for son born, before his mother tragically passed away. She must have wondered what was next, as the wheel of fortune kept turning. This life was certainly not

not know for certain how Jane felt about the late queen, but we can guess that she must have felt some pity for the woman who had finally given Henry what he wanted, only to die before she reaped any of the real benefits of being in the king's favour and firm in her position as mother of the heir.

It would be a couple of years before Jane would return to court to serve another queen, this time Anne of Cleves, and her brief return had been far from certain. Between 1536 and Anne of

that of someone who helped with and benefited from the downfall of her husband and sister-in-law, just that of another courtier trying to navigate the dangerous world of Henry VIII's court.

CHARLIE FENTON

Further Reading:

Charlie Fenton, *Jane Parker: The Downfall of Two Tudor Queens?*, Chronos Crime Chronicles (Winchester, Chronos Books, 2021)



**Thomas Howard,
3rd Duke of Norfolk**

Susan Abernethy talks about...



Elizabeth Stafford, Duchess of Norfolk

Women in history had few rights and it was their fate to comply with the wishes of men. But every now and then, it's possible to find a woman who fought back. Elizabeth Stafford managed to fight back on a personal level. She was the daughter of a Duke and married to the premier nobleman in Tudor England and wasn't about to give up any of her rights. She also had the temerity to challenge King Henry VIII in his divorce from Catherine of Aragon.

Elizabeth was born c. 1497, the eldest daughter of Edward Stafford, 3rd Duke of Buckingham and Eleanor Percy, daughter of Henry Percy, 4th Earl of Northumberland. Elizabeth lived in her parent's home until at least 1508 and her father made certain all his children had some education. In 1509, Elizabeth was appointed a lady-in-waiting to King Henry VIII's new Queen, Catherine of Aragon and went to live at court. She would serve Catherine for sixteen years, becoming her lifelong friend and holding the Queen in great affection and high esteem. Elizabeth carried Catherine's daughter the Princess Mary to the font during her christening.

The Duke of Buckingham had promised Elizabeth she could marry his ward, Ralph Neville, 4th Earl of Westmorland in December 1512. Elizabeth and Ralph were in love and devoted to each other. Thomas Howard, Earl of Surrey's first wife had recently died and he was looking for another wife and approached the Duke of Buckingham.

Buckingham tried to get Howard to marry one of his other daughters but he insisted on marrying the eldest daughter because this brought more wealth, power and prestige. Elizabeth's dowry amounted to two thousand marks and she was promised an income

of five hundred marks per annum although Howard never paid the jointure. The marriage to Ralph Neville was called off and she married Howard.

Elizabeth continued to serve the Queen while having five children; two sons, Henry and Thomas and three daughters, Mary, Katherine and Muriel who died young. She divided her time between court and the family home. As Countess of Surrey, her local duties included visiting estates nearby, joining hunting parties and participating in pilgrimages. She had little time to devote to her children and both Elizabeth and her husband were strict disciplinarians.

In 1520, Thomas was appointed Lord Lieutenant of Ireland and the entire family arrived in Dublin where Elizabeth would have a hard time adjusting. The household had food shortages and dysentery was rampant with plague arriving in the summer. Due to the food shortages and lack of lodging for his troops, Thomas housed soldiers in the family home. Thomas asked for permission to send Elizabeth and the children into Wales or Lancashire to escape the plague but was refused.

Elizabeth's father was executed for treason in May 1521. Being the daughter of an at-

tainted and treasonous father put Elizabeth in a precarious position. The Howards returned to England and when Thomas' father died in May 1524, he became the Duke of Norfolk. At this point, Elizabeth's marriage was solid.

In 1526, Norfolk began to openly flaunt his mistress, Bess Holland, giving her clothes, jewelry and love which wasn't unusual for an aristocratic male in the sixteenth century. What was out of character was Elizabeth's reaction. Instead of accepting her husband's mistress, she chose to fight. She called Bess Holland 'a churl's daughter', the 'washer of my nursery', a 'drab', and a 'harlot'. Despite this tension, Bess Holland was named a lady-in-waiting to the King's new love and niece of the Duke, Anne Boleyn.

Elizabeth inserted herself in the King's effort to cast aside Catherine of Aragon to marry Anne Boleyn, becoming an influential adherent of the Queen. Elizabeth supported the Queen in principal because her husband openly supported Anne Boleyn, who took precedence over the Duchess of Norfolk at the Christmas celebrations at Greenwich in 1529, humiliating Elizabeth. Beginning in 1530, Elizabeth would pass on information she gained from spying on her husband to Catherine and she would speak publicly in the Queen's favor. Elizabeth sent the Queen secret communications from the papal emissary hidden in a scented orange.

In 1531, Catherine of Aragon was banished from court, which reduced her faction's influence. Elizabeth continued to explicitly impugn Anne Boleyn's ancestry and wrangled with Anne over her interference in organizing marriages for her children. Anne had used her influence to arrange the marriage of Elizabeth's eldest son Henry, Earl of Surrey to the penniless Frances de Vere, daughter of the Earl of Oxford and persuaded King Henry to allow Elizabeth's

daughter Mary to marry Henry's illegitimate son Henry Fitzroy, Duke of Richmond.

Anne warned her to stop tampering in affairs at court but Elizabeth brazenly continued to act as an intermediary between Catherine and the Imperial ambassador Chapuys. When Henry learned of this, he banished Elizabeth from court. After a period of exile, she returned to court and became even bolder in her resistance. In September 1532, Elizabeth refused to attend the elevation of Anne Boleyn to the peerage as Marquess of Pembroke, and declined to show up for Anne's coronation on June 1, 1533 or the christening of the Princess Elizabeth in September. Openly attacking and denouncing the relationship of her husband with Bess Holland, she embarrassed Thomas and he resolved to separate from her.

In 1529, Elizabeth's brother Henry, Lord Stafford, had assisted her in reclaiming lands from her jointure. A few years later, as Elizabeth and Norfolk's marriage became a public scandal, Stafford condemned Elizabeth for refusing to allow Norfolk to move his mistress into the primary home. Stafford was attempting to recover lands which had been forfeited by his attainted father and needed Norfolk's help.

Stafford was mortified Elizabeth aggravated the King by not accepting his advice regarding her marriage and became frightened by Elizabeth's 'wild language' which included disapproving of Henry VIII's attempts to divorce Catherine of Aragon. Both Cromwell and Norfolk asked Stafford to take Elizabeth into his home in 1533 but he refused.

In 1534, Norfolk came home from court where he had suffered some political setbacks only to find Elizabeth in a rage over his relationship with Bess Holland. Norfolk locked her up in her chamber and took away all her jewels and apparel. Bess Holland was installed as the Duke's official mistress and

moved into some recently remodeled rooms in the Howard family home of Kenninghall while Elizabeth was expelled to the manor of Redbourne in Hertfordshire, a residence Norfolk rented from the Crown. She had twenty servants and £200 to live on. She was not allowed out to visit friends and no one was allowed to visit her. This state of affairs would last ten years.

In a series of letters to Thomas Cromwell, she accused Norfolk of physical abuse. On four occasions, Norfolk had her women bind her till blood came out of her fingers' ends, pinnacled her and sat on her chest until she spat blood. She accused him of assaulting her and dragging her from her bed after she gave birth to her daughter Mary. Her anxiety was high, believing she would be poisoned if she returned home due to her husband's love for his mistress. In a letter to Cromwell, in answer to his wife's accusations, the Duke threatened to beat her.

On two occasions, she tried to reconcile with her husband and he refused. In 1535, she managed to get away to Dunstable where the King was visiting. The King advised her to write a 'gentle' letter to her husband which she did but Norfolk's answers were threatening. After this she vowed never to plead her case again with the King or anyone else.

Norfolk begged her for a divorce on numerous occasions, promising to return all of

her jewels and clothes and to give her some of his own plate. She staunchly refused. Whether or not these accusations of physical abuse had merit, the law was on Norfolk's side and Tudor society would have found Elizabeth's behavior very strange. Her children even sided with their father.

Relations between Elizabeth and her brother eventually improved, with Stafford sending his daughter Susan to live with her. He later asked her to take his daughter Dorothy under her wing. In the last years of King Henry VIII's reign, the Duke of Norfolk and his son Henry would fall from favor. Both were arrested for treason and Elizabeth testified against her husband regarding her physical abuse.

Henry Howard was executed on January 19, 1547. The Duke was attainted by statute without trial and King Henry approved his death by execution on January 27. Henry died the next day and the Duke was spared. Elizabeth witnessed his release from the Tower after Mary I pardoned him on her accession to the throne. Norfolk died in August 1554. Elizabeth died on November 11, 1558 at Lambeth and was buried in the Howard Chapel in the Church of St. Mary-at-Lambeth.

SUSAN ABERNETHY

Further reading:

"Henry VIII's Last Victim: The Life and Times of Henry Howard, Earl of Surrey" by Jessie Childs,
"English Aristocratic Women 1450-1550: Marriage and Family, Property and Careers" by Barbara J.

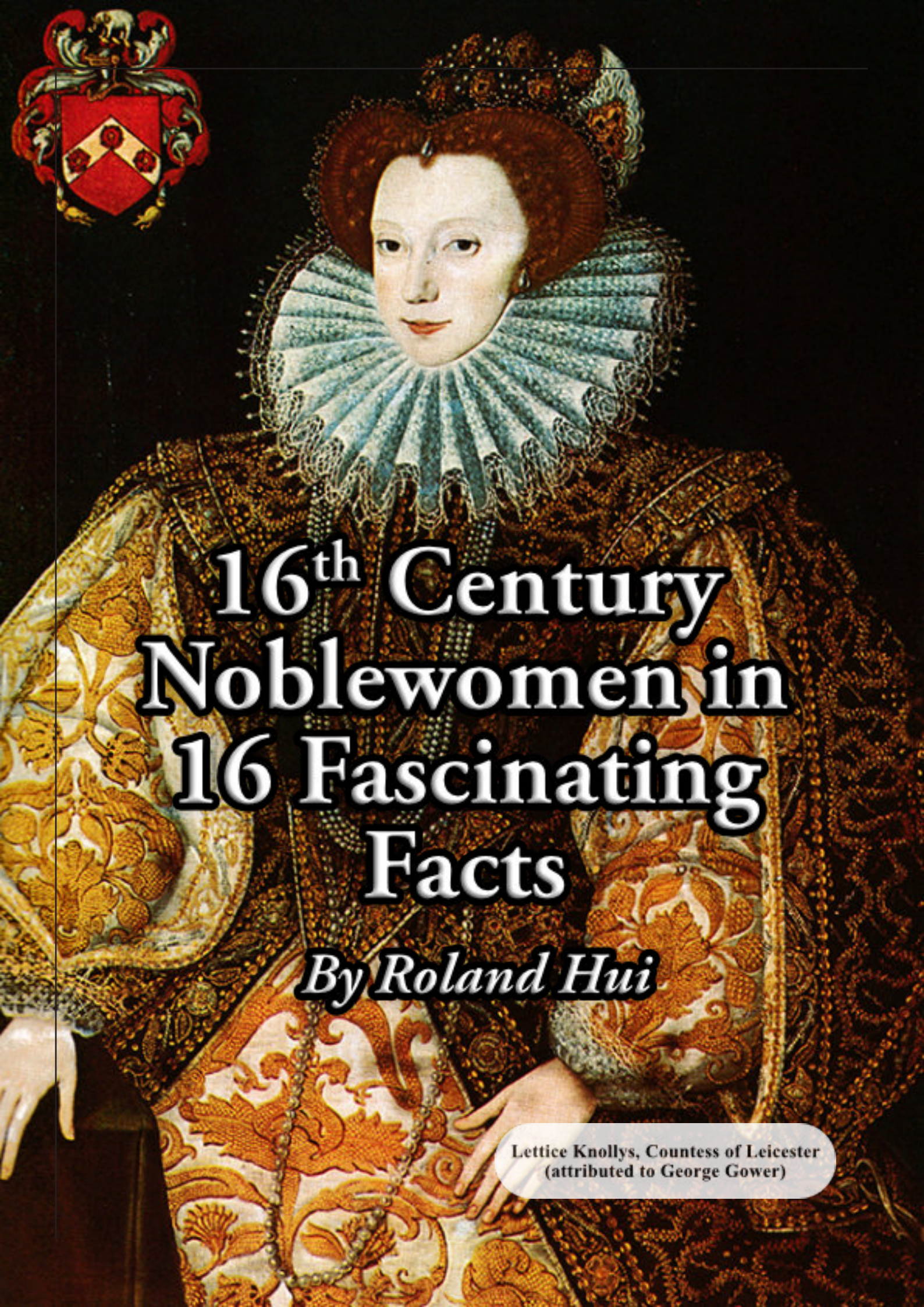
Harris,

"Bastard Prince: Henry VIII's Lost Son" by Beverley A. Murphy,

Entry on Elizabeth Howard (nee Stafford) in the Oxford Dictionary of National Biography written by Michael A.R. Graves,

Entry on Thomas Howard, 3rd Duke of Norfolk in the Oxford Dictionary of National Biography written by Michael A.R. Graves

"The House of Howard, Volume 1 and 2" by Gerald Brenan and Edward Phillips Stratham



16th Century Noblewomen in 16 Fascinating Facts

By Roland Hui

Lettice Knollys, Countess of Leicester
(attributed to George Gower)

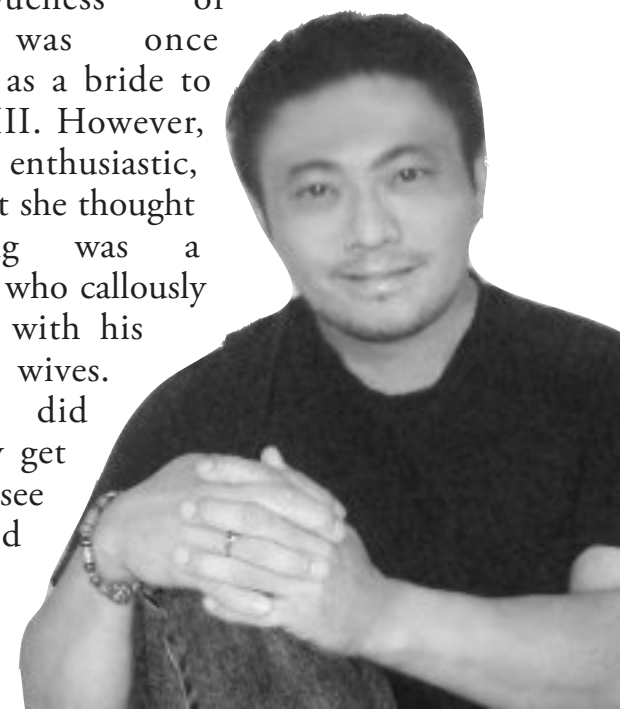
1 Despite being a cousin of Elizabeth I, Lettice Knollys, Countess of Leicester (a granddaughter of Mary Boleyn), incurred her enmity. Initially, the two were on good terms with Lettice being described as a favourite of the queen. But when Robert Dudley, whom Elizabeth was always affectionate with but never married for reasons both personal and political, began courting Lettice, Elizabeth became very jealous. Matters were made worse when the two wed in secret in 1578. Dudley was threatened with imprisonment, and Lettice was banished from court. The queen eventually forgave her 'Sweet Robin', but never her cousin. After Dudley's death, Lettice's son by her first marriage, Robert Devereux, Earl of Essex, was able to persuade Elizabeth to receive his mother. The meeting was brief and frosty, with the queen still harbouring resentment towards Lettice for marrying the man they both loved.

2 María de Salinas, Baroness Willoughby de Eresby was Katherine of Aragon's closest friend and greatest comfort. When she was about 11, she accompanied the 15-year-old Katherine to England for her marriage to Arthur Tudor. But the prince died after a few months, and Katherine, as a young widow living in a strange new country, endured years of hardship and uncertainty which Maria shared with her. Things looked up when Katherine was finally married to Arthur's brother, Henry, who ascended the throne in 1509. Maria also became a bride in 1516 when she accepted the hand of William Willoughby, Baron Willoughby de Eresby. Their daughter Katherine (later Duchess of Suffolk and an ardent Protestant in the reign of Elizabeth I) was born in 1519. Maria's former mistress Queen Katherine was later divorced by Henry VIII, and was banished

from court. By the end of 1535, it was evident that she was dying. Maria was determined to be by her side at her last moments. She made her way to Kimbolton Castle in Cambridgeshire by herself, and after lying to the queen's custodian that she had injured herself from falling off her horse, she was allowed in where she made straight for Katherine's room. There, Maria bolted herself inside and stayed with her old friend until she passed away on 7 January 1536.

3 The ring that might have saved a life. In 1601, Robert Devereux, Earl of Essex, was sentenced to death for raising a rebellion against Elizabeth I. Prior to his treason, the ageing queen was very fond of Essex, and according to legend, had given him a ring telling him that should he ever displease her, he had only to forward it to her and all would be forgiven. On the eve of his execution, Essex sent the ring, but it was intercepted by his enemy, the Countess of Nottingham. She secretly kept it, and the earl went to the block. Later when she was on her deathbed, the countess confessed all to Elizabeth, The queen was stunned. She told the dying woman that while God may forgive her, she herself never would.

4 Christina of Denmark, Duchess of Milan was once proposed as a bride to Henry VIII. However, she was enthusiastic, saying that she thought the king was a bluebeard who callously did away with his previous wives. Christina did eventually get to see England





Christina of Denmark
(by Antonio Campi)

though. During the reign of Queen Mary, she accompanied her cousin Philip of Spain for a visit. Christina got to meet the queen who might have been her stepdaughter had she accepted Henry VIII's

proposal, but Mary herself was wary of her. Philip was Mary's husband, and he was said to be paying much attention to the attractive Christina. When the duchess finally left England, Mary felt much relief.

