

# Tudor Life

THE TUDOR  
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## STAR-CROSSED LOVERS: TRAGIC TUDOR ROMANCES

Margaret Douglas and  
Thomas Howard

Mary and Charles Brandon

Arbella Stuart and  
William Seymour

**PLUS**

The Wedding Feast

**AND MUCH MORE**



**Romeo and Juliet: Most Excellent for Tragedy**

**By Jane Moulder**



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## STAR-CROSSED LOVERS: TRAGIC TUDOR ROMANCES

Star-crossed lovers often ended up in bar-crossed cells in Tudor Britain. Of course, there is the tragic example of Henry VIII's fifth queen, Catherine Howard, the subject of one of our articles here, but it also caused scandal and ruin to many in the Tudor elite. In this issue of "Tudor Life," we look at various couples, the price of their liaisons, and why we are still fascinated by the intertwined narratives of love in a time of danger.

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**FRONT:** Arbella Stuart  
**ABOVE:** Romeo and Juliet's balcony  
in Verona, Italy © Maksym Harbar

**GARETH RUSSELL**  
**EDITOR**



# Tudor Life

The background of the cover is a photograph of a large, multi-story red brick Tudor castle with many windows and a central arched entrance. In the foreground, there are two portraits. On the left is a portrait of a woman with a pale face, wearing an elaborate gold necklace and a dark dress. On the right is a portrait of a man with a full dark beard and a crown, wearing a dark robe with a gold and red patterned collar.

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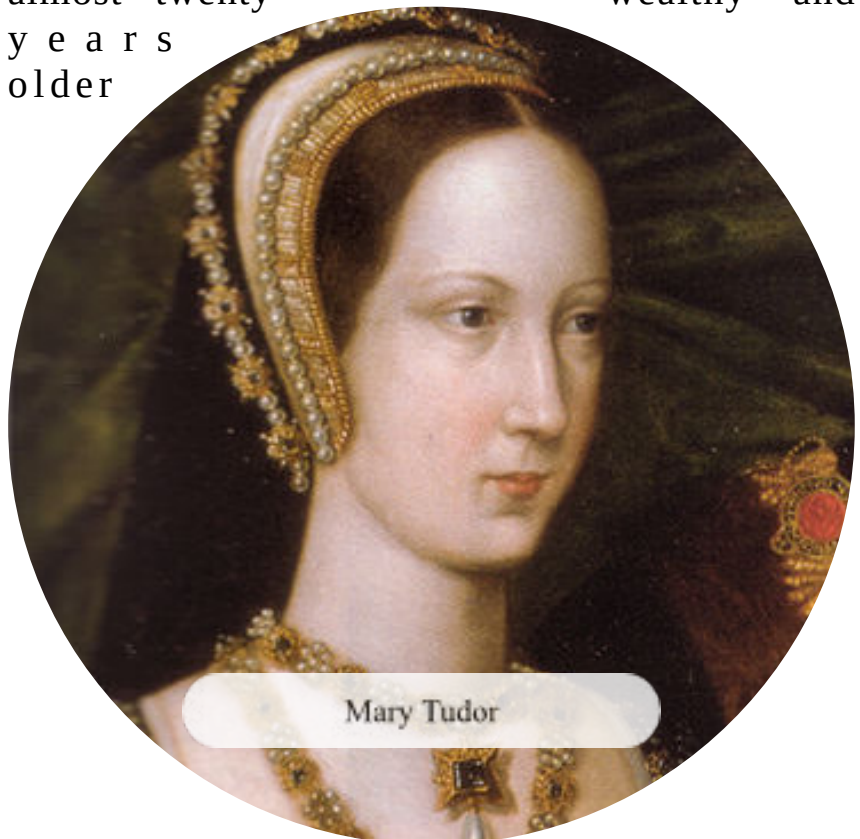


# Mary Tudor & Charles Brandon

**M**ary Tudor was the daughter of Henry VII and Elizabeth of York, Henry VIII's little sister and his favourite sibling. They grew up together at the Tudor court and remained close when their elder sister Margaret left England for Scotland and her marriage to James IV.

Mary had grown into a beautiful young woman. She was often with her brother and his band of brothers – the young men who surrounded him. One man in particular caught her eye. The dashing Charles Brandon, who would become the Duke of Suffolk, was a constant fixture at her brother's side. He was handsome and charming but he was also a man with a chequered marital past.

daughter by her in 1506. But instead of marrying her, he married her aunt, Margaret Neville, Lady Mortimer. She was almost twenty years older than him and a rich widower. He disregarded Anne and their child to marry a woman who was wealthy and



Mary Tudor

Charles had had an affair with Anne Browne, the only child of Sir Anthony Browne by his first wife, Eleanor Ughtred and had a



marry an old and ailing one. Louis XII was in his fifties, toothless, gouty, with a scurvy-like skin condition, and rumoured to have syphilis and leprosy. She would become Queen of France but at a price.

It all happened so quickly, she barely had time to dread it. On 13 August, Mary's proxy marriage to the French king was held at Greenwich. By October she was on her way to France. Before she left however she made her brother promise that after the king's death she would be allowed to marry whom she wanted.

On the 9 October Mary married King Louis XII of France in a sumptuous ceremony at Abbeville. The Duke of Norfolk and Marquis of Dorset escorted Mary, dressed magnificently in gold brocade and trimmed with ermine, along the aisle to join her husband. Louis presented her with a

immediately began selling off her lands for a profit. Anne's family were rightly furious and began legal proceedings against him until Charles was forced to annul the marriage and return to Anne. In early 1508 Charles married her in a secret ceremony at Stepney. But Anne's family were not impressed and wanted their marriage to be public so a second ceremony was held at St Michael's, Cornhill. When Anne died in 1511, it left him free to become betrothed to his eight-year-old ward, Elizabeth Grey.

He may have seemed like a dashing, athletic, handsome young man – and he probably was – but he did not have a great relationship history and whether Mary could overlook that or not, her brother was not about to let her to follow her heart. Mary was a pawn in Henry's political game and when on 7 August 1514, England signed a peace treaty with France, Mary was offered to King Louis XII as a bride.