5 Elizabeth Howard, Countess of Wiltshire, the mother of Anne Boleyn, is a shadowy figure with little documentation about her life. But what is known is that she and her daughter had a close relationship. When Cardinal Wolsey was in disgrace and surrendered Hampton Court to Henry VIII, Anne took her mother on a sightseeing tour of the palace to inspect the cardinal's riches he left behind. Elizabeth also attended Anne's coronation in the summer of 1533. She was seen riding in a carriage with the Dowager Duchess of Norfolk. Sadly, Anne fell from power three years later on charges of high treason. During her arrest, she expressed concern for her mother, saying that the countess would 'die of sorrow' for her sake.

6 A Tudor family feud - the Duke and Duchess of Norfolk had a terrible marriage to say the least.

Much of this was attributed to the duke's philandering; Thomas Howard was sleeping with his wife's laundress Bess Holland. Instead of turning a blind eye as most women were expected to do at the time, Elizabeth Stafford made much complaint. In retaliation, she was locked up by her husband, and even physically abused. She claimed that he once dragged her out of bed after childbirth and threatened her with a dagger. On another occasion, Elizabeth said that Thomas ordered his servants to tie her up and sit on her until she bled. The duke denied her allegations, and the two lived apart and never reconciled. When the duke was accused of high treason in 1546, Elizabeth very willingly co-operated with the prosecution. The two were later united in death - well in a sense. On Thomas Howard's funeral monument at Framlingham, he is shown lying next to his estranged wife, but in actuality, he was buried by himself. Upon her decease later, Elizabeth was interred at Lambeth instead.

7 Margaret of Austria, the daughter of the Holy Roman Emperor Maximilian I, knew two of Henry VIII's wives intimately. As a young lady, Margaret went to the Spanish court to wed Prince John, the son and heir of Ferdinand and Isabella of Spain. The marriage was brief as the prince died of an illness after six months. Margaret became friends with John's sister, Katherine of Aragon, and even taught her French, as Elizabeth of York (Katherine's mother-in-law to be) wanted her to be able to converse well with her fiancé Prince Arthur. After she became regent of the Netherlands in 1507, Margaret welcomed a young Anne Boleyn to her court in 1513. Anne stayed with Margaret for a year until she was then sent to France.



Margaret of Austria
(by an Unknown Artist)

8 Lady Jane Dormer was born of English gentry but later became a Spanish duchess. As a young woman, Jane served Queen Mary who had a special affection for her, and was reluctant to see her go away when she accepted a proposal of marriage from the Duke of Feria, an attendant upon Philip of Spain. After the accession of the Protestant Queen Elizabeth, Jane was known for her sympathies towards English Catholics persecuted for their faith in her former country. In her later years, Jane's memories of her life in England were set down by a biographer, and they remain an important document of events at the Tudor court.

9 Mary Tudor, Duchess of Suffolk had a great falling out with her brother King Henry VIII over his second marriage. Mary was close to her sister-in-law Katherine of

Aragon, and she was appalled when her brother decided to put away his wife and wed Anne Boleyn. The duchess was said to be particularly upset over the seating arrangement of a royal banquet. Anne, as the king's mistress, was put next to Henry VIII giving her precedence over all the other ladies present. Mary was offended as she herself outranked Anne as the king's sister, as the former Queen of France, and now as a duchess. Anne had even been one of her ladies while in France. Anne's rising star set up a tense situation at court. There was even a public brawl between the Duke of Suffolk's followers and those of the Duke of Norfolk, who was Anne's uncle. Mary eventually retired from courtly life, and when she died in 1533, it is uncertain whether she and her brother ever properly made up.

10 Frances Brandon, Duchess of Suffolk was the queen who might have been. According to the will of Henry VIII, should his children (Edward, Mary, and Elizabeth) each die without direct heirs, the throne would pass to the descendants of his sister Mary Tudor. But when Edward VI was dying in 1553, he disregarded his father's order and disinherited his two sisters. The crown, he decided, would go to their cousin Lady Jane Grey, Frances's eldest daughter. It was Edward's hope to secure an eventual Protestant male succession by Jane's future



The Tomb of Frances Brandon, Duchess of Suffolk (Westminster Abbey)

sons. By the boy-king's decree, Frances was thus snubbed in favour of her own daughter. It is not known if she willingly agreed to this upset of the succession or not, but she had no choice but to accept Edward's wishes. By letting Jane assume her place, Frances ultimately saved her own life. After Princess Mary won the throne, poor Jane was executed months later.

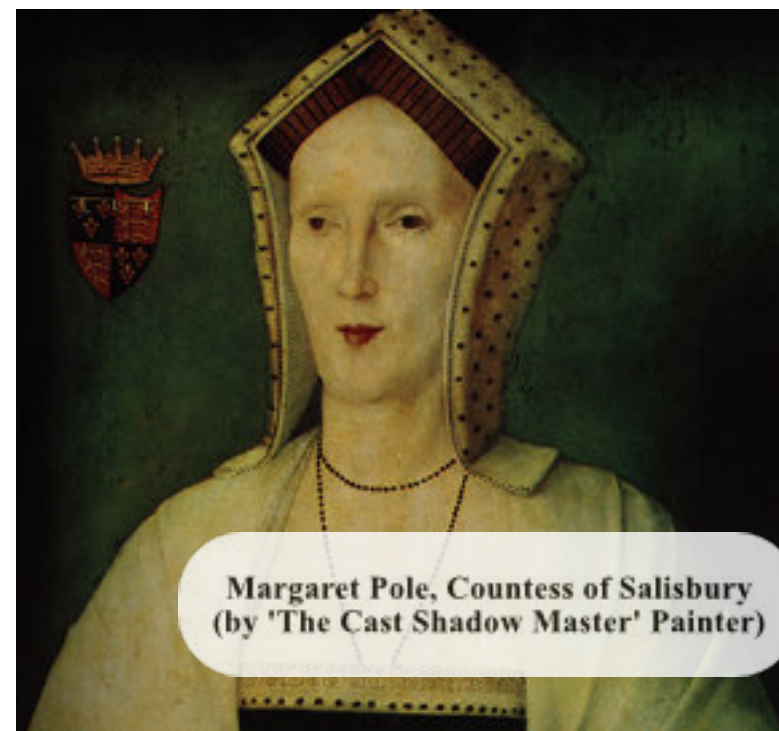
11 The Dowager Duchess of Norfolk found herself in hot water during the disgrace of Queen Katheryn Howard. Agnes Tilney had been put in charge of a number of young ladies of her family, including her step-granddaughter, Katheryn Howard. The old duchess was either too lax or too ignorant of the goings-on under her roof, as some of the girls - including Katheryn - indulged in love affairs with the young men of the household. After Katheryn became queen as the fifth wife of Henry VIII, she fell into ruin when her past caught up with her. During a government investigation into the queen's time with her step-grandmother, Agnes panicked. She sent a servant to court as a spy to see what was being uncovered, and she even made inquiries as to whether she herself could be legally indicted in Katheryn's treasonable adultery. The duchess also secretly went about unlocking the baggage left behind by Francis Dereham (one of the men accused with the queen) to see if there was incriminating evidence. Most likely, Agnes sought to destroy it, though she would claim she was merely helping the authorities. Along with many of Katheryn's relatives, Agnes was arrested and put in the Tower of London. Luckily, they were all let go afterwards unlike the tragic Katheryn who was beheaded.

12 In her brief life of twenty years, Lady Jane Seymour, the daughter of Edward Seymour, Lord Protector of England under Edward VI, was a remarkable young lady. When she was about 9 years old, she and her equally precocious young sisters, Margaret and Anne, composed the highly praised Hecatodistichon, a poem in Latin celebrating Margaret of Angoulême, the sister of King Francis I of France, known for her patronage of the arts and of religious reform. Lady Jane was also remembered for her important part in the affair of Lady Katherine Grey. When Katherine, the sister of the tragic 'nine days' queen', fell in love with Jane's brother Edward, Earl of Hertford, Jane did much for the lovers. She arranged their secret meetings at court, and in defiance of Queen Elizabeth (who looked upon the marriages of her relatives as affairs of State), helped to get them wed in private. The marriage would later prove tragic as Katherine and Edward were forced apart never to see each other again. Jane did not live to see their unhappiness as she died shortly before the scandal was made public.

13 Elizabeth Hardwick, Countess of Shrewsbury (or Bess of Hardwick as she is more commonly known) was put in charge of Mary Queen of Scots for part of her English captivity. At first the countess and the exiled Scottish queen got on very well. They spent time together gossiping and working on embroideries (many of which still survive today). But after fifteen years together, their forced close proximity led to much ill will between the two women. Mary accused Bess of being disloyal to her mistress Queen Elizabeth, while Bess fought back with allegations that Mary was having an affair with her husband the Earl of Shrewsbury. Eventually, Elizabeth had no choice but to

place the Queen of Scotland with another gaoler. Interestingly, Bess, with her eyes on the crown as Elizabeth remained childless, arranged a secret marriage between one of her daughters and Charles Stuart, the brother-in-law of Mary of Scots and a descendent of King Henry VII. Their child was Lady Arbella Stuart whose claim to the throne would give her much unhappiness in her life.

14 Contrary to what many tour guides or Beefeaters say about Margaret Pole, Countess of Salisbury at the Tower of London, she was not chased around by an axe-wielding headsman resulting in her grisly end. The old countess (she was nearing 70) was arrested when her son Reginald Pole wrote a devastating critique of Henry VIII's break from the Church of Rome. As payback, Margaret was accused of treason with the rest of her family and condemned to death. She was finally taken to the block in 1541, and as the story went, she refused to lay down her head on it as she was no traitor she exclaimed, and had to be run down by the headsman. But in reality, Margaret calmly and resignedly accepted her fate. However, the executioner was an inexperienced young man who 'hacked her head and shoulders to pieces in the most pitiful manner' as described by an ambassador.



Margaret Pole, Countess of Salisbury (by 'The Cast Shadow Master' Painter)

15 Jane Parker, Lady Rochford, the wife of George Boleyn, remains controversial. She appears in many works of fiction and even historical studies as a malicious woman who brought about the death of her husband and his sister Queen Anne by accusing them of incest together. But it is actually unclear what role - if any - Jane actually played. If she did indeed testify for the authorities, she may well have been forced to give them incriminating evidence even if untrue, or her words were twisted as to make Anne and George appear guilty. Jane had nothing to gain by the fall of the Boleyns, and she was forced to write to the king's great minister Thomas Cromwell asking for aid as a 'poor desolate widow'. Nonetheless, her reputation, whether it was deserved or not, was blackened further through her subsequent association with Katheryn Howard. In 1542, Jane was executed, along with the queen, as an accessory to her alleged adultery.

16 According to Lady Jane Grey, her mother-in-law was a monster-in-law! Although it was initially agreed that Jane and her new husband Guildford Dudley would wait to consummate their recent marriage on account of their youth, Jane Guildford, Duchess of Northumberland, insisted otherwise. She demanded that her daughter-in-law come live with her new family and begin co-habiting with Guildford as man and wife. A harried Jane later accused the duchess of trying to poison her during this time. In July 1553 when Jane was proclaimed Queen of England, another family row erupted. She refused to make her husband king as he demanded, and as a result, his angry mother ordered him to stop sleeping with Jane.

ROLAND HUI



The Portraiture of Queen Jane Seymour

by Elizabeth Jane Timms

Which one to wear? This question of which cap to choose was put by Wendy Barrie's Jane Seymour to her ladies in the 1933 British film directed by Alexander Korda, *The Private Life of Henry VIII*. The choice had narrowed down to either the velvet coif or the pearl cap. Unable to accept the universal recommendation of her women, Queen Jane breaks into the King's rooms during an audience and asks him to make the decision.

WITH THAT characteristic chivalry which personified perfectly how the historical Henry VIII saw himself, Charles Laughton's Henry VIII calls his third wife a pearl and chooses the pearl cap. The scene in fact, exposes several real truths. Pearls do indeed feature in Jane Seymour's portraiture, as does a decision of taste to adopt one particular type of headdress over another, for reasons that may have been political as much as they were possibly also, psychological. I have sought to parallel what we know of Jane Seymour with an analysis of her contemporary portraits and interpret her life in particular, through her costume.

The most recognisable portrait of Queen Jane Seymour in her own right is of course, that by Hans Holbein the Younger, today housed in the Picture Gallery of the Kunsthistorisches Museum, Vienna. Displayed in Hall IX, Jane Seymour is far from Tudor England. Her portrait hangs in the company of other masterly examples of Dutch, Flemish and German genius - a silent royal court, which includes Albrecht Dürer's 1519 portrait of the Emperor Maximilian I, Lucas Cranach the Elder's 1530s group of Princesses Sibylla, Emilia and Sidonia of Saxony, and Holbein's 1541 portrait of a merchant.

Crucially for us, Jane Seymour's portrait is thought to have been executed at or around the time of her marriage to Henry VIII; in other words, painted during her lifetime.

The preparatory study for this portrait of Jane by Holbein forms the basis for several of his paintings, as well as the general inspiration for the majority of later engravings. The original of this study survives in the Royal Library at Windsor. The Holbein drawings featured in the important Tudor exhibition of 1890 of which Queen Victoria was patron, at the New Gallery. The listing for Jane's study was catalogued as No. 497, "Queen Jane Seymour (?)" hung chronologically next to Holbein's drawing of Anne Boleyn. (1) The study in the Royal Library is on pale pink paper and executed in black and coloured chalk. Unlike the portrait in Vienna which is three-quarter length, the Holbein study is half-length and shows the distinctive placing of the hands, which Holbein replicates in the three-quarter portrait. There is the less-fashionable but unmistakably English gable hood, although there are no jewels to adorn it and the Queen's remaining jewellery is merely suggested, with the finer details saved for the portrait. What is perhaps striking most about the Holbein preparatory study, is the fact that Jane's eyes appear slightly

larger, with a near-to surprised look. Here is a young woman whose likeness may not even have been recorded but for the way that the year 1536 altered Jane's destiny, the death of Catherine of Aragon precipitating the fall of Anne Boleyn.

For Holbein seems to have captured something of Jane Seymour's famous modesty in her pose. She is undoubtedly a Queen in her dress, yet retains something of the air of a Queen's lady-in-waiting – precisely what she used to be. Indeed, it is her royal marriage which alone is responsible for what is now, an exceedingly rich appearance; the Kunsthistorisches Museum suggests that Jane's queenly portrait conveys a certain impression of wearing her jewels and costly gown, as if she remains unmoved by them.

(2) Court etiquette of not being permitted to look at the King is interesting to consider, when we look how Holbein has placed Jane, for we are not permitted to look at her. With the all the artistic propaganda of the royal image, he presents her as he surely imagines Henry VIII wishes his 'very modest' queen to be depicted. In the words of the celebrated poet Wyatt, she has a certain 'Noli me tangere [Do not touch me], for Caesar's I am', though this line from his poem has an understood connection with Anne Boleyn, not Jane Seymour.

Jane's costume is royal and therefore also, subtly representative of possession. In the political speech of costume, it is clear from the richness of her appearance, to whom she belongs. In keeping with the royal ideology of Henry VIII, everything that belonged to him had to reflect his magnificence and this of course, extended to the costume of his queen, just like the furnishing of his rooms, sumptuously hung with costly tapestries. As the King's image was also 'fashioned' through his clothing, so the costume of Queen Jane Seymour must have fed into this visual process.

Holbein's mature design for a magnificent gold cup for Queen Jane is held at the Ashmolean Museum, Oxford, whilst a skilled preparatory study for it is preserved in the British Museum; this exquisitely

beautiful example of Holbein's craftsmanship survived into the Stuart Age but was melted down in 1629 by Charles I, to supplement his expenses. (3) Given the outstanding artistic taste of Charles I, we must assume that the Stuart king was indeed in some considerable need, that he should agree to the sacrifice of an object of such supreme historic worth. Whilst there is no evidence for this, it is even possible that Holbein may have taken loose inspiration for the gilt cup from his portraiture of Queen Jane, as the cup is studded with jewels on its rims, just as the borders of her neckline and English hood are in the Kunsthistorisches portrait, as with the Royal Library drawing. Perhaps significantly, the cup has pendant pearls as in her portrait, which Jane wears prominently at her throat. The gold cup repeats Jane's chosen personal motto of 'Bound to obey and serve' at its lid and base, as if underlining its absolute importance: here was a wife who considered herself committed to obedience. In that year of three queens – 1536 – both Catherine of Aragon and Anne Boleyn had in different ways, demonstrated characters which were anything other than submissive. Jane was determined to be different, a wise choice for any woman given her new husband's previous marital experiences. For when Jane did in fact come as close as she did to defiance – pleading for the monasteries – Henry sharply reprimanded her not to 'meddle' in his affairs. In other words, Jane was forcibly reminded to hold true to her motto.

We might recall the King's original gift to Jane Seymour of a letter enclosed with golden sovereigns, which Jane had refused, inspiring that perfect role-play of respectability which followed – a chaste courtship of his mistress 'in the presence of some of her relatives'. It was precisely this behaviour of Jane – she had acted 'very modestly'. This was totally different to the bewitchingly interesting Anne Boleyn, although both had initially resisted the King's advances. In reminding Henry VIII that she was a 'gentlewoman of fair and honourable lineage without reproach', Jane Seymour appealed to the

King's chivalry and reminded him of her innocence, thereby making Henry defend her as a knight, against the advances of his own passions. Indeed, Jane Seymour probably became interesting to Henry VIII precisely because she represented a characteristic contrast to her predecessor - the King's interest spurred on in this case, by the sheer absence of fascination. It was well put by Antonia Fraser, who pointed out that Henry VIII had been attracted by Anne Boleyn after the pious Catherine of Aragon and probably was afterwards attracted by Jane's virtue as part of the same pattern. (4) It is the view of the present author that if we carry this idea further, it seems like a game of opposites was played out throughout the whole of Henry's complicated marital history: each time, the woman he married was the exact opposite of her successor. Given Henry VIII's experiences, he chose his next wife to be different to his last one - apart from Anne of Cleves, who had been Cromwell's choice rather than his own. As to Jane, by refusing the golden sovereigns, she in fact, won the Sovereign himself and the evidence shows that her 'very modest' behaviour only increased Henry's attraction.