Mary must have been appalled to hear that instead of a handsome young man she was to

necklace of diamonds and rubies before they sat before the Bishop of Bayeux for the nuptial mass. After the ceremony Mary returned to her rooms to rest for a while before the evening's entertainments and the ordeal that was to follow.

Louis boasted the next morning that he had 'crossed the river three times that night and would have done more had he chosen'. Poor Mary! But as Louis' health began to fail, she did her duty and cared for her new husband. After eighty-two days of marriage, the King of France died on 1 January 1515. It was rumoured he had over-exerted himself with his new bride but it was more likely complications of the chronic gout he suffered from.

Mary just wanted to go home but she had to wait. The French court required that she declare she was not pregnant therefore allowing Francis I, Louis' son-in-law, to succeed. Forty days of



Henry VIII, Mary Tudor's brother

m o u r n i n g would also ensure she was not carrying a child. She kept to her darkened rooms in the Hotel de Cluny dressed in traditional white, the colour of royal mourning, earning her the title 'la reine blanche' or 'the white queen'.

During this time she fought off the new king's advances. Francis I, although married, was in no hurry to see her leave and was contemplating putting his wife aside for the young and beautiful Mary. But Mary had other plans

a n d eventually asked for his support in marrying the person she really wanted to be with – Charles Brandon.

And he was on his way. Henry sent Brandon, who was still contracted to his ward Elizabeth Grey, over to France to aid his sister and once there Mary convinced Charles to marry her in a secret ceremony at the Hotel de Cluny with only Francis and a handful of attendants present. Henry reacted angrily when he had the news but Henry was also an astute and calculating king. He knew that



Mary loved Charles and he also knew that by sending him over to France and then marrying, he was giving his sister a way to return home.

Brandon was worried about Henry's reaction and blamed it all on Mary. 'And the Queen would never let me [be] in rest till I had granted her to be married; and so, to be plain with you, I have married her harettylle and has lyen wyet her, in soo moche [as] I fyer me lyes that sche by wyet chyld.' Henry had not given his permission and he had to be seen to be furious.

Mary wrote to her brother asking for forgiveness. 'Whereupon, Sir, I put my Lord of Suffolk in choice whether he would accomplish the marriage within four days or else that he should never have enjoyed me. Whereby I know well that I constrained him to break such promises as he had made to your Grace... I most humbly and as your sorrowful sister requiring you to have compassion upon

us both and to pardon our offences...' but she also pointedly reminded him of his promise that she could marry whomever she chose after Louis' death.

Whilst other nobles called for Charles Brandon's execution, Henry would hear nothing of it. He allowed them to return to England but demanded they marry again and they were married on 13 May 1515 in the Church of the Observant Friars in Greenwich.

In June, Mary conceived their first child and not long after retired from court life

to begin family life at Westhorpe Hall in East Anglia. She spent most of her time there with her children and Brandon's daughters Anne and Mary by his marriage to Anne Browne. This was what she had always wanted. Charles was often at court but they made their marriage work. Despite their ups and downs including Charles siring at least one illegitimate son and the loss of their own child, they were married for eighteen years before her death in 1533.

**SARAH-BETH  
WATKINS**



Henry VII, Mary Tudor's father



# TOP 10 STAR-CROSSED LOVERS OF THE ERA

BY GARETH RUSSELL

## 1. Queen Catherine de Valois and Owen Tudor

The love affair that launched an era took place between Henry V's French widow, the Dowager Queen Catherine de Valois, and her astonishingly handsome Welsh servant, Owen Tudor. A legend claims the Queen first noticed him bathing naked near the castle and was so dazzled by his good looks that she could not look away. They eloped and had several children together, including the future Henry VII's father Edmund. Owen was imprisoned by his enemies after Queen Catherine's death in childbirth, but he escaped and proved his valour in battle before being executed after being captured once again.



## 2. King Edward IV and Elizabeth Woodville

If Catherine and Owen helped unintentionally launch a dynasty, Edward and Elizabeth nearly helped destroy another. The handsome and promiscuous young King Edward IV threw away a chance to secure his fragile throne by marrying a well-connected foreign princess. Instead, he eloped with “the most beautiful woman in the islands of Britain,” the widowed Lady Elizabeth Grey, better known by her maiden name of Woodville (with various spellings). The couple risked, lost, and gained much, with a large family and splendid court, but terrible political tragedy would overwhelm Elizabeth after King Edward's death in 1483.



## 3. Princess Cecily of York and Sir Thomas Kymbe

A flair for romantic risk was apparently inherited by Edward IV and Elizabeth Woodville's third daughter, Princess Cecily. In the reign of her brother-in-law, Henry VII, the widowed Cecily scandalised the court by eloping with a low-ranking knight called Sir Thomas Kymbe. Banishment and social ruin threatened, until help arrived in the unlikely form of Henry VII's powerful mother, Margaret Beaufort, who took the couple in and gave them the use of her magnificent country house, Collyweston Palace, until the scandal died down. It shows that Beaufort's modern reputation is perhaps a little too harsh.







#### 4. Lady Mary Carey and William Stafford

Anne Boleyn's sister Mary lost her first husband, Sir William Carey, in the epidemic of 1528. Although Anne had subsequently stepped in to help Mary financially, after it turned out that Carey had died deeply in debt, poor Mary increasingly felt ignored by the rest of her family, particularly as their power grew and their interest in her diminished. She eloped with a former soldier called William Stafford, although, as she was at pains to point out, he came from a good (gentry or upper class) family. Her family were nonetheless horrified, yet Mary remained loyal to her second husband. She reconciled with her father, the Earl of Ormond, in later years.



#### 5. Archbishop Thomas Cranmer and Margarete Preu

Due to some confusion in the German sources, we don't even know Margarete Cranmer's maiden name. However, this Lutheran pastor's niece from Germany risked everything for love when she married the English theologian, Thomas Cranmer. He was visiting her home city of Nuremberg, one of the first to embrace the new Protestant idea of married clergy, when they met for the first time, fell in love, and wed. Not long after, Cranmer unexpectedly became the new Archbishop of Canterbury and attitudes in England remained divided on clerical marriages. The couple had to endure long separations - 8 years at one time - until she could return to live with him, bringing their children to England, after Edward VI became king.