The Imperial Ambassador, Eustace Chapuys considered Jane 'no great beauty'. Holbein's portrait would appear to confirm a certain serenity of character. He drew delicate attention to Jane's famously fair, even 'white' colouring, by concentrating on the rich materials of her costume. An equivalent might be found in the Victorian period, where it was considered desirable to be both 'pale and interesting'. Importantly – in contrast to the whitening methods that came to be employed by Henry VIII's second daughter, the future Elizabeth I – Jane Seymour's pale complexion would almost certainly have been naturally so, which emphasises a sense of purity and transparency, something important in an age that drew direct connection between the outer appearance and the inner character. 'Whiteness' also in itself, has an ancient visual symbolism for virginity, something shared in jewellery language by pearls.

Nor was Jane's face 'painted'. We might for example, recall the pleasure experienced by Henry VII at Dogmersfield, when a young Princess Catherine of Aragon's veil was lifted and he saw for the first time, that 'sweet face' with its pale complexion, as may have been captured by the artist Michael Sittow. Jane's chosen badge of the crowned phoenix - emerging from a burning castle burgeoning with Tudor roses – may also be visually representative of chastity. It is also worth emphasising also, that Jane's predecessor, Anne Boleyn's complexion had been sallow – or as it was described more tellingly, 'not so whitely as... above all we may esteem'. (5)

Jane's impression is of quietness and purity, even coyness - appropriate for one who so jealously guarded her reputation. The position of Jane's hands – no easy pose to attempt – is also suggestive of restraint and is a virtuous, 'closed' body language. Tudor court costume was both sumptuous and stifling, due to its style and numerous layers, naturally restricting the woman. The quintessentially English hood reveals her high forehead; there is no sign of hair, perhaps because the hairline was often be plucked during this period. (6) Her appearance is certainly closer to a Catherine of Aragon than an Anne Boleyn, recalling earlier English queens, (7) even Henry VIII's own mother in this connection, Elizabeth of York, whose tomb effigy shows her wearing a medieval hood.

The provenance of the Royal Library drawing is catalogued in the Royal Collection in detail. The drawing was owned by Henry VIII and transferred to Edward VI - his son by Jane - in 1547 on his death. It subsequently became the property of Henry FitzAlan, 12th Earl of Arundel, who willed the drawing to John, Lord Lumley, in 1580. It has been suggested that Lord Lumley may have left it to Henry, Prince of Wales in 1609 and that it later passed to his younger brother Prince Charles, on the death of the latter in 1612; as such, it entered the great treasury of Charles I's unparalleled art collection. Information in the Royal Collection

states that in 1627/8 the drawing was then exchanged with Philip Herbert, 4th Earl of Pembroke, who gave it to Thomas Howard, 14th Earl of Arundel. It remained in the Arundel collection, until Charles II acquired it sometime before 1675. (8) It remains in the Royal Library at Windsor Castle, an appropriate ending for this study's story, for it was at Windsor that Henry VIII willed his body to be placed next to that of Queen Jane Seymour, his 'entirely beloved' consort who had predeceased him in 1537. The Holbein study is dated in the Royal Collection as around 1536/7; the Vienna Kunsthistorisches portrait to precisely the same period. As stated, it has been identified as a picture made at or around the time of her marriage to Henry VIII, linking it by date with the picture of Henry VIII aged about forty-five by Holbein in the Thyssen Collection in Lugano, although there is no evidence to support the suggestion that they could have been painted as a pair. Both were in fact, historically reunited with their son, the toddler Edward VI, now in the collections of the National Gallery of Art in Washington. This formed a family re-grouping impossible in lifetime but which took place artistically, as part of Tate Britain's Holbein in England exhibition between September 2006 and January 2007, which focused on the two main periods of Holbein's activity in London; his portrait of Jane was made during the second of those working periods, between 1532 and 1543. (9) It is pleasant to observe that this reunion of Henry VIII, his Queen and Prince Edward – from across the United States, Lugano and Vienna - took place in the former Tudor capital of London.

According to information at the Kunsthistorisches Museum, Jane Seymour's portrait was recorded already in the museum collections in 1720. (10) This leaves the natural question as to how Jane's portrait made a journey of this kind and why it found its way to Vienna. According to the Kunsthistorisches Museum, the portrait may be that same 'Profile, showing a Queen of England', so described in Karel van

Mander's famous "Schilder-boek" in 1604 of what he saw in the Warmoestraat in Amsterdam; significantly, the Kunsthistorisches Museum mentions that the picture was probably part of the collections of the 'Graf' [Earl] of Arundel in 1654; which may link the portrait's provenance with the story of Holbein's study of Jane, now in the Royal Library. Thomas, 14th Earl of Arundel was a great collector and as we know, included Holbein's drawings among his artistic interests. An inventory of the paintings he had collected was made in 1655 and published in Cambridge by Mary, Lady Hervey as 'The Life, Correspondence and Collections of Thomas Howard, Earl of Arundel' in 1921. Consulting this book, the present author found a listing in the Arundel Inventory of 1655 published by Lady Hervey, under the section for Holbein. No. 167 was listed as Jane Seymour and that the original of this portrait – probably the one owned by Lord Arundel – was in Vienna. This supports the information in the Royal Collection that the study in the Royal Library of Jane was indeed in the Arundel collection and this listing in Lady Hervey's publication links it with the Kunsthistorisches Museum portrait. (11) According to a recent academic study of Holbein's life, information is unfortunately missing as to Holbein's actual composition process of these particular works as the relevant account books between 1533 and 1537 are no longer extant; Holbein's first recorded payment for 1538 is a quarterly income of £7 10 s. (12)

In 2016, the National Portrait Gallery acquired an important portrait of Jane Seymour from around 1537, evidently based on the Holbein portrait and which conservational research suggests is from the studio of Holbein himself and not in fact, a copy. It seems unfinished in areas which should otherwise be highly decorated, if compared with the Vienna portrait, although traces of silver on one of the sleeves still remains. (13) This places the new portrait somewhere between the preparatory drawing in the Royal Library and the completed portrait in Vienna; information at the



PORTRAIT OF JANE SEYMOUR
BY HANS HOLBEIN

National Portrait Gallery suggests that the painting may even have been left unfinished because of Jane's premature death. (14)

It is time to look in closer detail at Jane Seymour's costume, as seen in the Kunsthistorisches Museum portrait. A study of courtly Tudor female clothing, makes it possible to 'de-code' Jane's appearance. Precious fabrics proclaimed social status and this meant that a person could thus be 'codified' in the luxurious language of the court, by the costume that they wore. Particular luxury materials and importantly also, colours were at this time reserved for the Royal Family or the high elite, such as furs and cloths of gold or silver. Henry VIII introduced four sumptuary laws, the Acts of Apparel, the last of which was enacted in 1533. Wealth helped to separate who was able to afford these precious materials, but the sumptuary laws defined who was in fact, actually permitted to do so. Queen Jane is wearing a rich court gown of red velvet with detachable sleeves. The linen undersleeves show details of fine black-work, whilst her 'forepart' – the piece of fine material which occupies the centre place of the gown downwards – seems to be of the same fabric as her detachable sleeves, fastened with jewelled buttons. She has a jewelled girdle, which complements the neckline borders of her dress and English gable hood.

Significantly for the short period that she presided over the court as queen, Jane Seymour would have occupied the leading position downwards for fashion for the ladies of her court. She actively set the tone as to their head-dress. She paid especial attention to the wearing of the English gable hood, as is evidenced not only from her portraiture, but in the communications of John Husee to his correspondents in Calais, Lord and Lady Lisle. The more severe English hood appears less flattering than the elegantly feminine French hood favoured by Anne Boleyn, but therein may have laid the point. Anne Boleyn had always appeared more 'French' than English on her return to England at the beginning of the

1520s, from the overseas court of the Archduchess Margaret. There was nothing 'French' about Jane Seymour; indeed, the very contrast of the 'foreign' look of Anne Boleyn's hood – was something probably best forgotten by replacing it with the heavier English hood which Jane Seymour firmly wears in the Kunsthistorisches portrait. Jane insisted that the English hood be worn at court and it is just possible that as Queen, she may have used costume as another means of creating a psychological contrast between herself and Queen Anne Boleyn, her former mistress. The portrait of Jane's sister, Elizabeth Seymour in the National Portrait Gallery – misidentified for many years as a portrait of Queen Katherine Howard – wears mourning in her portrait and most interestingly perhaps, a French-style hood, fastened under her chin. Whatever the truth of the hoods, Anne Boleyn wears a French hood in that most recognisable likeness of her of which several versions exist, the most well-known of these being that in the National Portrait Gallery – a late seventeenth-century copy of a lost original.

John Husee reported to Lady Lisle on 17 September 1537 that her daughter Anne was 'sworn the Queen's maid on Saturday last'; her clothes were being made ready as one of the Queen's ladies and Lady Sussex had given her a kirtle made of crimson damask with sleeves to match: 'the Queen's pleasure is Mrs. Anne shall wear out her French apparel, but she must have a bonnet and frontlet of velvet. I saw her yesterday in the velvet bonnet in which lady Sussex attired her, which I thought became her nothing so well as the French hood, but the Queen's pleasure must be done'. (15) Husee's surprisingly modern eye meant that he preferred Lady Lisle's daughter in the French hood, whatever the Queen's preference in fashion, insisting that she 'wear out' her 'French' clothes. Prior to Anne's appointment as one of the Queen's ladies, John Husee had written to Lady Lisle that she was not to spend much on her daughters, until it was known which of them the Queen

would choose as a lady-in-waiting. They would 'require two "honest changes," the one of satin the other of damask' and Queen Jane would 'give her nothing but wages and livery'; the Queen herself, he reported on 17 July hinting at the royal pregnancy, 'goeth with placard not laced'. (16)

The Royal Wardrobe was an extraordinary important department of the Royal Household first and foremost, as well as also a building, just as the various departmental units of the Household would refer to for example, the Chapel Royal and then the chapel royal, the latter being the building in which its activity took place. The Great Wardrobe was destroyed in the Great Fire of London; the great diarist and naval secretary Samuel Pepys described witnessing a row in September 1667 between the Groom of the King's Bedchamber and one of the men of the Wardrobe over the urgent need of new linen for Charles II. Pepys documented at the end of 1667 that the location of the Royal (or, Great) Wardrobe had moved to Hatton Garden after the Fire; it moved in fact, several times. Chamberlayne's 1707 edition stated that it had removed to York-House Buildings after the Fire. (17) The Wardrobe's former location at Blackfriars is today marked by a plaque and its historical presence gives explanation to the unique name of the nearby church of St Andrew-by-the-Wardrobe, rebuilt under Wren. Some part of the Tudor collections contained within the Wardrobe were sold off under the Stuarts; the early part of the reign of James I saw his Keeper of the Wardrobe, Sir George Home, occupied with selling the gorgeous, heavily jewel-embroidered dresses of Elizabeth I. (18) It is supposed that some other remaining parts of the Tudor Wardrobe were destroyed during the Great Fire or were sold off in the Commonwealth Sale of 1649. (19)

The Royal Wardrobe would have provided all the necessary material for royal coronations, marriages and funerals and supplied the court with a great quantity of stately items from cloths of estate, beds, liveries and robes, down to the uniforms worn by the Queen's Watermen. It supplied for

example also, the personal linen for the King and Queen. As such, it is likely that any state dresses which had been held at the Wardrobe during Henry VIII's reign were worn by Henry's consecutive wives, given the fact that six women held this title. This practice might seem unsettling, even ghoulish by modern standards, given the fact that today's woman would certainly not wish to wear the clothes of her husband's former dead (or beheaded) wife or wives, yet this is to misunderstand the nature of the Great Wardrobe in relation to Henry's queens. The official clothes of the Queen were the property of the state and consonant with the rank they occupied, so consequently were stored in this Blackfriars repository for use by the King's consort. Whilst Henry's wives would have probably understood this, we could allow Jane Seymour any private feelings she may have felt, wearing clothes of her former mistress, the dead Queen Anne Boleyn; Henry VIII granted Ralph Worseley, Yeoman of the Wardrobe of Robes to the Queen Consort (June 1536) the sum of 6d per day as paid for by the Crown. (20)

Looking at Jane Seymour's position of her hands in the portrait, we might correctly assume that these might lend themselves skilfully to needlework. Queen Jane Seymour was in fact, a highly accomplished embroiderer and her work was well regarded. There is evidence that examples of her needlework were still to be seen in the English royal residences well into the seventeenth century; Jane is said to have loved nightgowns and nightcaps trimmed with gold and silver. (21)

Queen Jane's tailor was a man called Scut, or more specifically, John Scutte (22); we know this because his name is recorded a letter from John Lord Husee to Henry VIII in June 1537 and his name occurs several times in the gossipy letters of John Husee to Lady Lisle. Scut or Scutte, is referred to specifically as the Queen's tailor in the Letters and Papers of Henry VIII for June 1537. On 6 February 1537, John Husee wrote to Lady Lisle: 'Mr. Skut says the fashion of nightgowns is such as your ladyship has already, made

of damask, velvet, or satin. Two bonnets of ermine are bespoke for your ladyship. The waiscoats are to be made of white satin, edged, and turned up at the band with ermines.' (23). Husee had written earlier to Lady Lisle: 'Your nightgown and waistcoats are made in every point like lady Beauchamp's, that is, the very fashion the Queen and all the ladies wear, and so were the caps... I have...a red travers which I borrowed of one of the Queen's wardrobe...' (24) There are only scant single references to Jane Seymour's clothing recorded. As her pregnancy advanced successfully, she would be able to demonstrate the fact publicly; indeed, she was expected to be open-laced with stomacher for the Feast of Corpus Christi, as Husee reported to Lord Lisle in May 1537 from London. After the christening of Prince Edward at Hampton Court on 15 October, the Queen sat up to receive the customary visits of congratulation, dressed in crimson velvet, lined with fur. (25) Indeed, it is perhaps significant that it is in crimson-red velvet, with sleeves trimmed with ermine, that the Queen appears in Holbein's Whitehall Mural, which will be dealt with later. In the Letters and Papers of Henry VIII, the present author found recorded a licence to one 'Pet. Richardson, alien, goldsmith, a native of Holland, in the Emperor's dominions. Licence to have six servants or journeymen, natives or foreigners, for the making of "juells, woorks, and dyvyses" for Queen Jane', signed by the King on 29 August 1536. (26) The historical coronation of queens was often associated with a pregnancy or the successful birth of a royal heir; as Queen Jane was not yet pregnant with the future Edward VI, it is reasonable to suggest that the above licence probably relates to a more general commission, unless of course, there was a miscarriage which has never been recorded. There is evidence in the sources that this planned coronation (destined never to take place, because of the death of the Queen) would have taken

place at York.

Those same sumptuary laws which dictated the eligibility of materials and persons, applied of course, to court mourning after the Queen's death; this time however, the Household Ordinances decided regarding the particulars of mourning garments and were not governed by personal tastes, such as Queen Jane's marked preference for English hoods over their French counterparts. On her death, court mourning as set out in the Ordinances specified the dimensions of the mourning hoods. (27)

No single item of clothing associated with Jane Seymour would appear to have survived, a fact unsurprising given the Great Fire of London and the Commonwealth Sale of 1649 (28). However, one single piece of material claiming to be a surviving fragment of silver tissue from the canopy carried at the christening of Prince Edward in 1537, was shown at the Tudor exhibition of 1890, lent by Miss E. St Barbe-Laurie; somewhat touchingly, it was displayed in the same part of the exhibition as the 'Christening Mantle of Henry VIII', of red velvet and silver tissue, given to the King's former nurse, Lady Luke and lent by D. Parry Crooke Esq.. (29)

Queen Jane Seymour died on 24 October 1537 at Hampton Court Palace. The Queen's body was embalmed and dressed one last time - wrapped in gold tissue. (30)

After the death of Queen Jane Seymour, her personal jewel collection was dismantled and shared out between her ladies and stepdaughters, principally the Princess Mary; an especially touching fact perhaps regarding the latter, when we consider the closeness that had grown up between the two women, who exchanged many gifts during the Queen's lifetime. (Queen Jane for example, had given the Princess Mary a fine diamond in July 1536, as Chapuys reported to Charles V). As would be expected, the Queen also gave jewels as gifts to others. John Husee for example, wrote to Lady Lisle on 17 February 1537 that he was sending 'the Queen's new year's gift, a pair of beads of "granatts" with gold.' (31) Listed in the Letters and Papers of Henry VIII between 11-20 June 1536 under

'Apparel and Jewels' are two interesting references, one apparently signed 10 May 1536 - a receipt by William Igrave from Henry VIII of '28 score pearls, to be bestowed on his doublet and the Queen's sleeves, and the rest to be returned to the King'; It is followed by a memorandum of the delivery of 1,562 pearls 'to Epigrave, embroiderer, for the hinder part of the Queen's kirtle', signed by Igrave under the embroiderer's bills. (32) As Anne Boleyn was in the Tower of London by 10 May 1536 and not executed until 19 May, this cannot really refer to Anne Boleyn who though disgraced, was Queen until 19 May 1536. Given the date of 11-20 June, it probably refers to Jane Seymour, the Queen presumptive who married Henry VIII and was Queen by June 1536; Anne is tactfully referred to in some of the sources writing immediately afterwards as the 'late Queen'.

After her death, the Queen's state jewels were transferred to the Jewel House in London. (33) In the Letters and Papers of Henry VIII is contained a detailed record of the distribution of the Queen's personal jewels in what the royal manuscripts term 'A book of the Quenes juelles.' The Queen's beads were catalogued, as were her jewels, pomanders and tablets, her girdles, borders 'enamelled with various colours', her 'brouches [brooches] of gold', 'catalogue of bracelets', her 'buttons of gold', 'aggeletts', and her 'chains'. (34) Beneficiaries also included the King's apothecary and a servant to the Lord Privy Seal. There was also a glass mentioned which contained pictures of 'the King's father' Henry VII, amongst others.