#### 6. Lord Hungerford and William Master

Walter Hungerford, 1<sup>st</sup> Baron Hungerford of Heytesbury, was one of the first victims of the Buggery Statute of 1533, which had criminalised all homosexual activity. Lord Hungerford had previously had an affair with a servant called Thomas Smith, then with William Master. Walter and William were putting themselves in mortal danger with their romance, thanks to Henry VIII's new law. William seems to have escaped, but Lord Hungerford - who had also fallen out of favour politically and religiously - was beheaded on the same day as Thomas Cromwell in 1540.



#### 7. Queen Catherine Howard and Thomas Culpepper

No list like this would be complete without them. Later writers saw the couple as Paris and Helen, or Romeo and Juliet, although at the time very few had such a high opinion of courtier Thomas Culpepper. A love letter from Henry VIII's beautiful and charming fifth queen was discovered in November 1541, then used as evidence to send queen and courtier to the block. Interestingly, however, they were not condemned for actually committing adultery, rather for the intent to do so.



## 8. Lady Anne Bouchier and John Lyngfield

The Earl of Essex's daughter, Lady Anne Bouchier, was married whilst still very young to the equally young William Parr. This was long before William's sister Katherine became queen, yet even at this stage the Parrs were a courtly family with significant wealth. The pair grew up to dislike one another and Lady Anne defied all contemporary standards by leaving her husband to live with a former preacher John Lyngfield, whose bastard son, John, she gave birth to. She quit her life in high society to be with John Lyngfield. Back at court, William became an affair with one of Catherine Howard's ladies in waiting. The Parrs divorced in 1543 and both lived for three more decades. Anne had several more children with Lyngfield and they lived together for years.

## 9. Lady Mary Grey and Thomas Keyes

Lady Jane Grey's youngest sister, Lady Mary, survived her eldest sister's downfall and went to court under their kinsman, Queen Elizabeth I. Historians are divided about whether Mary Grey was a dwarf, although we do know that contemporaries commented on her lower-than-average height. The Spanish ambassador cruelly described Lady Mary Grey as "crook-backed and very ugly." She fell madly in love with a palace servant called Thomas Keyes, who was allegedly the tallest man in the court, and they eloped. When the Queen discovered, she was so furious that she had Mary banished and placed under house arrest. Keyes was also imprisoned where he suffered a mental breakdown from which he never recovered. He died shortly after being released. Mary, still defiantly signing her name as "Mary Keyes," died not long after the man for whom she had risked so much.



## 10. King James VI and the Duke of Lennox

Mary, Queen of Scots's only son had a more fluid sexuality than some 20<sup>th</sup> century historians knew what to do with. It's hard however to seriously argue that the king who once wrote a letter on how much he longed to feel the Duke of Buckingham's muscular legs wrapped around him meant such things in a platonic way. As a teenaged King of Scots, James fell hopelessly in love with his charismatic French cousin Esmé, Duke of Lennox, a liaison which so scandalised the Presbyterian church in Scotland that they colluded in a plot to kidnap King James while he was out hunting, detaining him until they banished Esmé and shipped him back to France. Esmé fell ill and died after the journey, prompting a devastating King James to write poetry in his memory.



GARETH RUSSELL



# Kriss Kross Lovers

by Catherine Brooks

Following the theme of our unfortunate star-crossed lovers, this month's quiz involves five couples written about in this edition by our wonderful regular contributors.

For each of the ten people, fill in the missing words from the sentences provided, and then see if you can fit the words into the Kriss Kross. Good luck!



**Margaret Tudor:** Mother of Lady \_\_\_\_\_ Douglas and betrothed to \_\_\_\_\_ IV of Scotland in 1502.

**Archibald Douglas:** His father, George, Master of Douglas, was killed at \_\_\_\_\_. Archibald was appointed Lieutenant of the \_\_\_\_\_ in March 1525.

**Frances Dereham:** Had a physical relationship with Joan \_\_\_\_\_, roommate and later secretary of Catherine Howard, before Catherine did. He stormed up from \_\_\_\_\_ to confront Catherine when he heard a rumour that she was going to marry Thomas Culpepper.

**Catherine Howard:** Daughter of the Black Sheep of the Howard family, \_\_\_\_\_, and step-granddaughter to Agnes Howard, the \_\_\_\_\_ Duchess.

**Lady Arbella Stuart:** Granddaughter of the formidable \_\_\_\_\_ of Hardwick and was under her wardship from the age of 7, living at \_\_\_\_\_ Hall.

**William Seymour:** Managed to escape from the Tower (where he had been imprisoned for his marriage to Arbella) disguised as his own \_\_\_\_\_. In 1617, he married his second wife, Lady Frances \_\_\_\_\_.

**Lady Jane Grey/Queen Jane:** Great granddaughter of VII. She was proclaimed queen under Edward VI's Devise for the Succession, having previously been 5th in line to the throne.

**Lord Guildford Dudley:** Brother of \_\_\_\_\_ Dudley, favourite of Elizabeth I. His marriage to Jane is thought by many to have been part of a plot for power by his father, John Dudley, Duke of \_\_\_\_\_.

**Lady Margaret Douglas:** Mother-in-law of Mary Queen of \_\_\_\_\_, She was a bridesmaid for queen Jane Seymour.

**Thomas Howard:** Thomas' invalidated 'marriage' to Margaret Douglas is referenced in a poem by his cousin, Henry \_\_\_\_\_. In 1530, an Act of \_\_\_\_\_ was passed against him, sentencing him to death. The sentence was never carried out, but he died of ill health in the Tower the following year.





**Margaret  
Douglas**



Susan Abernethy talks about...



# Margaret Douglas and Thomas Howard

If any couple were star-crossed lovers in Tudor history, Margaret Douglas and Thomas Howard fit the bill perfectly. Margaret, daughter of Henry VIII's sister Margaret, Dowager Queen of Scots, and her second husband, Archibald Douglas, 6th Earl of Angus, had a considerable claim to the English throne. Henry VIII actually appears to have been fond of his niece and deemed her position important enough he considered her a valuable foreign policy asset, available on the marriage market for an alliance.

In 1534, Margaret's marriage became an item when Henry suggested her as a bride for the Duc d'Angoulême. During the negotiations, according to the French ambassador, Henry treated her as if she were the daughter of a Queen and publicly appeared to hold her in high esteem. But the marriage never materialised. Margaret, now nineteen years old and well beyond the age where a woman married, became frustrated Henry took so long to arrange a match for her.

With the king's marriage to Anne Boleyn, many Howard relatives occupied positions at court. William and Thomas Howard, half-brothers to the Queen's uncle, Thomas Howard, 3<sup>rd</sup> Duke of Norfolk, helped carry the canopy at the christening of Princess Elizabeth. Thomas Howard, was two or three years older than Margaret and the son of the 2<sup>nd</sup> Duke of Norfolk and his second wife, Agnes Tilney. He grew up in the Duchess' home at Horsham, where he was highly educated and known as a competent poet.

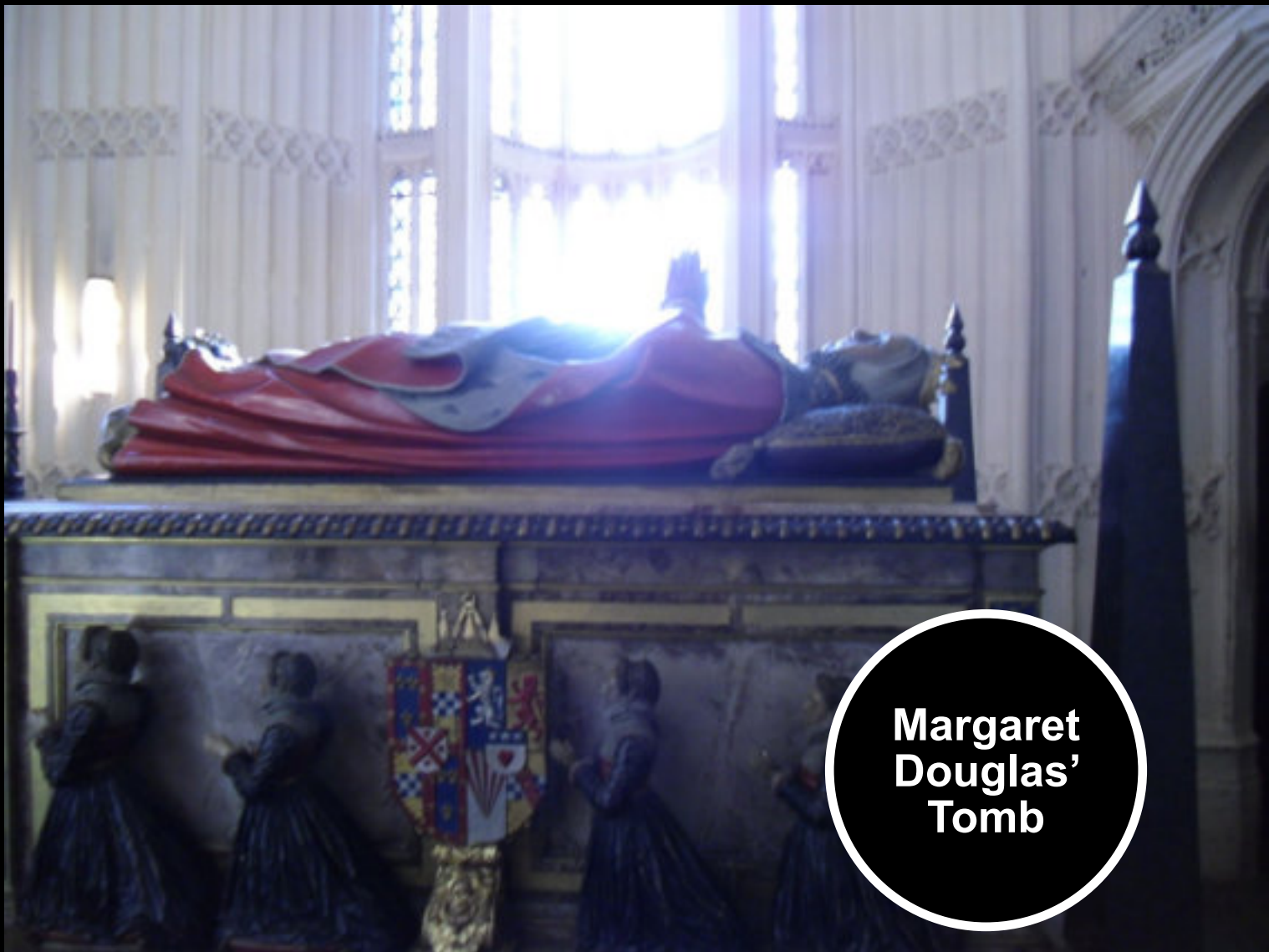
When his schooling ended, he joined the royal court with his older brother William. Being a younger son, Thomas had no fortune, no prospects and no political influence, but he was handsome and cut a good figure, becoming a confederate of his dashing cousin, Henry Howard, Earl of Surrey and a favorite of the king and his cousin, Anne Boleyn. Margaret attended the Queen as one of her ladies and was

also a great friend of Mary Howard, Duchess of Richmond and daughter of the 3<sup>rd</sup> Duke of Norfolk.

As so the couple met and fell in love in 1535. They were encouraged in their relationship by the Queen and Mary Howard, who would always be present as a chaperone for the couple during their assignations. Because they had such well-connected advocates, they probably didn't fear any negative consequences, despite the fact they knew full well their liaison could result in trouble. Tudor couples typically exchanged small gifts. Thomas gave Margaret a cramp ring blessed by King Henry on Good Friday, 1536 and she presented him with a miniature of herself, along with a diamond. The Earl of Surrey wrote a poem acknowledging Thomas' genuine love for Margaret.

Margaret and Thomas entered a pre-contract at Easter, presumably with witnesses. According to Tudor custom, this was as binding as a marriage. The only element missing was consummation. The arrangement was considered a 'defiant match' because they were contracting a marriage outside the accepted norms for a woman of her class. Margaret may have succeeded in her plan if the Boleyn's had not fallen from royal favor. She knew her marriage wasn't just a personal matter. It had political ramifications due to Margaret's value to the king on the marriage market. Henry was not prepared to renounce his valuable commodity.