Jewellery had of course, featured in Jane Seymour's portraits, not least the Kunsthistorisches portrait, showing magnificent rings on her fingers, jewels on her hood and neckline as well as a pendant with precious stones and pearls. It has been suggested that this same pearl-drop pendant worn by Jane in the Holbein drawing and Kunsthistorisches portrait may be exactly the same one worn in the Holbein miniature now understood to represent Katherine Howard, which is held in the Royal

Collection. (35) The beautiful miniature which Horenbout painted of Jane Seymour in the collections at Sudeley Castle shows her wearing a pendant of precious stones but is different to that worn by her in the Kunsthistorisches portrait in Vienna. This beautiful pendant with the letters 'IHS' was a gift to Jane from the King (36) and was set with black diamonds; it is significant that Jane wears this prominently in Holbein's portrait of her, probably painted as has been stated, at or around the time of her wedding.

Holbein had in fact designed jewellery, some examples of which would appear to have been made for Jane, as they feature her initial of 'I' [J] combined with the King's 'H'; the designs survive in the British Library. Significantly perhaps, these designs incorporated precious stones and had three pendant pearls - ironically, the same amount of pearls on the 'B' necklace, prominently visible in the most recognisable portrait of Queen Anne Boleyn by an unknown artist, in the National Portrait Gallery. This combining of initials is reminiscent of the cyphers combining the King's initial with that of his (new) wife which had to be replaced on each of Henry VIII's marriages. Surviving examples of Henry VIII's 'H' and Jane's 'I' can still be seen in the Great Watching Chamber at Hampton Court. (37) At least one coin is preserved at the British Museum which shows 'H' and 'I' for 1536-7. (38)

A small miniature by the royal enamel painter William Essex was commissioned by Queen Victoria of Jane Seymour in 1843, now in the Royal Collection, clearly based on the 1600 miniature by Nicholas Hilliard, after the Holbein portrait. The Hilliard miniature was part of the so-called 'Bosworth Jewel', presented to Charles I and containing miniatures of Henry VII, Henry VIII, Queen Jane Seymour and Edward VI; it was probably sold off during the Commonwealth but was recovered later and recorded in the royal inventories under James II. Interestingly, Queen Victoria had been patron of the aforementioned Tudor

exhibition which was held at London in 1890, to which she lent a number of royal works, including the Holbein drawings from the Royal Library. The young Queen had discussed Henry VIII and his six wives with her first Prime Minister, Lord Melbourne; she wrote in her diary on 21 April 1839: 'talked of Jane Seymour, who Lord M. thinks a bad person, as she supplanted her Mistress, which I said Anne Boleyn did too, and which wasn't their fault...' (39) The Queen later agreed to the restoration of the Chapel of St Peter ad Vincula, although it was Prince Albert who was more responsible for the fact that the Tower of London was preserved as an ancient monument. Contained within the volumes of portraits albums of the royal children held at Windsor, are a series of photographs showing Queen Victoria's eldest daughter, the Crown Princess of Prussia dressed as Queen Jane Seymour for the Berlin Fancy Dress Ball in January 1869. (40)

The large dynastic portrait of Henry VIII and his family, almost certainly commissioned by Henry VIII in or around 1546, now hangs in the so-called 'Haunted Gallery' at Hampton Court Palace. It was painted by a sixteenth-century anonymous artist of the British school and shows Queen Jane Seymour seated to the left side of Henry VIII at the time that Catherine Parr was his chronological queen. To the King's right stands Jane's child: his longed-for heir, Prince Edward. Jane's figure is full length in this picture and clearly, her image is being manipulated posthumously for the purposes of royal propaganda: Henry VIII was perpetuating the succession in paint as he saw it, with Princesses Mary and Elizabeth flanking the picture, with doors opening onto the Great Garden in the Palace of Whitehall where Henry in fact, died on 28 January 1547. Queen Jane and Prince Edward flank in turn, the dominant figure of the magnificent King, much as the heraldic beasts flank the Royal Arms of England on the richly embroidered canopy of state beneath which they are seated. Jane Seymour wears her staple English hood, yet her sleeves seem to be richly furred –

something found on the Whitehall Mural. An interesting coincidence is that white, richly furred sleeves are a feature of a portrait in the National Portrait Gallery attributed to Master John and now identified as being of Catherine Parr, who was actually queen at the time. We might recall that following the wedding ceremony at the Palace of Whitehall, Jane Seymour had been 'set in the Queen's seat under the canopy of estate royal'. (41)

Holbein's monumental life-size commemoration of the Tudor dynasty is preserved only in part as an ink and watercolour cartoon and is one of the precious treasures of the National Portrait Gallery, allocated to the Gallery in 1957. The right half which once showed Queen Elizabeth of York and Queen Jane Seymour is gone. Holbein's original painting, the so-called Whitehall Mural, was commissioned by Henry VIII for the Palace of Whitehall and destroyed when the Palace burned down on 4 January 1698; a mid-seventeenth-century copy was created by Remegius van Leemput now in the Royal Collection, showing all four figures of the Tudor dynasty in a splendidly decorated room hung with costly tapestries. George Vertue made his copy of it in 1737.

The Remegius van Leemput copy has been displayed in the Great Watching Chamber at Hampton Court Palace and is dated 1667; it was painted for Charles II and can be seen hanging in the Queen's Closet at Kensington Palace as part of Pyne's pictures of Royal Residences of 1819. (42) Jane's figure stands on a rich carpet, her picture clearly based on Holbein's original pose, similarly wearing her pearl pendant and English hood. Like Elizabeth of York, she wears queenly ermine. Jane Seymour stands in full length, with a small dog sat on her court train; it is unlikely to be one of the King's dogs as we know that these wore special collars to denote the fact. It may be the white poodle which Jane owned (43), so its presence as a beast is not heraldic. Incidentally, Jane's personal heraldic beast was the panther, apparent on her badge. As it was recorded in 1536: 'The

Queen's badge garnished with the Scripture, "bound to obey and serve." (44)

Importantly, the year '1537' may be seen in the Remegius van Leemput copy. As this was the year of the birth of the King's heir, Prince Edward and the subject matter is firmly dynastic, it has been suggested that it was painted in connection with the fast-approaching and expected birth of a prince (45). It is the view of the present author that it may have even have been begun once the Queen's pregnancy was confirmed, when the so-called 'quickenings' had taken place, the period after which it was judged that a pregnancy was successfully advancing and was assured. Given the time that Holbein would have taken to complete this important, life-size picture, it is suggestive of the fact that it was begun somewhat earlier but nevertheless almost certainly refers to what was hoped to be the next generation in that Tudor dynastic picture. The portrait, importantly, does not show a pregnant Queen Jane, instead perhaps anticipating the happy outcome in advance, with Jane as the maternal successor to Queen Elizabeth of York, whom she stands beneath. The National Portrait Gallery takes the official view that the work is either to mark or anticipate the birth of the future King Edward VI. It suggests that the painting may have been displayed in the King's Privy Chamber, instead of one of the more public rooms for the purposes of royal propaganda; the Royal Collection states that the work was indeed hung in Henry VIII's Privy Chamber. (46) The Latin inscription on the central sarcophagus argues which king is the victor, the father (Henry VII) or the son (Henry VIII), acknowledging at least, that both were supreme. Delicately, the Latin description does not ask the question of which of the two queens is the greater.

The Tudor Exhibition of 1890 provided a public opportunity for many examples of portraiture to be seen which were held in the royal and national collections, as well as by leading members of the Victorian nobility and by private individuals. As such,

pictures of Jane Seymour were recorded which otherwise were not seen and are thus, are probably still held privately. These were included in the exhibition and either described or attributed as such. Unfortunately, the catalogue omits to provide the year for any of the attributed works shown, including the priceless Holbein drawings. The most important works of Jane Seymour were those that were contemporary, with the exceptions of later copies of works which were lost, but details of these other portraits are included here, as they are interesting as to Jane's costume and jewels and indicate they were all inspired by Holbein.

The 1890 exhibition included a portrait of Queen Jane Seymour dressed in crimson with sleeves of gold braid, with a pearl pendant – lent by the Lord Sackville; a small panel was lent by the Society of Antiquaries, showing the Queen with a diamond-shaped hood and pearl necklace, in cloth of gold. The Marquess of Hertford lent a portrait of Queen Jane dressed in red with ermine trimmings and yellow slashed undersleeves; Sir Rainald Knightley, Bart., M. P, lent the interesting picture of Queen Jane Seymour in a grey dress, with a black cap and gold necklace holding a gold pot, which was formerly owned according to the catalogue, by Lady Elizabeth Seymour, daughter of the Lord Protector Somerset and wife of Sir Richard Knightley. (47) The Duke of Northumberland lent a picture of Jane in a red, square-cut gown with pearls and lace; one Mrs S. S. Gwilym lent a half-length portrait with ermine over-sleeves, jewelled hood and pearls; Lady Dent of Sudeley offered her picture of Jane 'by Holbein', which had been in the Strawberry Hill Collection. (48) J. Lumsden Propert, Esq, lent a picture of 'Queen Jane Seymour,' 'by Holbein'; the Marquess of Hertford lent a further engraving.

As has been pointed out, the majority of all later works of Jane Seymour are based on the Holbein originals. The Royal Collection possesses a number of engravings of Jane Seymour as well as several later copies of

the Holbein portrait. The Austrian National Library's Picture Archive contains an average amount of engravings. The Kunsthistorisches Museum portrait of Jane in the sumptuous company of Old Master Paintings (German), leaves the English visitor with the curious feeling that Queen Jane Seymour, third consort of Henry VIII, is a long way from home. An English traveller to Vienna might be forgiven for momentarily thinking her back onto the walls of Hampton Court Palace, that rare surviving example of the Tudor royal residences which is more associated with Jane's life than perhaps any other. Queen Jane finally had no coronation, but at Hampton Court Palace, swathed in her velvet and costly fur, she presided over the congratulations after her son's christening – literally, her 'crowning' achievement. She appears in her red velvet, as recorded by Holbein.

But there is one possible final irony. Because Henry VIII's Jane Seymour is not alone in Vienna. She may share the Kunsthistorisches

Museum as an artistic home with another of the King's wives. For held at the same magnificent museum in Vienna is Michael Sittow's graceful portrait of what historically has been identified as almost certainly representing Princess Catherine of Aragon, Henry's Spanish-born queen. (49) Princess Catherine's portrait is contained in Cabinet 20 of the Picture Gallery and is recorded as having been part of the Ambraser Collection; recently however, the portrait has been suggested as representing Princess Mary Tudor, sister of Henry VIII. The Kunsthistorisches Museum identifies the portrait now somewhat cautiously as 'Mary Rose Tudor, sister of Henry VIII of England?' with a secondary identification of 'Catherine, daughter of Ferdinand II of Aragon'. (50) If it does show Catherine of Aragon, it was a face of someone, whose name the English Jane would have recognised; the first wife of the King, her husband.

ELIZABETH JANE TIMMS

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Anne Boleyn – her music and her song book

Unlike her husband, Henry VIII, and her daughter, Elizabeth I, there are surprisingly very few first-hand accounts of Anne Boleyn's personal music making. Despite this, her musical attributes are written about and mentioned more than any other of Henry's wives, both during her lifetime and in subsequent years.

By Jane Moulder

Unlike her husband, Henry VIII, and her daughter, Elizabeth I, there are surprisingly very few first-hand accounts of Anne Boleyn's personal music making. Despite this, her musical attributes are written about and mentioned more than any other of Henry's wives, both during her lifetime and in subsequent years.

There is no doubt that Anne was gifted in the important courtly attributes of language, conversation, dancing and theatrics and, of course, music. She 'knew perfectly how to sing and dance....to play the lute and other instruments', ac-



The lute player – by Master of the Female Half-Lengths, Private Collection, c1530

ording to Lancelot de Carles, a French bishop, and even one of her critics, Nicholas Sander, admitted that she could play “on the lute and was a good dancer”. A courtier of Francis I, the Count de Chateaubriant described her as such: “she possessed a great talent for poetry, and when she sung, like a second Orpheus, she would have made bears and wolves attentive. She likewise danced the English dances, leaping and jumping with infinite grace and agility. Moreover, she invented many new figures and steps, which are yet known by her name or by those of the gallant partners with whom she danced them. She was well skilled in all games fashionable at courts. Besides singing like a siren, accompanying herself on the lute, she harped better than king David, and handled cleverly both flute and rebec.”

Perhaps this focus on music and Anne is partly down to her alleged association with Mark Smeaton, the court musician, as well as her questionable au-

thorship of a song she composed in the tower whilst awaiting her fate. However, the most tangible evidence we have of Anne's connection with music is the book of motets in the collection of the Royal College of Music, London, and which bears her name. Her clear love of music must have been attractive to Henry, and, as parents to Elizabeth I, they produced a daughter who was undoubtedly a skilled musician and probably more musically gifted than either of them. In this article I would like to explore the sort of music education Anne would likely to have received and also explore further the music book which she undoubtedly owned.

Throughout the 16th century, music was one of the talents which any well-educated and daughter of noble birth was expected to demonstrate. Richard Mulcaster, head of the Merchant Taylors' School wrote that princesses especially needed the talents of “reading well, writing faire, singing sweet, playing fine in order to honour themselves and to dis-

charge the duty which the country has committed to their hands”. Courtly women were expected to use music to demonstrate good breeding and it was also a means by which a woman could attract a suitable husband. However, there was a dangerous aspect for women playing music as they could be accused of inciting lust as Venetian courtesans adopted the lute as their badge of trade. Woodwind instruments also could illicit sexual connotations and it meant that female musicians had to be cautious about the contexts and company in which they performed.

We know little of Anne's time at Blickling where she was born and Hever Castle where she spent her early years but there is no doubt that music would have been part of her soundscape. When Thomas Boleyn extended Hever and built a second story to the castle, a minstrels' gallery was added to the Great Hall. Thomas would have entertained lavishly and music and dancing would have been a central part of ensuring his guests enjoyed their stay. Anne

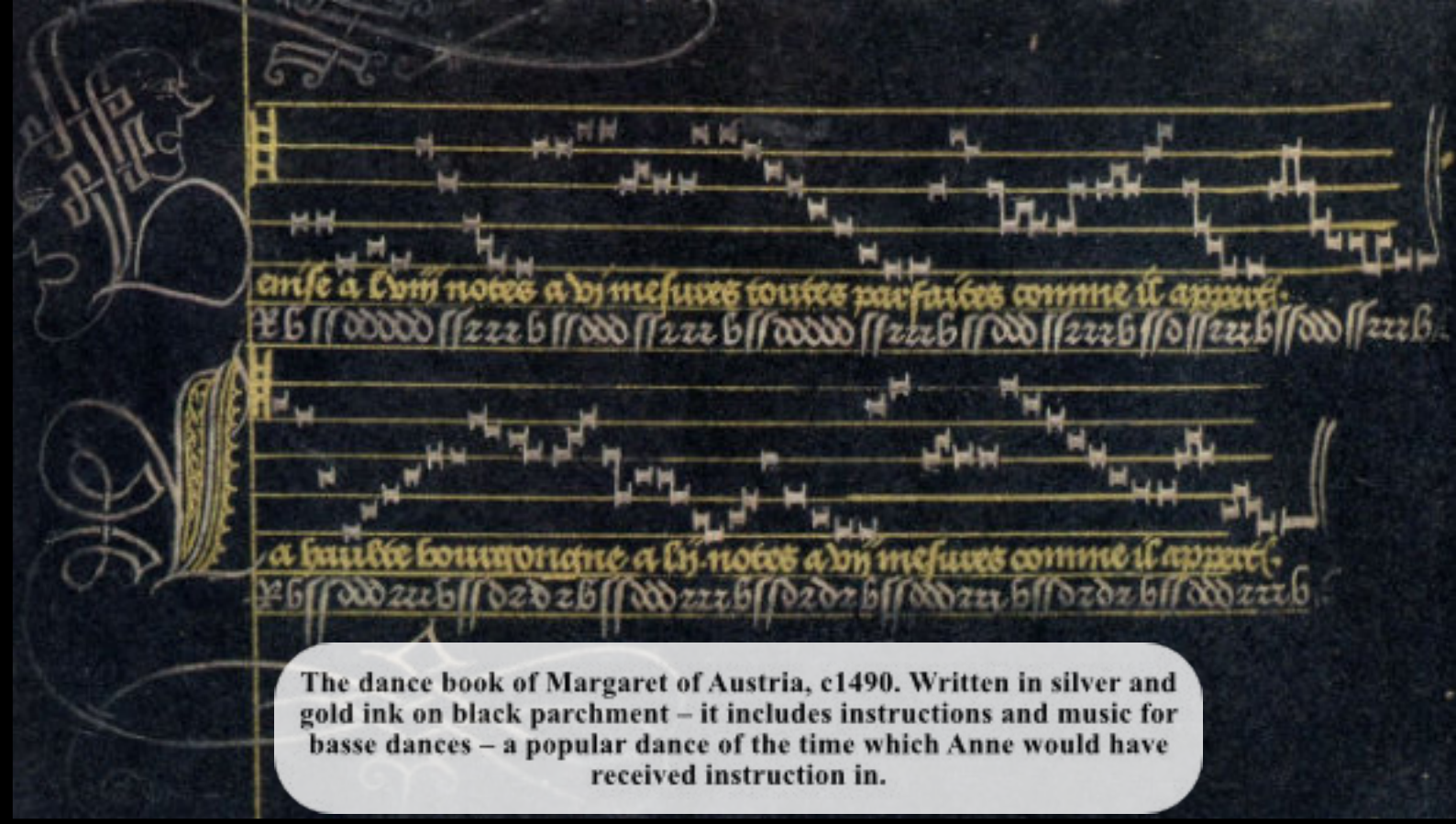
was not to grow up at Hever though and at 13 was sent to the Netherlandish court of Margaret of Austria in 1513 as a *filles d'honneur*. Here she would have enjoyed a humanist education and learned the practical skills of an aristocratic woman.