## Margaret Douglas' Tomb

Shortly after the agreement, Margaret revealed the marriage to Margaret Gamage, the wife of Thomas' elder brother William. The fall of the Queen in May 1536 caused the discovery of their contract. With legislation passing Parliament naming the Princess Mary and the Princess Elizabeth illegitimate, Margaret could claim precedence in the succession, and a secret marriage to a member of a leading noble house of England was now considered politically dangerous. Shortly after he married Jane Seymour, the king discovered the romance of Margaret and Thomas, resulting in their arrest and incarceration in the Tower.

What crime the couple had committed was unclear as there were no existing laws against what they had done. The exact nature of their relationship was ambiguous. Were they merely betrothed? Or were they in truth, married? As long as they were of canonical age, (fourteen for boys and twelve for girls), all they had to do was speak vows and they were married in the eyes of the Church. Had they actually consummated the relationship?

At this point, King Henry was not well disposed toward the Howards or any of their supporters. The Duke of Norfolk had never been informed of the romance, leaving him completely in the dark and unprepared for Henry's wrath. There is no indication of how Henry found out about the contract of marriage but most likely someone betrayed them. It has been creditably proposed the Duke of Norfolk betrayed his brother to the king in an effort to demonstrate his loyalty to his sovereign over that of his family, who had taken a devastating political hit over the fall of Anne Boleyn. He may also have been attempting to protect his daughter Mary who had participated in the couple's trysts.

King Henry was enraged over the affair and believed the Duke of Norfolk aspired to the Crown. He imagined the duke guilty of 'maliciously and traitorously minding and imagining to put division in this realm' and of deliberately trying to subvert the Act of Succession. Henry also believed his sister Margaret had encouraged her daughter.

Horried at the news, Margaret wrote to her brother, asking for mercy and for her daughter to be sent to her for her safety. It is unlikely Henry would have considered releasing Margaret to her mother. He messaged his sister and assured her, if her daughter would conform to his will, he would treat her well.

Thomas Howard underwent interrogation by Thomas Wriothesley while in the Tower. He confessed they had been in a relationship for one year and decided to marry at Easter. He said only his sister-in-law, Margaret Gamete, and his mother's servant, a man named Hastings, knew of the engagement. Hastings and Margaret Gamete were arrested and interrogated, completing the details of the story.

The couple wrote poems about their relationship while incarcerated. They were not prosecuted in the courts. Thomas was attainted by Bill of Attainder, introduced to the House of Lords in Parliament on July 18, 1536, indicating they had actually entered into a binding marriage. The Act had been written quickly and the language of the bill was especially violent. Read three times, it was approved and sent to the Commons where it passed. The king gave his assent. New language had been added to the bill.

"That if any man of what estate, degree, or condition so ever he be, at any time hereafter take upon him to espouse, marry, or take to his wife any of the King's children [being lawfully born or otherwise commonly reputed or taken for his children] or any of the King's sisters or aunts of the part of the father, [or any of the lawful children] of the King's brothers or sisters [not being married] or contract marriage with any of them, without the special license, assent, and agreement first thereunto had and obtained of the King's Highness in writing under his great seal, [or defile or deflower any of them not being married,] shall be deemed and adjudged a traitor to the King and his realm...."

The penalty for breaking this law was death for the man and the woman. The law, as written, included a special provision to exempt Margaret from the penalty. Because the marriage had not been consummated, she received a pardon. Although Margaret and Thomas were excluded retroactively from punishment, Thomas was still sentenced to death.

The consequences of this law had an immense impact on certain members of the royal family for years to come. Elizabeth I would invoke the law with the marriages of her cousins, Lady Jane and Mary Grey. Margaret's grandson, King James I of England, would use it against his cousin, Lady Arbella Stuart. By passing this law, a new form of treason and basis for attainder was introduced into the Tudor legal system. Trial and condemnation were no longer needed. From 1536 going forward, this was the form of law King Henry VIII preferred. It would be invoked to indict another Howard, Queen Catherine, in 1540.

While Margaret and Thomas didn't face judicial execution, the conditions in the Tower were so hazardous, Thomas became fatally ill and died in October 1537. Margaret remained in the Tower for many months with her health a source of deep concern. She was moved to Syon due to her illness. While there, the King's personal physician, Dr. William Butts, was summoned to treat her. Her incarceration at Syon was comfortable and she remained there until two days before Thomas' death, an event which she took very hard. In order to gain her release, she had to renounce Thomas, something she may have felt guilty about, as there is evidence, she took on several of Thomas's servants.

**SUSAN ABERNETHY**

Further reading:

"A Biography of Margaret Douglas, Countess of Lennox (1515-1578), Niece of Henry VIII and Mother-in-Law of Mary, Queen of Scots" by Kimberly Schutte

"The Lost Tudor Princess: A Life of Margaret Douglas, Countess of Lennox" by Alison Weir

"House of Howard: Volume 1" by Gerald Brenan and Edward Phillips Statham

Lord Thomas Howard entry in the Oxford Dictionary of National Biography written by Michael Riordan

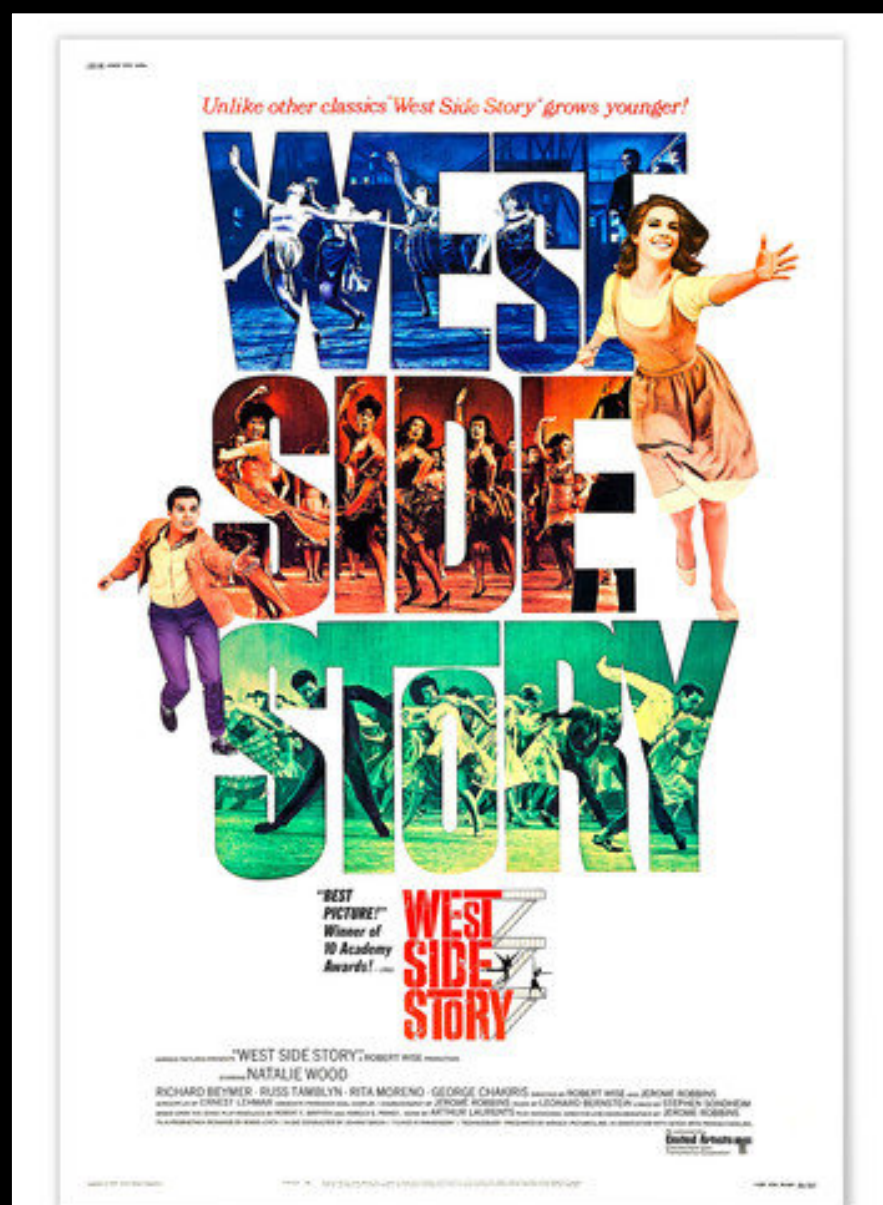


# “Most Excellent for Tragedy” – the stories behind Shakespeare’s Romeo and Juliet

*“Shakespeare among the English is the most excellent in both kinds [ie both Comedy and Tragedy] for the stage.”* Those words were written in 1598 by Francis Meres, the first person to write a critical account of Shakespeare’s poems and plays. He was writing having seen the play Romeo and Juliet, the first great tragedy by the playwright and one beloved by audiences from the very beginning through to today.

By Jane Moulder

The story of the two young, star crossed lovers has endured over the centuries and has sprung countless offspring in plays, music and dance. Perhaps the best known is ‘West Side Story’ the musical by Stephen Sondheim and Leonard Bernstein, but there is also a ballet by Prokofiev, an opera by Charles Gounod and a symphony by Hector Berlioz. The tale has also inspired popular music from Duke Ellington’s ‘Star Crossed Lovers’ to Dire Straits’ ‘Romeo and Juliet’.



There have also been various film versions, most notably those by George Cukor in 1936, Franco Zeffirelli in 1968 and, more recently, Baz Luhrmann's version in 1996 starring Leonard DiCaprio. The play was the first of Shakespeare's plays to be performed outside of England (it was staged in Germany in 1604)

somewhere in the world today, even in these Covid restrictive times. The play's early success led to it being parodied at the time. 'The Two Angry Women of Abingdon' written by Henry Porter in 1598 and Thomas Dekker's 'Blurt, Master Constable' (1607) both contain a balcony scene where an innocent virginal heroine engages in bawdy wordplay.

One would hope that if you have seen the play that you had a more satisfying experience of it than that of the famous diarist, Samuel Pepys. He saw the play on the 1st March 1662 and in his journal that night he wrote, "Thence my wife and I by coach, first to see my little picture that is a drawing,

these people do, and I am resolved to go no more to see the first time of acting, for they were all of them out more or less".

Whilst there are no surviving records detailing the original performances, it is believed that the play was first performed by Shakespeare's own company, the Lord Chamberlain's Men probably at, the imaginatively named, The Theatre and then later at The Curtain. These were the two playhouses where the Lord Chamberlain's Men performed before the acting company, led by Shakespeare and Richard Burbage, built The Globe on London's South Bank.

There is no definite date for when the play was actually written but taking factors such as writing style in account, it is assumed to be around 1595. It is clear that it was a big hit with the audiences as soon as it was performed as the first printed edition of it, known as Q1, was in 1597 and included the words '...it hath been often (with great applause) plaid publicly'. As re-

and, following the Restoration and the re-opening of the theatres, it was one of the first plays to be put on in 1662. It has hardly been off the stage since then and it is probably being performed

and thence to the Opera, and there saw "Romeo and Juliet," the first time it was ever acted; but it is a play of itself the worst that ever I heard in my life, and the worst acted that ever I saw





gards the cast, we can be sure that the famous comedic actor and musician, Will Kemp, played Peter, the nurse's comic servant, as the 1599 printed version (Q2) specifically states his name in a stage direction. Kemp's presence would have been a huge audience draw due to his popularity at the time and he would have undoubtedly provided a dose of light relief to counter the tragic nature of the tale. Whilst not



specifically attributed, it can be assumed that Shakespeare's fellow actor, Richard Burbage, played the leading role. But it is not clear who

played the tragic heroine but it must have been someone who the playwright had huge faith in to undertake such an important and taxing role and, as a boy, to convincingly play a 13 year old girl.

The scene is set right at the beginning as the prologue con-

tains the lines "A pair of star-crossed lovers take their life, / Whose misadventures piteous overthrows / Doth with their death bury their parents' strife." Romeo and Juliet goes on to develop into the ultimate tragedy: the story of two young innocent people in love whose lives are doomed because of their families' long standing vendetta of hatred. Death is their destiny because of fate and chance.