Margaret's court had one of the largest musical ensembles in Europe and her ladies in waiting would have had a broad musical education befitting a young Renaissance woman. Here she received formal instruction in singing, dancing and instrumental music and she would have taken part in court entertainments, including staged theatrical musical events.

There is supposition that her tutor was Henry Bredemers as he taught other royal children of the court as well. He was a skilled musician and was the official organist to the court. Another possible tutor was Fleurquin Nepotis, a relative of Govard Nepotis, Margaret of Austria's personal teacher. Fleurquin had been 'raised and taught music and other studies' and he was assistant to Bredemers from 1516 on-

wards, coinciding with Anne's time at court. He is the more likely candidate, as Anne, as a daughter of an Englishman at a foreign court, would have been among the lower tiered courtiers and would not have warranted the attention of the prestigious Bredemers or Govard Nepotis.

Regardless, Anne's station would have ensured that she would have been educated in acquiring musical skills such as playing the clavichord and other keyboard instruments and the lute as well as singing and dancing and theatrical skills. One of the primary duties of a *filles d'honneur* was participating in court dances and Margaret's court was associated closely with the *basse-dance*, a couple dance of the period. It was said that "to dance it, one moves tranquilly, without agitation, in the most gracious fashion one is capable of".



After leaving Margaret's court, Anne joined Mary Tudor's retinue at Blois. Although there is little contemporary evidence of her time in France, an account by Lancelot de Carles written after her death said that "she knew how to sing and dance and she proposed to be seduced by the sound of sound and other instruments, to divert her sad thoughts". It is not known if de Carles ever witnessed Anne's abilities or whether his observations were gathered from second hand accounts. It is clear though that Anne was particularly attracted to the tastes and fashions

she learned at the French court under Queen Claude, who she served having left Mary Tudor. Anne spent seven years with Queen Claude and she was also close to the queen's relatives, Louise of Savoy, and Marguerite d'Angoulême/Alençon. It was in France that she would have developed her taste in music, manuscripts, poetry dance and the game of love. She would have been exposed to the finest music of the age by some of the leading composers of Europe. Pavaues and Galliards, chansons and other musical styles and dances would all have been part of her regular routines.

On returning to Eng-

land and joining the retinue of Katharine of Aragon, it was remarked that Anne could have been mistaken for a native French woman as her manners, dress, behaviour and style set her apart from the other ladies at court. Her experience of taking part in theatrical entertainments in the French court stood her in good stead when she played a part of *Perseverance* in the Chateau Vert pageant in 1521, supposedly the first time she and Henry interacted.

Anne's close association with Marguerite is of particular relevance with regards to the book of French chansons which has now become

known as Anne Boleyn's Songbook.

RCM 1070 is a rare and important manuscript collection of French motets dating from the early 16th century. It is held by the Royal College of Music and whilst of undoubted interest to musicologists and early music specialists, it has greater curiosity because of the inscription on folio 79r 'Mrs A Belleyme / Nowe thus' which seems to suggest that it once belonged to Anne. The collection contains 42 compositions, 7 of which are unique to that document. Josquin Desprez, one of the foremost composers of his age, has 10 pieces and there are other

French composers such as Lyset Compère, Jean Mouton and Claudin de Sermisy. There is one piece by the famous Flemish composer Jacob Obrecht, who had travelled through France in 1492. As I have shown, Anne would have had a good musical education and she would have been familiar with many of the composers whose pieces appear in the collection.

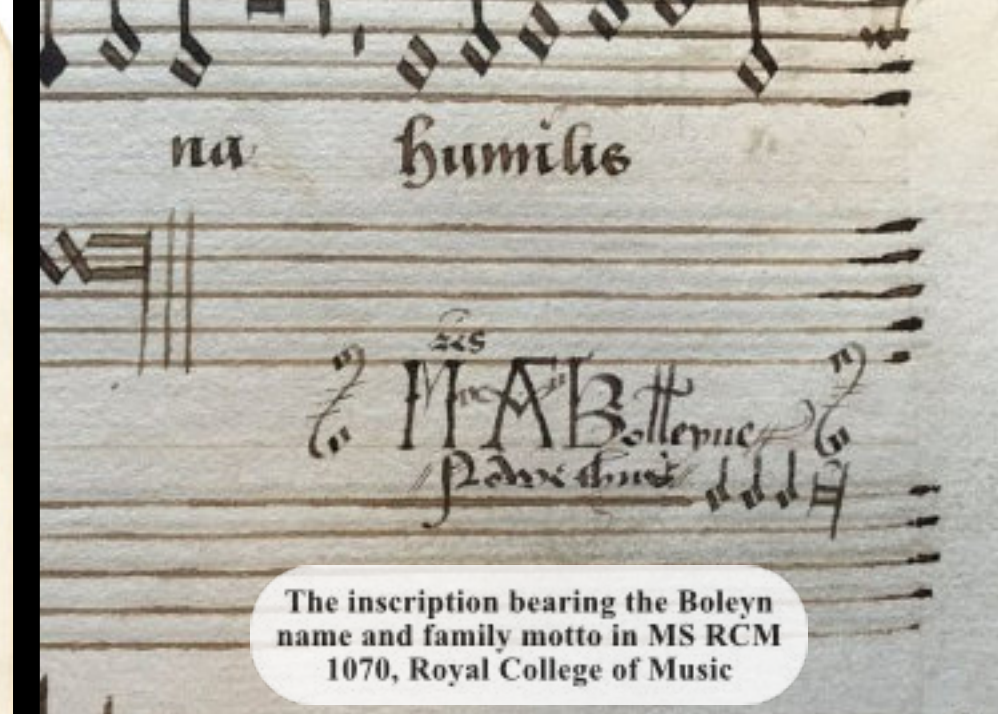
The book is a compilation of a series of five bindings. The first three bindings formed the original core of the book and the pieces date to the very beginning of the 16th century, circa 1505-1509, Two bindings were added later. They would have been written out by a professional scribe (five different hands have been identified) and then decorated later by an artist. The book is made from paper and analysis of the paper and the watermarks has shown this to be French. This was a music book that was clearly designed to be used and sung from as all four harmony parts can be viewed at once (during this period, each voice usually had their own part book and there



A page from the music book

was no 'score'). The corners of the book have clearly been thumbed and there are various marks added to the music by the singer, such as sharps or flats above the notes – one of the few rare examples of an annotated music manuscript from this period. It is not a highly decorated book and the fact that it is

made from paper and not parchment indicates that it was not meant for royalty or for show, but it clearly is for someone of some status. The subjects of the songs contained in the collection have led Lisa Urkevich to suggest that the book could originally have been intended as a wedding gift – songs of love, marriage



The inscription bearing the Boleyn name and family motto in MS RCM 1070, Royal College of Music

most likely been given her as a gift by Marguerite d'Alençon.

A curious aspect of the signature 'Mrs A Boleyn / Nowe thus' is that it appears in the middle of the document alongside the alto part of a piece by Loyset Compère. Nowe Thus was a Boleyn family motto and

and the desire to have children.

There have been various studies of the manuscript over the years. Edward Lowinsky printed his research in the early 1970s but his observations were flawed because he believed that the book had been compiled for Anne Boleyn whilst she was Queen of England (1533-36) and even suggested that one of the scribes was her lutenist and supposed lover, Mark Smeaton. This view then held for some time and sometimes this flawed research is still, sadly, being quoted. In 1997, Lisa Urkevich gained her PhD with research into the manuscript and suggested that it could be dated to a period before Anne was in France and had



Female musicians by The Master of the Female Half Lengths, Hermitage Museum, St Petersburg. C1530.

there are other Annes in the Boleyn family. Thomas Boleyn had two sisters, Anne Clere (1487-1538) and Anne Shelton (1475-1555), both of whom could have inscribed themselves as Mrs A Belleyne. But neither are shown to have received a formal education in France or had a particular interest in music so we must assume that it is the Anne Boleyn.

There has been speculation about the minims and longa, with a downward tail, (musical notes) shown underneath the signature. Lowinsky stated that the minims referred to her three years as queen and the 'longa' showed the end of her time. Eric Ives, in his biography of Anne, took a similar view in that the three minims could be a code for the period that Anne and Henry knew was unavoidable before the longa of the conclusion. However, Urkevich proposed that, as queen, Anne would not have used the lowly title

of 'mistress' or her father's motto. Following her father's rise to the peerage as Viscount Rochford in 1529, Anne stopped using the title 'Mistress' and she is henceforth known as Lady Anne Rochford and after 1532, Marchioness of Pembroke. Therefore, the inscription in the music book must have been made prior to 1529 and at a time when she did not know Henry. She suggests that the musical notation could symbolise her age at the time or simply be a musical design. Urkevich concludes that a professional scribe could have written the inscription as the handwriting does not

match Anne's and the musical notation is expertly drawn.

One of the pieces in the book *Jouyssance vous donneray* by Claudin de Sermisy was a very popular chanson on the time and Sermisy was a favourite musician of the French court. There is a strong association between the French court poet, Clément Moran, and Marguerite d'Alençon. One of Moran's poems was set to the tune of *Jouyssance* and it was a known favourite of Marguerite's and she used the tune in a theatrical production she commissioned. The music for *Jouyssance* can be seen being played by the

women in the famous painting by The Master of the Female Half-Lengths. Eric Ives even suggested that the inclusion of this piece of music pertained to Henry and Anne's situation during their courting years from 1526 to 1533. The words of the song "I will give you pleasure, my dear, and thus I will ensure that what you hope for ends well ... but if it weighs you down, appease your hurting heart: everything will be good for those who wait". Eric Ives has even posited that Henry and Anne sang this together – this is, of course, pure speculation and fanciful guesswork.

There is still much debate by musicologists about the exact history and origins of this songbook. However, all are

agreed that it is French and it dates from the early 16th century. Following research by Lisa Urkevich, studying the music, the paper, the watermarks and other initials found in the book (such as MA), her theory that the book was at one point owned by Marguerite d'Alençon, has now become established. It was probably originally compiled for her as a gift for a wedding that never took place, and this would explain why the various bindings have empty pages and it is clearly unfinished. However, Marguerite kept the book for her own use and later added some extra pieces. Some years later Anne and Marguerite formed a close friendship and the two could have used the book for their

own performances. When Anne was recalled to England for a proposed marriage in 1521, Marguerite gave her the book as a parting gift. Was it at this point the Boleyn inscription was added or was it added when Anne sang from the part on which the signature appears?

No doubt study and speculation into the music book will continue but suffice to say, it will always be known as Anne Boleyn's Songbook and it is a tantalising thought that this book would have been held by Anne and she would have sung the words and followed the music contained within it. A precious document indeed.

JANE MOULDER



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CATHERINE BROOKS CONSIDERS...

MARY HOWARD, DUCHESS OF RICHMOND

Mary Howard was born in 1519 and was the daughter of Thomas Howard, 3rd Duke of Norfolk, and his second wife, Elizabeth Stafford. Elizabeth was a good political match for the power-hungry Duke, as she was the daughter of Edward Stafford, 3rd Duke of Buckingham and Lady Eleanor Percy.

Mary Howard was born in 1519 and was the daughter of Thomas Howard, 3rd Duke of Norfolk, and his second wife, Elizabeth Stafford. Elizabeth was a good political match for the power-hungry Duke, as she was the daughter of Edward Stafford, 3rd Duke of Buckingham and Lady Eleanor Percy. Mary was said to have been quite forthright and outspoken for a lady of her time, much like her father (and aunt, Anne Boleyn), which became a course of frustration for him on several occasions! We know little of her early life, as is so often the case. Regarding her education, we know she could read and write based on letters that have survived and her entries in the Devonshire Manuscript. She also seems to have read the scriptures in English, of which not everyone would have approved. She

would've spent her childhood moving between the three Howard estates of Tendring Hall, Kenninghall, and Framlingham Castle, probably often with her siblings (although her brother Henry was educated as part of the household of Henry Fitzroy, the illegitimate son of Henry VIII). With her mother serving Catherine of Aragon, and her father a big player at court, it seems certain she would have visited the court as a young child. Still, our first record of her is attending Anne Boleyn in September 1532, when she was 13 and had already been betrothed to Henry Fitzroy, Duke of Richmond and Somerset.

When researching the Howard family tree, I found many sources cite Mary as the only daughter of Norfolk and Elizabeth, with two sons, Henry, Earl of

Surrey, and Thomas, Viscount Howard of Bindon. However, Mary had an elder sister, Katherine. The Howards aimed high when seeking marriages that increased their wealth and status, which comes as no surprise. Her father, Norfolk, was a sneaky chap and purchased the wardship of Edward Stanley, Earl of Derby, and then in 1529, married him to Katherine. This was an excellent match for Katherine, for even as the daughter of a Duke, the Derby match was a grand prize. Norfolk had jumped the gun, though: the earl was a minor under the king's authority, and so he had to seek a pardon from Henry VIII essentially for abducting him and marrying him to his daughter without royal license. But Norfolk was good at getting on the right side of the king, and the marriage was permitted. Around the same time, Mary was betrothed to Lord Bulbeck, heir of the Earl of Oxford, another good match for the Howards.

A short time later, at around age 22, Katherine died. The Duke and Duchess were desperate to keep the Derby marriage. Elizabeth wanted Mary to marry him (not a wise idea when you consider the aftermath of other siblings marrying the same person), but in the end, Norfolk's half Dorothy Howard became Derby's second wife, probably because around this time, Mary's betrothal to Bulbeck seems to have fallen by the wayside in favour of another suitor.

Mary became betrothed to the king's illegitimate son, Henry Fitzroy, Duke of Richmond and Somerset. This would seem like a real boon to the Howard's in terms of beneficial marriages, although Howard maintained from the outset that it was Henry's idea, which makes it almost

impossible to refuse. But should Mary and Fitzroy have issue, Norfolk would be sharing grandchildren with the king. This would not have been lost on him, and should Anne fail to give the king's sons in the end, he would be in a good position.

Mary's mother, Elizabeth, was opposed to the match with Fitzroy. She was a firm supporter of Catherine of Aragon and spoke openly against Anne Boleyn. Her relationship with Anne was also soured by her husband's mistress, Bess Holland, being one of Anne's ladies. This is relevant as it seems Anne helped engineer the marriage between Mary and Fitzroy – this makes me think that 'Henry wanted the match' actually means that Anne pushed for it! It could have been because Anne was concerned about who Fitzroy could have married; perhaps it could potentially put her or her heirs in a less secure place. Also, though, it provided more ties between the Tudors and the Howards, which helped to solidify the family connection she would be forging when marrying the king. The marriage was finalised in Spring 1531. In any case, despite the animosity between Anne and her uncle Norfolk, Anne did Norfolk a service as he did not have to pay what would have been an enormous dowry. Having said all this, Anne may have had some affection for Mary, who was one of her Maids of Honour and carried the basin at Elizabeth's christening. However, this may simply have been acknowledging the Howard connection.

Mary and Fitzroy were, as many couples in this period, related within the limits of consanguinity. They were granted the necessary dispensation for the marriage in November 1533, with the ceremony taking place on the 26th at Hampton

Court Palace. It was not much noted or a grand affair. It was, obviously, not a love match, but Fitzroy did spend time in England around this period, having spent some time recently in France. Both were around 14 years old and not expected to live together or consummate the union because of their young ages. Mary returned to serving her queen and Richmond to learning the ways of government. Essentially, apart from her elevated status as a Duchess, Mary's life didn't change.

In May 1536, Anne Boleyn was executed, and her daughter was declared illegitimate. Henry was left with only bastard children. Jane Seymour may very well produce one or more heirs. But in the absence of this being guaranteed, talk had turned to the possibility of Fitzroy becoming legitimised and taking the crown. How seriously this was taken by anyone and everyone at court, including Henry, I don't know, but had it happened, Mary Howard, Duchess of Richmond, would have found herself queen consort of England. It was also rather handy timing for Mary (although we don't know if she would've been distressed over Anne's death), as it got her out of a rather sticky situation.

Mary was very good, if not best, friends with Lady Margaret Douglas, the king's niece, who served Anne Boleyn with her at court. Margaret fell in love with Lord Thomas Howard, half brother of Mary's father, and he felt the same. To meet in secret, they needed someone to help them. That person was Mary. At Easter 1536, Margaret and Thomas foolishly wed in secret, with Mary in attendance. When the news came out, Henry lost his mind. On the one hand, the marriage was

illegal as it had taken place without royal authority (which would never have been granted). On the other, the church accepted clandestine marriages. The 'solution' was to send them both to the Tower. After a short period, Margaret then went to Syon House, but Thomas remained in the Tower. He was charged with high treason, his crime being made to fit the punishment, rather than the other way around – Margaret was now Henry's legitimate heir, and he was accused of seeking the crown. He died there the following year.

Mary knew this behaviour was dangerous and ill-judged. She was not stupid. Perhaps she helped them as Margaret was her best friend and Thomas her half-uncle. She may have felt in danger herself at this point, but by now, the rumours of her husband becoming king seemed to be taking more shape, and I suppose that drawing attention to her part in this debacle would not be advantageous. But however serious a notion this may have been, it was not to be. Around 23rd July 1536, Henry Fitzroy succumbed to death, probably from consumption. Mary was now a widow. Consumed with grief, the king wanted the whole thing to be as secret as possible, and his son had the most meagre of funerals for a man of his standing. Unfortunately for Norfolk, who did as the king asked concerning the funeral, Henry later changed his mind once it was too late and was furious with him. Mary's actions over Margaret were, I'm sure, now the least of Henry's concerns.

Mary's brother, Henry, Earl of Surrey, had cultivated a good friendship with Fitzroy, for which the king showed him some fondness, and he seemed to have

been very upset. We do not know how Mary felt about her husband's death. They wouldn't really have known each other. And she soon found that she was not to be treated with any level of affection or even respect as the king had for her brother. At one time, she had the thought of presenting the king with a grandson. Now what would her future hold?