For those of you who don't know the story, I will give a very much abbreviated resumé. There is an age-old vendetta between two Veronese families, the Montagues and the Capulets and the action opens with the young men from the feuding



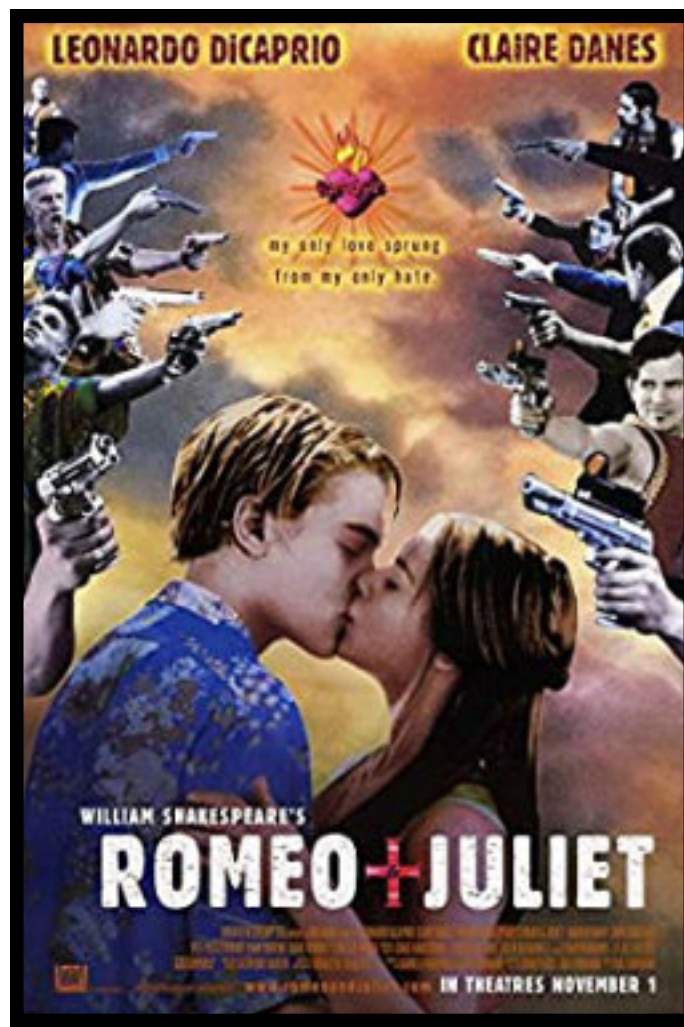
families fighting in the streets which is drawn to a halt by the Prince of Verona. Juliet, the young Capulet daughter, is due to marry her father's choice of suitor, Count Paris. The Lord and Lady Capulet decide to hold a banquet to introduce the young couple. Romeo, the son of rivals Lord and Lady Montague attends the event, heavily disguised, smuggled in by his friends. Romeo and Juliet meet and fall in love immediately. Lady Capulet's nephew, Tybalt, recognises Romeo and forces him to leave. Later, Romeo secretly enters the Capulets' garden and sees Juliet on her balcony. They declare their love for each other and decide to marry. Knowing that their love cannot be declared openly, Romeo arranges for them to meet at the cell of Friar Lawrence, who agrees to marry them straight away (a very short engagement!). In the

next act, the young men Tybalt, Benvolio and Mercutio goad each other and fall into fight. Romeo tries to stop the action but Mercutio is wounded and later dies. A vengeful Romeo returns and kills Tybalt, Juliet's cousin. As punishment, the prince banishes Romeo from Verona but the young couple meet in secret for their wedding night before leaving for Mantua. Lord Capulet then orders Juliet to marry Paris. Not knowing what to do, Juliet visits Friar Lawrence for help and he gives her a sleeping potion to make her ap-

pear dead. He then sends for Romeo to come and rescue Juliet. Juliet takes the potion the day before she must marry Paris. However, the Friar's message doesn't reach Romeo and instead he learns of Juliet's death. Returning immediately to Verona, he enters Juliet's tomb, meets Paris and after challenging him, kills him. Seeing Juliet apparently dead, he takes poison and dies. On awakening she finds Romeo dead beside her and, distraught, she then kills herself with a dagger. The friar has to then explain the story to the gathered Montagues and

Capulets who, encouraged by the Prince, immediately end their long feud and join together in mourning for their dead children.

This tragic tale, however, was not one of Shakespeare's imaginings; he was simply building on a story dating back many years and one which had been told





many times before. In fact, the themes contained within Romeo and Juliet appear in tales dating back two thousand years to classical times. In Ovid's tale of the two young lovers Pyramus and Thisbe, which appears in *Metamorphoses*, the couple were forbidden to marry due to their parents' feud and they were forced to communicate between a crack in a dividing wall. Pyramus wrongly believes that Thisbe has been killed by a lion and so kills himself and upon discovering her lover's dead body, she likewise ends her life. No doubt Shakespeare, as a grammar school boy in Stratford, could well have read this story and been set to translate it from the original Latin. For fans of Shakespeare, you will know that this story is the one acted out for entertainment by Bottom and the 'rude mechanicals' in *A Midsummer Night's Dream*.

There is also a Greek romance, written three centuries after Ovid's version, when one of the two young lovers, separated by their parents,

takes a sleeping potion which induces a death like state. Stories by Boccaccio in the *Decameron* in the 15th century and *Troilus and Criseyde* by Chaucer in the 14th century, along with many others, reflect the various themes brought out in *Romeo and Juliet*. Regardless of the re-telling, all of the aspects in the various versions match Aristotle's qualifications for a tragedy – "the plot ought to be constructed in such a way that anyone, by merely hearing an account of the incidents and without seeing them, will be filled with horror and pity at what occurs". It was not until the 16th century that these themes from earlier stories were brought to-

gether to contain the true kernel of the *Romeo and Juliet* story.

In all, preceding Shakespeare's play which was printed at the end of the century, there were eight earlier versions in the 16th century which include the same characters, the same situations and the same events in the same order that we are so familiar with today. Five of these versions were in the form of novellas, a form of story collection, that was increasingly popular during this period. The novella originated in Italy during the Middle Ages and took the form of a humorous, political or amorous short story which would then be gathered together with others into a



collection. They were not necessarily literary masterpieces but designed for popular consumption.