Even though she and Fitzroy had never lived together and hadn't much of a chance to act as man and wife, Mary was required to show an appropriate period of mourning, which she did, retiring to the Norfolk family home at Kenninghall. After a period of mourning had been observed, her jointure would need to be settled before she could marry again. As a potential bride, Mary should've been viewed as a great catch. She had royal blood through her mother's side, the wealth of her father, and the fact that she was a Howard, plus she had her status as Duchess of Richmond. In theory, too, she would bring an income as a widow.

Mary did retain some of her husband's plate and jewels and geldings, but soon after his son's death, the king began to question the validity of the marriage, based on the fact of non-consummation. This was not a legal claim as the two were not expected to have consummated the marriage, and the law ruled in Mary's favour. It seemed Henry had no intention of giving Mary her jointure (the estates whose income she would have to live off). Mary was not impressed. She demanded her father sort the matter, and Norfolk fought for his daughter's jointure to no avail. Mary was angry with him over this, but Henry was not an easy man to reason with. Mary then voiced that she would go

to London to put her case in person, but this request was denied as Norfolk no doubt panicked. Mary was not one to shrink back and stay silent. They also approached Cromwell to ask for his help. I wonder if part of Henry's reluctance to pay up is that he'd never received a dowry for Mary, so didn't think he should pay anything either.

There came, of course, a point where Mary's future needed considering. She was still a young woman and needed a good marriage. It may also make Mary stop pursuing the matter of her jointure, as it would pass to her husband anyway (presuming the groom could be 'persuaded' by the king to drop it). Despite his lower status, a candidate was put forward: Thomas Seymour, uncle to the new prince Edward. Norfolk was not fond of the Seymours, but he could see they were retaining good favour, and everyone approved of the match – except Mary, who made that very clear.

Perhaps she felt she did not want to marry in case it finally ended her chance to settle her jointure and maintain her status. Maybe she just didn't want to get married, or at least married to Seymour. Whatever the reason, her refusal was bold and surprising. There is also the possibility that her brother, Surrey, dissuaded her to shun the match, as he hated Thomas Seymour. But in 1538, still an unmarried woman, Mary finally had her jointure settled.

Still styled as the Duchess of Richmond, she came to court to serve Anne of Cleves. Anne's time as queen was short-lived, and Catherine Howard's rise looked set to benefit the Howards. But her swift fall from grace so soon after her marriage meant Norfolk had to try and implement

some damage control. He once again proposed the match between Mary and Thomas Seymour and also proposed matches for his grandchildren, the offspring of his son, Surrey. Arriving at court in June 1546, Surrey was furious to find that his sister had once again been put forward as a bride for Thomas Seymour and then became further incensed once he discovered his children had been promised without his consent. In his fury, he made what was considered a very public spectacle of himself, ranting against the affront to his dignity and berating Mary for even considering the match. On this occasion, Mary's thoughts on the proposed Seymour match aren't clear, but they were now irrelevant – Surrey had destroyed any form of an alliance the Howards could ever have made with the Seymours. His behaviour also gave those around him the opportunity to make a final push against the Howards. On 12th December 1546, Norfolk and Surrey were taken to the Tower on trumped-up charges of treason.

Mary did not attempt to defend either her brother or her father. However, she may have chosen her words carefully when the Kings counsellors came to Kenninghall to question her, her mother, Elizabeth, and her father's mistress, Bess. She was also likely aware that speaking against an investigation is unlikely to end well for you. Previously, Mary had hurt her mother dreadfully by treating Bess so well, to the detriment of her relationship with Elizabeth. As time went by, the

mother-daughter relationship returned to better terms. Surrey was executed, and Norfolk only escaped the same fate as Henry conveniently died before the axeman got to do his job. Thomas Howard remained in the Tower throughout Edward VI's reign, and Mary and her mother both visited him there. Mary, who remained unmarried for the rest of her life, took guardianship of her brother's children during her father's imprisonment. She requested money for their upkeep, and Norfolk provided some financial compensation for this in his will. Interestingly, she hired John Foxe as one of their tutors, which must have been the result of the years during the 1540s when Mary began to explore and accept the reformed faith (which could have been the influence of Anne Boleyn when Mary had served her years before). The Howards had always been staunch Catholics (even though they may have outwardly swayed to keep on the right side of what was going on politically at court). Still, the fact that Henry Howard's heir, Thomas, who became the 4th Duke of Norfolk, was protestant was likely a result of his aunts' choices in his upbringing and education.

Mary died in (or a little before) 1555, having been a widow for almost 20 years. She left no will, so perhaps her death was sudden. Her tomb is in Framlingham Church, a burial place of the Howards, placed next to Henry Fitzroy.

CATHERINE BROOKS

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Unhappy Marriages

Being a noblewoman was not all sunshine and roses. Although the typical age to marry in Tudor times was around twenty, many noblewomen were betrothed or married at a much earlier age, as young as twelve for girls and fourteen for boys.

Although families hoped that their daughters would find love, it was not their main consideration. Politics, family alliances, money and property all played a part in choosing a marriage partner and the women themselves often had very little say in who their spouse would be.

Some noblewomen found love or at least companionship but for others their marriages were disastrous. Problems with adultery, finances, domestic violence, land rights and inheritances all added to the issues a mismatched couple might face.

Elizabeth Stafford married Thomas Howard, 3rd duke of Norfolk as his second wife around 1513 when she was only fifteen years of age. Norfolk was over twenty years older and not the man Elizabeth wanted. She had been promised to Ralph Neville, 4th Earl of Westmorland and her father's ward. In a letter dated 28 September 1537, Elizabeth told him they had been in love for two years and were due to marry before Norfolk asked for her hand. She

must have pleaded with her father not to accept his proposal and for his part, he tried to persuade Norfolk to take one of her sisters instead but he was set on Elizabeth.

Elizabeth served Catherine of Aragon as a lady-in-waiting for around sixteen years and between her being at court and Norfolk serving his king at home and abroad, the marriage started well. They would have five children and appeared to all to have a loving marriage but then Norfolk took a mistress, Bess Holland.

Bess was the daughter of Norfolk's secretary

and had worked in the Norfolk's household as a laundress but before long the duke was showering her with gifts and affection. Many other noblewomen had been faced with their husband's adultery but Elizabeth was furious and refused to accept her without a fight calling her 'a churl's daughter', the 'washer of my nursery', a 'drab', and a 'harlot'.

In the spring of 1534, Norfolk came home from court and Elizabeth told him exactly what she thought of him and his mistress. He locked her up in her bed chamber and took away all her jewels and clothes before moving Bess into the family home. Elizabeth was sent to a house in Redbourn, Hertfordshire, where she was virtually under house arrest and surviving on a paltry annual allowance of only £200.

She tried to communicate with Norfolk but when he didn't reply to her

letters, she wrote to Cromwell. Elizabeth told Cromwell that Norfolk severely abused her. On one occasion, after she had given birth to their daughter, he had dragged her from her bed and out of the house, wounding her with a dagger. She also said Norfolk had 'set his women to bind me till blood came out at my fingers' ends, and pinnacled me, and sat on my breast till I spit blood, and he never punished them'. Elizabeth was also promised an income of five hundred marks per

annum and Norfolk had never given it to her.

Norfolk denied all her claims and to try and keep the peace, Cromwell and the duke suggested that she should go to live with her brother, Lord Stafford, but he refused to have her at his home. Elizabeth made some attempt at reconciliation with her husband but Norfolk was not interested. Instead he wanted a divorce and if she agreed she would get her jewels and clothes back



Thomas Howard

but she refused. It was stalemate.

On 3 March 1539, she wrote to Cromwell that:

I am of age to rule myself, as I have done these five years, since my husband put me away. Seeing that my lord my husband reckoned me to be so unreasonable, it were better that I kept me away, and keep my own house still, and trouble no other body. I pray you, my lord, take no displeasure with me, although I have not followed your lordship's good counsel, and your letters, as touching my lord my husband for to come home again, which I will never do in my life.

And Elizabeth and Norfolk never would be reconciled.

Norfolk's sister Anne also had a loveless marriage to John de Vere, 14th Earl of Oxford whom she married in 1512. Oxford was known for his drinking, womanising and riotous behaviour. Anne had told Wolsey that she

could not manage his household any longer and that she was overwhelmed with trying to manage her errant husband's affairs. Wolsey tried to help by entreating Oxford to be loving and kind to his wife but Oxford was more concerned with living the high life until eventually he was ordered to live with his father-in-law, the 2nd Duke of Norfolk.

Husbands controlled the household finances and wives were often unable to stop them from frittering away their money unless they were helped by their family or men like Wolsey and Cromwell. Charles Brandon, duke of Suffolk, had to intervene in his daughter's marriage for that reason. Mary Brandon married Thomas, Lord Monteagle before 1527. Lady Mary, Baroness Monteagle, spent most of her time at court but her husband was known to be abusive and a spendthrift.

Charles intervened and made Baron Monteagle promise

'from henceforth from time to time [to] honourably handle and entreat the said lady Mary as a noble man ought to do his wife, unless there be a great default in the lady Mary and so affirmed by the council of the lord Monteagle'. His promises came as part of a restructuring of his finances. At one point he owed thirty-one creditors for his debts and Brandon felt obliged to help him but on the condition that he adhered to his father-in-law's instructions regarding his estate and household management. Brandon made Monteagle agree to debt management, reduced expenditure and allowed the couple an allowance to live by, as long as he continued to treat his daughter well.

It seems his intervention worked and the couple would have six children before Mary's death between 1540 and 1544.

**SARAH-BETH
WATKINS**

October's Expert Speaker

Elizabeth of York and the 1502 Summer Progress with Natalie Gruening



Sir Thomas Gresham – the Tudor monarchs’ banker and spy

When it came to sixteenth-century dodgy dealing, Thomas Gresham was your man yet his success rate was so incredible, he got away with it, time after time. He swindled foreign monarchs, foreign banking houses, his fellow English merchants and even his own family members out of money and goods. Despite this, the City of London owes its global financial influence to Sir Thomas. The historian John Guy calls him ‘the first true wizard of global finance’. So who was Thomas Gresham and what was he up to?

Thomas Gresham was born in Milk Street, off Cheapside in the City of London in 1518 or 1519. Both his father, Sir Richard, and his uncle, Sir John, had served as lord mayors of London, were members of the powerful Mercers’ Company and belonged to the Merchant Adventurers’ Company. Meanwhile, young Thomas attended St Paul’s School and Gonville College (later to become Gonville and Caius), Cambridge, so he was privileged and well educated. His family exported more cloth from London than anyone else and the trade between the city and Antwerp in the Low Countries was expanding.

Antwerp was a large centre of



Thomas Gresham aged about 25
[unknown artist]

commerce and merchants and bankers from across Europe came there to do business, dealing in high end luxury goods, from sumptuous textiles to works of art. Sir Richard had supplied

tapestries for Archbishop Wolsey’s splendid new palace at Hampton Court. In 1543, in the reign of Henry VIII, Thomas joined his father’s and uncle’s enterprise, becoming a liveryman of the Mercers’ Company and handling the Antwerp end of the trading network. But this wasn’t just on behalf of the Greshams because Thomas was also acting for the king.

By the 1540s, having broken from the Church of Rome and declared himself the Supreme Head of the Church in England, Henry was paranoid that the country would be invaded by one or other or even an alliance of Catholic monarchs in Europe. The defence of the realm was paramount and required vast sums of money to pay for the construction of coastal fortifications and warships, arms and armaments and the wages of professional foreign mercenaries brought in to support the English. Undercover of his legitimate business as a merchant, Thomas was acting as the

king’s agent, importing weapons and foreign currency and bullion, either by hiding the contraband inside bales of cloth or by bribing the ‘searchers’ (customs officials) to look away.

Having been operating on his own account as well as for his father and uncle, Thomas took over the family business when his father, Sir Richard, died in February 1549. By this date, he and his network of agents were working on behalf of the new king, Edward VI, or rather for the Lord Protector, the Duke of Somerset, the young king’s maternal uncle. The duke was determined to raise England’s profile as a warrior nation by making war on the Scots. To afford it, Somerset needed to borrow money from abroad and bring in more weapons and mercenaries. His methods, which included further debasing the English coinage, making it unacceptable for foreign trading, along with sweeping religious changes, proved so unpopular that there were serious uprisings in the South-West of England



An Elizabethan sixpence

TONI MOUNT

and East Anglia, further depleting the royal coffers. Once again, Thomas Gresham was the go-to man but even he had difficulties raising money as the cloth trade was in a deep recession.

The changes from Protestantism back to Catholicism when Mary became queen didn't bother Thomas Gresham. He seems to have had little commitment to the vagueries of either religion, preferring ecumenical money which he understood better than anyone. He served Mary and her Spanish husband, Philip, as well as he had Henry and Edward. When Protestant Elizabeth came to the throne he continued his work. He realised that England's currency had to be improved. In fact, it required the collection, melting down and re-minting of every coin to something like its value in Henry VII's day when English coinage was the envy of Europe.

Thomas had a hard time persuading Queen Elizabeth that re-minting was vital, despite the time and effort involved. Fortunately, William Cecil, the queen's chief minister, understood the importance of reliable currency and brought a Frenchman from the mint at Versailles who had invented a machine that could strike coins, instead of doing this by hand. Thomas shipped over a contingent of German metallurgists and the process began in November 1560. The following July, Elizabeth made an official visit to the mint at the Tower of London to see the work being done by the French, Germans and English. By 1562, England had new coinage and some new denominations, including the popular silver sixpence [later known as a tanner]

and three-pence [known as a thruppenny bit], coins which were still being issued in the twentieth century.

Thomas had already received recognition for his services to the Crown over the years before the re-coinage began. At Christmas 1559, Elizabeth knighted him as her special economic advisor. One method Sir Thomas had used to make his own fortune and raise huge sums of money for the royal coffers was by trading on the Antwerp Bourse. It was the international stock market of the day. He bought foreign currency when the rate of exchange for pounds sterling was high, receiving as many foreign coins as possible, then exchanging them back to sterling when rates were low, so he got back more pounds than he'd paid out at the start. As far as possible, he did the same when borrowing the enormous amounts required by the Crown and doing his best to repay the debts when sterling was strong. It worked often enough for Sir Thomas to become very wealthy and yet remain a reliable trader – for the most part.

But the Wars of Religion, between Catholic and Protestant states, were breaking out across Europe. Now wasn't a good time for the financial markets and Antwerp was at the heart of the conflict as the Netherlands, mostly Protestant, were ruled by Philip II, the Catholic King of Spain. Sir Thomas decided it would solve many of his difficulties if England, and more specifically London, was at the centre of the world's monetary trade. Antwerp's Bourse was a building designed as a meeting place for merchants and bankers with regulated trading hours.

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In London, such business was conducted in Lombard Street – literally in the street – with no shelter from the English weather nor any degree of privacy to discuss contracts and deals. This last had always been seen as a means of ensuring transparency and honesty but times were changing. Monarchs and merchants didn't want every casual passerby to know of their financial difficulties or sharp practices.

With merchants withdrawing from Antwerp, fearing the approach of war, Sir Thomas determined to build a proper bourse in London. His fine town house, Gresham House, just off Bishopsgate, was nearing completion. The house surrounded an inner courtyard, keeping the noise of the city at bay, decorated with the Gresham badge: the Golden Grasshopper. It had its own stable block and a large walled garden faced south. Eight alms houses for the deserving poor – probably Thomas's fellow mercers grown old and fallen on less prosperous times – were included in the house design, though tucked away behind the main wing, out of sight. As far as Thomas was concerned, this charitable gesture fulfilled his civic obligations as a leading citizen. Unlike his father, uncle and other wealthy mercers, he had no time to spare, serving as a sheriff or lord mayor or taking up any other civic office. But he did have time, in January 1565, to send his personal surveyor to the mayor and

aldermen of London with an offer to build a bourse, similar to that in Antwerp and using the Flemish labourers who had constructed and almost finished Gresham House. The offer was accepted.

A site for the new bourse was found between Cornhill and Threadneedle Street and the city authorities bought up the plot – mostly owned by the



View of the first Royal Exchange, looking towards the entrance with the belfry [and grasshopper] above.
[Wikipedia.commons]

Dean and Chapter of Canterbury Cathedral. Eighty families were evicted and re-housed and the old buildings demolished at a cost of £3,500 or £3.5 million at today's values. And just like the costs of large civic projects today, they soon spiralled. Although Sir Thomas could well afford the outlay, he was determined to recoup the money in profits once the bourse began trading.

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The grand building was to be built of bricks from Battersea, oak beams from Suffolk and Hampshire but vast quantities of marble were shipped in at huge expense from Europe. Sir Thomas employed the Flemish bricklayers and masons who had built his house but the Bricklayers' Company protested that English workmen were being robbed of their rightful employment and local labourers were taken on as well.

Despite the industrial disputes, the building was roofed and ready for business by Christmas 1567. Gresham intended to call it the London or Gresham's Bourse. On the ground floor was an open quadrangle surrounded by a covered arcade of marble columns and paved with black and white marble where the merchants and money men could transact business. Entry was through a wide classical arch on the south side, bearing Gresham's arms, with a belfry on

which was mounted an enormous golden grasshopper – Thomas was making certain the world knew this was his pet project. Above the arcading on the upper floor were 120 small shops, selling everything from silks, velvets and jewellery to apothecaries' remedies and surgeons' services. Nothing of this building – England's first shopping mall – survives, having been utterly destroyed by the Great Fire of London just a century later, although by 1666, it was old fashioned and in



A cannon from the wreck found in the Thames Estuary in 2003. Note the letters 'T' and 'G' on the gun barrel. [https://www.wessexarch.co.uk/our-work/wreck-thames-princes-channel]

decay. Nevertheless, it has been rebuilt a number of times since and a Victorian version still stands.

On 23 January 1571, after three years of business had proved its success, Queen Elizabeth came to open it officially. Feasted at his house by Sir Thomas, she was then given a guided tour, visiting the boutiques which were



Sir Thomas Gresham's tomb, St Helen's Church, Bishopsgate, London. [en.wikipedia.org]

'richly furnished with all sorts of the finest wares in the city', according to John Stow, a contemporary observer. No doubt, Sir Thomas was feeling smug and self-satisfied but then the queen ruined his day. A trumpet sounded and a royal herald announced that Gresham's bourse was now 'the Royal Exchange and so to be called from henceforth and not otherwise,' – my italics. Worse still, his coat-of-arms above the grand entrance was shoved aside to make room for Elizabeth's royal arms. Whatever Thomas's thoughts on the subject, the queen wanted it made clear that she was the ultimate authority in England where money matters were concerned.

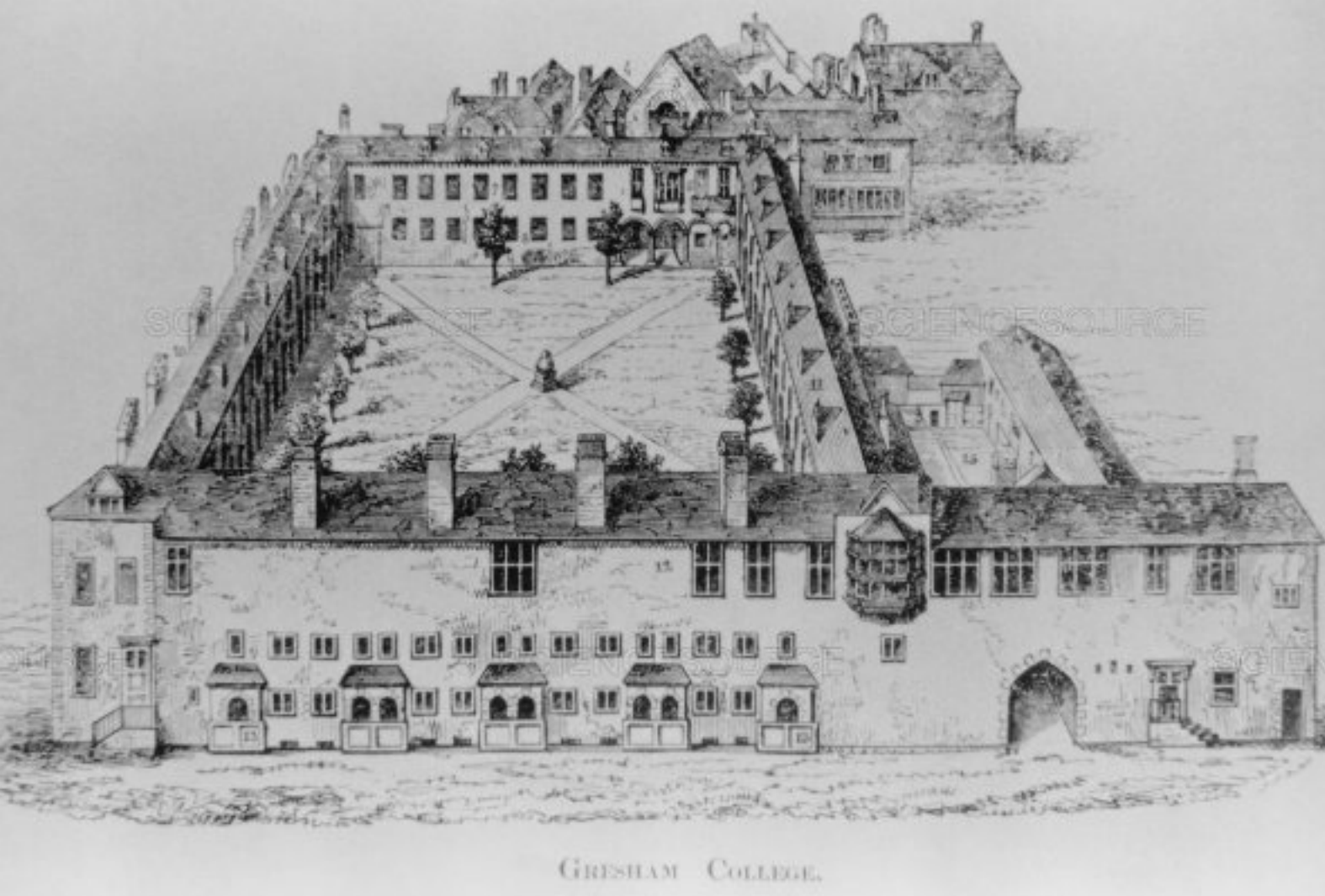
We have heard how, earlier in his career, Sir Thomas was involved in importing weapons of war from Europe into England but by the 1570s, he was reversing the procedure. Among his various business interests he had a couple of iron foundries in Kent. The Weald of Kent had been a centre of the iron industry since medieval times

because both iron ore and plentiful supplies of charcoal were available locally. In 1574 and again in 1578 Sir Thomas was granted licences to export cannons, made at his own foundries, to Denmark. The guns were shipped

down the River Medway from the heart of Kent, into the Thames and across the North Sea but one at least of his ships came to grief. We know because an English-built ship, dendro-dated to c.1570, was rediscovered in 2003, sunk in the Thames Estuary. It was carrying a cargo of cast iron bars, lead pipe, tin and cannons marked with the grasshopper logo and the initials 'TG'.

Sir Thomas was now sixty and decided it was time to draw up his will. Never one for straightforward dealing, his bequests would have his family, executors, employees and various institutions tied up in litigation for decades to come, trying to sort out the mess. Properties bequeathed had sub-clauses and provisos attached. For example, Gresham House was left to his wife for her lifetime but her sons from her first marriage had lived there too. When Thomas's widow died in 1596, were her sons allowed to remain or to be evicted? Nobody was certain.

On Saturday evening 21 November 1579, Thomas had returned to Gresham House having been busy at the Royal Exchange for most of the day. 'He suddenly fell down in the



GRESHAM COLLEGE

kitchen and being taken up was found

speechless and presently dead.’ His funeral in St Helen’s Bishopsgate was held on 15 December with all the dazzle and display expected as he was laid to rest in a grand tomb, designed by him and constructed by his favoured Flemish architect. The tomb survived the Great Fire of London and the Blitz of 1940 but was damaged twice in the 1990s by terrorist bombs. However, it has been repaired.

There was a good reason why Sir Thomas’s stepson should leave Gresham House because, after his widow’s death, he intended that the house should become a college to rival and exceed any centre of learning at Oxford or Cambridge. London didn’t have a university or any kind of higher educational institution apart

Gresham House/College c.1600

from the Inns of Court which taught lawyers

and barristers. Sir Thomas’s ideas were revolutionary. Unlike Oxbridge colleges, students at Gresham didn’t have to be of a particular religious persuasion [Church of England only], they weren’t required to take an entrance exam nor was there any testing of subjects studied. Students could be merchants, craftsmen or apprentices or anyone who wanted to benefit from further education. There were no fees, no live-in requirements nor were students obliged to attend a set number of lectures. Everything was informal but no paper qualifications were required or awarded. Perhaps the most shocking thing was that about half the lectures were to be given in English not just in Latin, as at every other seat of learning

TONI MOUNT

from grammar schools upward. This was education aimed at the common sort.

The lecturers were to be paid salaries and given free accommodation in the fine rooms of Gresham House – now to be known as Gresham College. At Oxford and Cambridge the lecturers received payment of tuition fees directly from the students, so the teachers of popular subjects were more highly paid and professors of less popular subjects hard to find. But at Gresham, all professors were treated equally, even though some suites of rooms were grander than others. But Sir Thomas had failed to stipulate how many lectures in which language the professors should deliver. The trustees, jointly the City of London and the Mercers’ Company, were to pay the

professors from the profits made at the Royal Exchange but Gresham’s will made no mention of repairs or upkeep of the building and how that should be paid for.

Despite so many difficulties, times of success and failure, Gresham College is still going. Its original building, Sir Thomas’s splendid house, is long gone and the college was moved to a new site but its free lectures, open to all with a desire to learn, have millions of students across the world, thanks to the internet. However devious and underhanded Sir Thomas was as a wheeler-dealer and financial whizz-kid, his legacy continues to benefit us after more than 400 years through Gresham College.

TONI MOUNT

QUIZ ANSWERS

- | | |
|---|--|
| KATHERINE PARR
Edward Burgh
John Neville, 3rd Baron Latimer
Henry VIII of England
Thomas Seymour, 1st Baron Seymour | MARGARET BEAUFORT, MOTHER OF HENRY VII
John de la Pole, 2nd Duke of Suffolk
Edmund Tudor, 1st Earl of Richmond
Henry Stafford
Thomas Stanley, 1st Earl of Derby |
| MARY BOLEYN, SISTER OF ANNE BOLEYN
William Carey
William Stafford | MARY TUDOR, SISTER OF HENRY VIII
Louis XII of France
Charles Brandon, 1st Duke of Suffolk |
| LETTICE KNOLLYS, DAUGHTER OF CATHERINE CAREY
Christopher Blount
Walter Devereux, 1st Earl of Essex
Robert Dudley, 1st Earl of Leicester | MARY QUEEN OF SCOTS
Francis II of France
Henry Stuart, Lord Darnley
James Hepburn, 4th Earl of Bothwell |

Charlie

The Afterlife of Anne Boleyn

Stephanie Russo

ON BOOKS



The life of Anne Boleyn has been told many times, there are countless biographies on her, as well as fictional works, TV shows and movies. However, a study of the works themselves has never been done until now. Stephanie Russo's latest book *The Afterlife of Anne Boleyn* looks at how Anne has been portrayed in fiction and on the screen. This is an interesting angle, looking at how it has changed over time and how our perception of her has changed, as well as influenced by what is going on around us. It is part of Palgrave's *Queenship and Power* series, which consists of numerous academic works looking at queenship throughout the years.

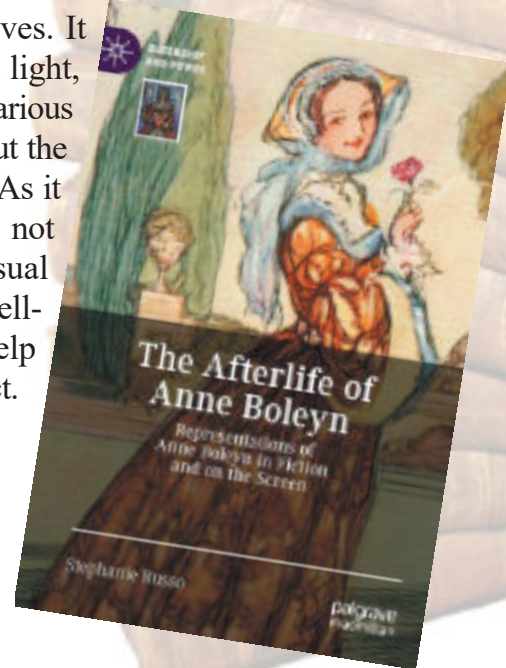
Russo goes through the centuries since Anne Boleyn's death in different chapters, with a final chapter on her portrayal on-screen at the end. She starts the book by making it clear that it is:

'the story of those hundreds of iterations of Anne Boleyn. It attempts to account for the myriad literary representations of Anne Boleyn that have appeared across the centuries in order to trace the way that she has become a symbol for a variety of conflicting ideas about women and power. This book takes as its focus literary and screen representations of Anne Boleyn, and thus academic and popular historical accounts are included only where they directly shape subsequent literary representations.'

It is interesting to see how different eras portray Anne in different ways; some as a martyr, some as a seductress, with many more versions of Anne in-between. Even by the end of the sixteenth century, Anne's life had been twisted and changed to fit numerous accounts. The author explores these different depictions, shedding much light on the struggles of women throughout history at the same time:

'By the end of the sixteenth century, then, much of the texture of Anne's afterlife was established. She had been compared to figures from Christ to Jezebel, and from Guinevere to Laura. She was either Protestant martyr, working quietly to spread the cause of reform, or the Concubine, the whore who destroyed Catholicism in England. It is the perpetual trap for women: virgin or whore.'

The Afterlife of Anne Boleyn is not a traditional biography, far from it, but it is still a book anyone interested in Anne should have on their shelves. It shows Anne in a different light, viewing her through the various portrayals of her throughout the years since her execution. As it is an academic work, it is not aimed so much at the casual reader, but it is very well-researched and will help anyone studying the subject.



Mary Queen of Scots' Secretary: William Maitland – Politician, Reformer and Conspirator

Robert Stedall



William Maitland was a prominent politician and notable figure during Mary Queen of Scots' time on the throne, yet he has been surprisingly neglected in the years since his death, with no real studies being done on him. Robert Stedall, who has written several books on this period, has turned to Maitland in his latest work, *Mary Queen of Scots' Secretary*. Sadly, Stedall's book proves why Maitland hasn't been studied in any real depth.

The author starts by going very quickly over William Maitland's birth and rise to prominence. It would not take long for the reader to realise that there isn't much about the man himself to write about and unfortunately this is true throughout most of the book. It is instead more the story of Mary Queen of Scots with some of Maitland's life and acts appearing where possible. It is soon evident that there is not enough on William Maitland to justify a biography on him. It is a shame as he sounds like an interesting character, as evidenced here by William Cecil's report on him:

Cecil had generally found the Scottish lords self-seeking and difficult to deal with, but warmly acknowledged the services of Lord James and Maitland, which only cemented their friendship. He mentioned Maitland with special distinction, reporting to Elizabeth that he 'was very helpful' and 'worth six others', being 'of most credit and wit [wisdom],' bearing 'all the burden of foresight' by anticipating problems before they arose.'

Stedall uses a lot of sources cited by other historians, like Alison Weir and Linda Porter, failing to follow up on contemporary accounts and instead relying on these being

correct. Some of the sources the historians cite are available online, like the *Calendar of State Papers for Spain*, so this seems an unusual way to do things.

Mary Queen of Scots' Secretary is an ambitious book that fails to deliver on what it promises. It is disappointing, as it isn't really a biography of William Maitland, despite what the blurb says and the author's attempts. It is a good effort, but Maitland is just not the right subject for a book. Stedall struggles to find material on him, instead pulling a lot from his other works and other historians. It is a difficult book to recommend, as it does provide some good background as to the politics of Scotland during the later sixteenth century, but there are many works out there that would better suit those purposes, including some of Stedall's previous books.

CHARLIE FENTON



“WOLF HALL” AND THE TUDOR CENTURY GUIDED WALK



My name is SEAN MITCHELL and I am a London Blue Badge Guide with a particular interest in the history of ideas. London is ‘the capital of the World’ in this respect because, at least since the beginning of 19th century, there has not been a single major domestic or international movement or cause that has not played out *some* part of its story on one of London’s myriad streets.

Having done walking tours on my particular favourite theme of 19th and early 20th century radical movements for a number of years, I began to realise that the reasons London became the host to all these domestic and international ideas and causes could be traced back to the Tudor century. Of course, the most important event within that century was the Reformation.

It is rather poignant to reflect on the fact that in three years’ time in 2024 London will mark half a millennium since William Tyndale boarded a ship on the River Thames and went into exile on the Continent for his cause of translating the Bible into English. Tyndale had to *leave* London for the cause of religious tolerance, and, although he tragically paid with his life, he made a huge contribution to a transformation of this country which

meant that for hundreds of years subsequently religious and then political refugees would be *arriving* in London to seek sanctuary for their faith or ideas.

The tragic irony of Tyndale’s story is that

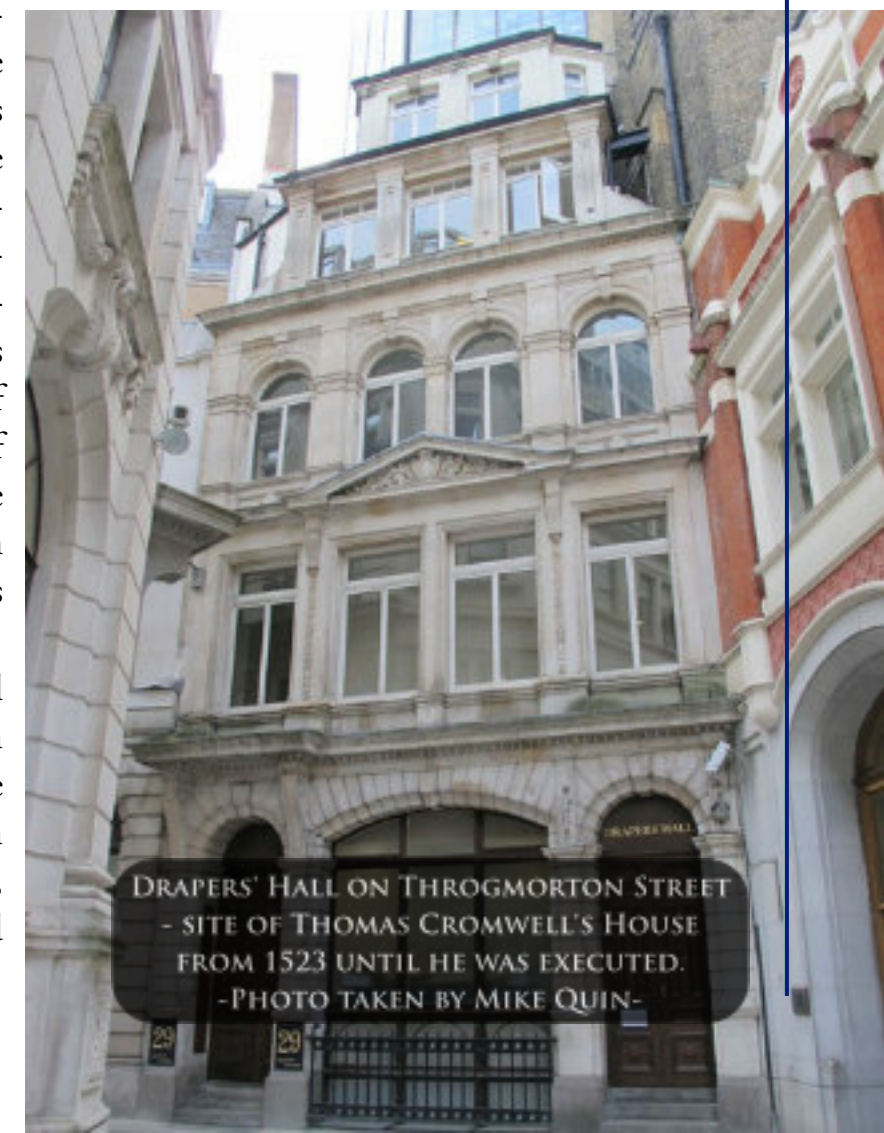
the same Henry VIII who forced him to flee the country for his evangelical cause also broke with Rome over the Pope’s refusal to give him his divorce from Catherine of Aragon, so he could marry Anne



Boleyn in the expectation of having the legitimate male heir he craved with her. Indeed, the site of the hearing of *The King's Great Matter* at the former Blackfriars Monastery is the first stop on this guided walk through the Tudor century. At Stop Three of the walk we will see the birthplace of Sir Thomas More who, despite being one of the leading Humanist scholar-intellectuals of the age, was also fanatically determined to destroy Tyndale’s challenge to the Roman Catholic church’s monopoly on the interpretation of the Christian faith, but then himself was executed when his original close religious and personal alliance with Henry no longer suited the King’s political priorities.

But whilst Henry may have still been Roman Catholic by conviction and only made himself Head of the English Church for his own mercenary dynastic political reasons, some extraordinary figures around

him *were* committed to the Protestant Reformatory cause. None was more exceptional than Thomas Cromwell: the working-class boy who changed the world! Obtaining Henry’s divorce by making him Head of the English Church through Parliament was one of the seminal events that shaped European, and thus ultimately world history, and is still echoing today in the bitterly controversial ‘Brexit’ decision. Like many of the individuals from working-class backgrounds who have done well since, this blacksmith’s boy from Putney who set the trend for the social mobility of English society that only seems to have collapsed in our own times, Thomas Cromwell had a touch of the ‘*Trotters*’ *Independent Traders*’ about him when he built the most ostentatious



house in the City of London after he became Henry's first minister! Curiously, the Draper's Hall that stands on the site of Cromwell's house today has some architectural similarities with it which will be highlighted on the guided walk. Cromwell's predictably *nouveau riche* tendencies were also combined with an inevitable ruthlessness in fulfilling the King's wishes given the fact that his lowly birth meant that his position was *entirely* dependent on the King's favour, especially when we recall that the old conservative Catholic aristocrats in the King's Privy Council like the Duke of Norfolk bitterly resented this parvenu and were just waiting for the opportunity to crush him. But notwithstanding his political ruthlessness and personal ostentation, he was also a man with a religious ideal to bring about, what was *at the time*, the *socially and culturally revolutionary* Protestant Reformation in England.

If we interpret the title of Hilary Mantel's famous novel about Cromwell to refer to the politics of the Reformation in the Tudor Court that he engaged in rather than the name of the *actual* house called Wolf Hall (based on the contemporary Latin expression: *Homo homini lupus est* –

'man is a wolf to man'), then Draper's Hall on Throgmorton Street can claim to be the site of "Wolf Hall" where Cromwell planned the Dissolution of the Monasteries, plotted the downfall of Anne Boleyn and attempted to ensure the continuation of Protestant monarchy through arranging Henry's marriage to Anne of Cleves. The Cleves marriage was, of course, the point

when Cromwell's luck ran out. The Duke of Norfolk was finally able to exact revenge on this "upstart" and promoted his own power base by dangling his young compliant niece, Catherine Howard, in front of the King as a Catholic alternative to Anne who, paradoxical as it may seem for a man who was capable of such ruthlessness to women, failed to inspire the King's *self-image* as a chivalric, romantic hero. But in the high stakes game of Tudor courtly intrigue, fate proved extremely fickle and Archbishop Thomas Cranmer





was able to reassert the Protestant faction's influence once again by revealing Catherine's infidelity for which she paid with her life. The execution sites of both Cromwell and Catherine are a stone's throw from one another and are included on this guided walk.

However, Thomas Cromwell's story is just *one* of the world-changing events of the extraordinary *Tudor Century* featured on this guided walk. The walk will also include the building that marks the beginning of London's long history of religious and then political tolerance under Henry's son, Edward VI who, if he had lived longer, would have made this same site the springboard for Protestant revolution across the European Continent. The City of London can also boast the site of the *Tudor* origins of the English Scientific Revolution of 17th century which provided the navigational know-how for the *Protestant* 'Age of Exploration'. We will also see the site of the house where Sir

Francis Walsingham created the world's first modern spy network in order to protect Queen Elizabeth I from Catholic assassination plots and thus where he sat, like a spider in its web, manipulating the threads of Mary of Queen of Scots' entrapment to its fatal denouement.

This latter stop on the walk is also the site in London that commemorates what has to be the most unexpected foreign alliance that England ever made and that, even more surprisingly, set up a recurring pattern over the subsequent 400 years of history.

Extraordinarily, *all* of these events played out some of their history on the streets of the City of London and I will show you and tell you the story of these locations in my *"Wolf Hall" and the Tudor Century Walk*.

**Please contact me by email to book your place on my tour:
londonideastour@yahoo.co.uk**

SEAN MITCHELL

THE TUDOR SOCIETY



Members' Bulletin

I really can't believe how quickly this year has flown by – it's October already! It's the time of year when I want to spend my evenings curled up with a good book. If you love doing that too, then do check out Charlie's reviews in *Tudor Life* for inspiration, or our "recommend reading" section on the Tudor Society website under the "resources" tab.

If you love Tudor fiction then I'd highly recommend C J Sansom's Matthew Shardlake series of mysteries and Toni Mount's Seb Foxley medieval mysteries – you can really get lost in those!

As you know, we had two interns, Emma and Merel, working with us for a few months for their degree. Well, I'm happy to announce that from October they will be working with us on a more permanent basis. I'm sure you will join me in giving them a big Tudor Society welcome. They will be handling our social media and also doing regular content for us. It's lovely to have them on board and we are planing for the Tudor Society to keep on growing and bringing more people to the amazing history we all love.

One exciting development we've had is that a number of historical places and theatres have been in touch letting us know about events they're running. News of our work is spreading.

And finally, in this issue, you'll find a tribute to regular contributor Riognach o'Geraghty who died in August. She was a beautiful lady through and through and I will miss both her articles and our friendship. We send our love to her family and friends.

CLAIRE RIDGWAY

PERFUMES AND PERSONAL HYGIENE IN TUDOR TIMES

Most members of the Tudor society love Queen Elizabeth I. Elizabeth reigned England from 7 September 1533 until her death on 24 March 1603 when she was 69 years old. But it is not so well known that she had a perfume which was made to her recipe including sugar, rosewater and some other ingredients. Elizabeth I's perfume recipe was rediscovered by Laurie Chetwood and garden designer Patrick Collins in an old recipe book in the Royal Horticultural Society's library in London. In 2009 it was produced for sale by Historic Royal Palaces after they had recreated it synthetically. The original recipe is said to be:

*“Take 8 grains of musk,
put in rose water 8 spoonfuls,
3 spoonfuls of Damask-water
and a quarter of an ounce of sugar.
Boil for five hours and strain it”*

During the Renaissance, a general interest in perfume began to blossom for the royals and aristocracy. This was an expensive undertaking as some fragrances had to be brought in from far away such as Italy or even further afield. Male fragrances were created by mixing ingredients like pepper, spices and others that were said to smell manly. Even Henry VIII was said to fragrance his clothes with lavender and orange blossom water. One interesting example was a scent called "Magellan", named after the great explorer of the same name as he brought back exotic fruits and spices unknown in Europe at the time. Other perfumes were named "Christopher Columbus" and "Vasco da Gama". The Tudors were drawn to the adventure of it all.

For the women, perfume was also becoming popular and one interesting development

was perfumed leather. Elizabeth I loved her perfumed gloves, and what Elizabeth liked became fashionable at court.

What about Person Hygiene?

The modern public thinks that hygiene was mostly ignored by Tudor people, even though they used to work very hard toiling on the land. Again and again, we see depictions of dirty peasants in films and on TV. And to some extent, our perceptions are right, certainly when compared to modern-day hygiene. For us today, everyone from the lowest to the highest wash regularly to remove dirt and sweat. That may be right for our modern attitude and knowledge. But it wasn't so 500 years ago...

In Elizabethan times, people were afraid of using water to wash and clean their bodies because of the worry of falling ill. They believed that they could become unwell by getting water through the pores of their skin. But that doesn't mean they were dirty. Instead, they tried to close their pores by using powder to build some shield against sickness and perfumes to remove body odour. This way they felt both safe and clean. Taking a bath was a rare occasion in those times. Would you believe that Louis XIV was said to have taken a bath just twice in his whole life?

What was Tudor beauty?

In Elizabethan times, white skin became a sign of ideal beauty, although as we now know the lead white used was not healthy for the skin. The lead and other chemicals used to whiten the skin were harmful and could cause lead poisoning over prolonged use. Additionally, it was responsible for skin impurities because the lead white was never totally washed away. Today we can only imagine the shocking sight of Elizabeth I's face when Robert Devereux entered her private rooms on 28 September 1599 and disturbed her beauty ritual. Elizabeth was well in her later years at this point.

Although Elizabeth always took care of her beauty and her appearance, and even more so as she became old, she tried to hide her years and the scars of early smallpox through make-up. Elizabeth died in 1603, and some scientists and doctors have the opinion that she could have become much older without her skin bleaching make-up of vinegar and lead. In the end, her vanity may have hastened her death.

Staying healthy

In medieval and Renaissance society, many people rightly had a fear of pestilence and plagues. They could not explain the cause of these afflictions and did not have any scientific or medical explanations available. It was many centuries later that the real origins of plagues were found. Once bacteria had been discovered, personal hygiene became much better, and of course, eventually, antibiotics were developed, making infection a lot less dangerous. We no longer fear getting the plague by water penetrating our skin thanks to people like Robert Koch and Louis Pasteur. We now understand the need for personal hygiene and the dark and fearful age of death by plagues has mostly passed.

BY TUDOR SOCIETY MEMBER ANGELA OSE



Ferdinand Magellan

Vasco da Gama

Christopher Columbus



TUDOR FOODIES

It is with a very sad heart that we must say a farewell to Rhi who sadly passed away in August 2021. Rhi has been a regular contributor to Tudor Life Magazine and the Tudor Society since January 2017. Rhi's knowledge of Tudor food and eating customs was amazing and she brought her knowledge to us in a very engaging way each month. From recipes to tales of wedding feasts, Rhi shared it all. Milk, cheese, alcohol, bread, honey, fish, meat, a wide variety of strange and interesting things that were eaten by the Tudors, and of course her favourite subject of all was spices. We still have a few articles to publish which were pre-written by Rhi, which is a little bitter-sweet. We hope you'll take some time to read back through her monthly articles and enjoy her perspective on Tudor life and times. As she ended all her emails with us - Warmest Regards.



When I sat down to write this article, I thought there'd be plenty of first-hand evidence as to what Henry VII, his wives, and children were particularly fond of eating. How wrong I was! The Tudors were still foodies in their own right, but finding out what the Tudor royals preferred instead of the general Tudor population was quite a task. Still, I've managed to find some unique Tudor foodie items that might just pique your interest and maybe your appetite.

When I sat down to write this article, I thought there'd be plenty of first-hand evidence as to what Henry VII, his wives, and children were particularly fond of eating. How wrong I was! The Tudors were still foodies in their own right, but finding out what the Tudor royals preferred instead of the general Tudor population was quite a task. Still, I've managed to find some unique Tudor foodie items that might just pique your interest and maybe your appetite.

What started me off down this particular rabbit hole was the chance discovery of a recipe for a spice blend called *Powder for the King of England's Herring Pies*, referring to Edward III (1312-1377). This blend called for the following:

"Half a pound of ginger

*Half a pound of peppe
Quater pound of cinnamon
One ounce of cloves
One ounce of cubebs
Half an ounce of grains of paradise
Half an ounce of galingale"*

Exactly how many herrings were needed, or how many pies it produced isn't mentioned. But what struck me was the sheer volume and extravagance of the spices in the blend. The total cost of these spices must have been exorbitant, but Edward was king again, and kings tend to get what they want. So let's start with the man himself, Henry VIII. For Henry, nothing was too rare or costly for his table, although Edward III might have outdone him in the spice department. I've come across culinary curiosities such as grilled beaver's tails gracing

Henry's table, along with baked lampreys and porpoise, seagull and peacock. The diaries of modern explorers record that the flesh of seagulls is particularly tough and oily and not wonderfully palatable. The same can be said of peacock. Who knows, maybe Henry did outdo Edward in the spice department after all. I also found references to a dish of bear's paw being a particular favourite of the king. So too was wild boar, to the point where it was hunted to the verge of extinction during the reign of Elizabeth I. *Beef aloes*, an early version of beef olives, also made it onto the king's foodie favourites list.

When Henry wasn't living the high life on a primarily carnivorous diet, he was indulging in his love of fruits, jellies, marmalades and other assorted sweet goodies. He introduced apricots to England by way of Italy, Greece, the Middle East and Spain. Catherine of Aragon brought Seville oranges with her, which Henry liked baked into pies and were a particular favourite of his. They involved cooking the skins of Seville oranges to a paste-like consistency, along with apples, sugar, and rosewater (made on-site in the

palace's still room) and baked in a case of sweet pastry. Sounds rather like a marmalade pie, doesn't it? Given Henry's great fondness for sweets, I find myself wondering if he had type 2 diabetes, something that would have been worsened by his weight and immobility.

Another dessert high on the list of Henry's favourites was something I can best describe as a Tudor frangipane. This is a blend of ground almonds, thick cream, rose water (I used orange flower water as that is what's in my pantry), and sugar. Everything is mixed together and baked in a sweet tart shell in a slow oven. I baked mine in terracotta ramekin dishes and included a layer of peaches underneath the frangipane. It takes about 30-40 minutes to cook in a slow oven (150-180C) and rises beautifully. But of course, by the time I got mine out of the oven and was ready to take the photos, they'd collapsed. Apologies for that, but it in no way affects the taste.

Next on the list of Tudor foodies is Catherine of Aragon,



and she too had some peculiar favourite foods. Most notable would have to be her liking for whale (species unknown) and porpoise. Who knows, maybe the Tudor court was onto something when it came to eating porpoise.

As I mentioned earlier, Catherine introduced the Seville orange to England and to the royal court. She also introduced the strange and foreign concept

of salads: albeit cooked or semi-cooked ones. While the concept of a cooked salad sound odd to us modern types, apparently, they were all the rage in Catherine's native Spain. We know from extant medieval cookbooks that vegetables were considered peasant fare and not fit for a refined royal palate. This is partly because most vegetables are grown in soil that may or may not have had animal

manure or human nightsoil applied as a fertiliser. So, in theory, at least, cooking lettuce before eating it might have had some relatively sound medical thinking behind it. Obviously, things like artichokes have to be cooked before eating and are actually quite nice in a salad or by themselves with olive oil and lemon. Another benefit of Catherine's taste for salads was they introduced a greater range of fruits and vegetables into the mainly meat-based royal diet. A

knock-on effect of this would have been a decrease in vitamin deficiency-related diseases such as survey, bleeding disorders, night blindness, and a whole host of cancers and digestive problems. Nice work, Catherine!

Anne Boleyn also had a hand in improving the royal diet with her fondness for fruits, especially damsons and pears, plums and cherries, and the humble strawberry. And then there's the infamous 'maid of

honour tarts'. The story goes that Henry came across a group of ladies in waiting, including Anne, eating tarts on one fine day. So, of course, being the king, Henry demanded a tart for himself and was delighted by both their taste and the texture. The rest, as they say, is history. There's even another story that Henry ordered the creator of the tarts to be confined to the grounds of Richmond Palace so he could demand the pastries be made whenever he desired them.

Our next Tudor foodie is the tragic figure of Jane Seymour. While it is not unusual for pregnant women to experience food cravings, Jane had refined tastes. For example, while pregnant with her son, who would become Edward VI, Jane experienced cravings for quail and quail eggs. Have you seen how small quail are, let alone their eggs! I can just see some poor kitchen maid having to pluck and draw lots of these small game birds before cooking them in her queen's favourite manner. And as for the eggs, I shudder to think how many quail eggs it takes to make an omelette for one or the patience it takes to carefully remove the shells from boiled quail eggs. I

can speak to deshelling boiled quail eggs, and it is definitely not a task for the quick-tempered.

There is also a theory that food featured in Jane's post-delivery illness led to her death. At the time, the accepted version of events was that Jane's ladies in waiting had given her something 'unsuitable' to eat, resulting in food poisoning. At first glance, the queen's symptoms do resemble a bad case of bacterial food poisoning, with fever, abdominal pain and vomiting chief among them. However, given Jane's protracted labour, modern historians now believe that she was probably suffering from any number of postpartum infections or perhaps partial retention of the placenta. Either way, she was a very sick woman, made worse because she could not keep food or drink down.

On that rather sad note, I'll end part one of Tudor foodies here. In the following article, we'll explore the favourite foods of Anne of Cleves and Katherine Howard, Catherine Parr and Edward VI, Mary I and Elizabeth I.

RIOIGNACH O'GERAGHTY



NEXT MONTH IN YOUR REGULAR

Tudor Life

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ROLAND HUI

The Portraiture of
Katherine of Aragon

SUSAN ABERNETHY

Agnes Tilney Howard

PLUS

SIMON BURROWS

Arundel Castle

and much more...

THIS MAGAZINE
comes out *every month* for

ALL MEMBERS

We hope you enjoy it!

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