The earliest version of the Romeo and Juliet tragedy was by Masuccio Salernitano and it was first published a year after his death in 1476. He tells of the young lovers, Mariotto

took place in his own lifetime. Much like Shakespeare's version, the couple's marriage is aided by an Augustinian friar. Similar events happen in that Giannozza drinks a sleeping potion so she can be smuggled out of Siena to meet her exiled husband. The plan, of course, goes wrong and her letter explaining the

situation never reaches Mariotto. In this story though, Mariotto is captured for the murder of his kinsmen and is beheaded. On discovering that her lover is dead, the heroine wastes away of a broken heart, only to be reunited with her husband later in heaven.

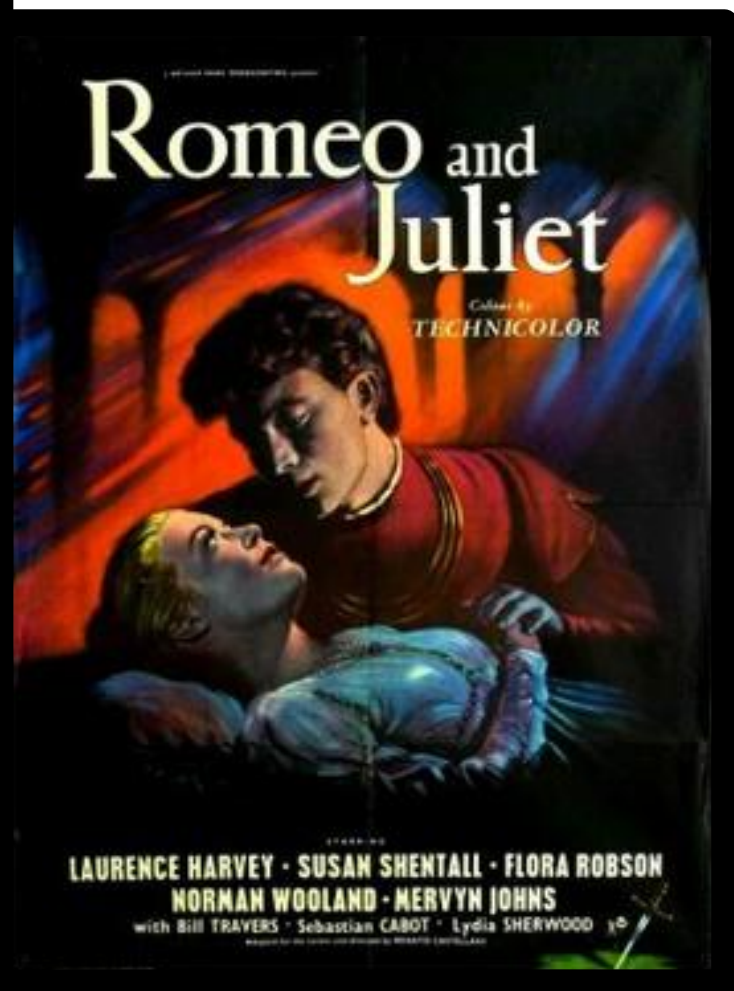
Luigi da Porta in 1530

wrote a similar story, telling the tale of Romeo Montechhi and Giulietta Cappelletti, moving the setting of their lives from Siena to the Verona – the same place where

Shakespeare would locate it. The pair again wed in secret with the aid of a friar, only to be torn apart by Romeo's accidental killing of Giulietta's cousin and their subsequent deaths—Romeo by Giulietta's sleeping potion, and Giulietta by wasting away through grief. In da Porta's version, Tybalt, Mercutio, Guilietta's nurse and Count Paris all make an appearance. This sounds much more the story we know from Shakespeare. But another version was to come from the pen of Matteo Bandello written in 1554.

In his story, Bandello introduced themes written about and expanded on by Shakespeare. The names of Montague and Capulet are there, so is the occasion where the couple meet but this time and Juliet kills herself with Romeo's dagger.

It was this story which was translated into French by Pierre Boistreau in 1559 a collection called 'Histoires tragiques'. It was this version which was then subsequently into English by Arthur Brooke in



and Giannozza, who come from feuding families. In this account, the action takes place in Siena rather than in Verona and he insists that the events were true and



1562. He developed the story into a poem called *The Tragicall Historye of Romeus and Juliet*. Another English version, in prose this time, was by William Painter in 1567. He called it "The goodly history of the true and constant love between Romeo and Juliet".

It is generally accepted that it was Brooke's poetic translation which was the immediate source for William Shakespeare's play but there are differences between them. Little is known about Arthur Brooke today but his death by shipwreck in 1563, whilst crossing the channel to help the protestant forces in the French Wars of Religion, is certainly one of the most notable facts. Brooke (or Broke) was a staunch protestant and his text carries a loaded view of anti-Catholic feeling and is a more telling of the story than Shakespeare's one of romance, passion and betrayal. It is clear that

Brooke's version is the one Shakespeare used as it is the only one where the initial meeting is at a banquet rather than a masked ball as in the other stories. Shakespeare builds on the roles of the characters appearing in the poem, such as Tybalt and the other young men. He also uses Juliet's nurse for comedy, thus offsetting the taut tension of the action. One of the most notable differences between Brooke's and Shakespeare's is the timeline and pace of the story. Brooke sets his action over a slow and steady nine months whereas in Shakespeare all the tragic events unfold over a fast paced four days. Shakespeare's ending is one of regret and reconciliation but Brooke takes a more moralising tone warning us that if we give into lust and ignore the advice of our parents, then we will hurry towards and 'unhappye deathe' like the 'unfortunate lov-

ers'. Despite the differences in the various versions, it is interesting to note that over approximately 100 years, the story steadfastly resisted significant alteration. From when it first appeared by da Porto and through into the English translations and Shakespeare's the same tragic tale is retold. Each version has slightly different emphases and some aspects carry more weight and minor characters are introduced. But despite these numerous versions of the story, one has to admit that it is Shakespeare's skill and use of words which transformed this tragic story of two star crossed lovers into one of the greatest plays known. He may have borrowed from writers before him but it was his Romeo and Juliet, with their doomed love and passion for each other, which makes his story the ultimate tragic tale.

**JANE MOULDER**

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# THE TUDOR SOCIETY



## *Members' Bulletin*

Thank you to all our members, both new and old as we celebrate the end of our SEVENTH year!

Last month saw us have to move server for the website yet again – it happens far too often – because we'd outgrown the last one. Every time we move website we say that it'll never happen again and then, of course, the society grows, the amount of amazing content we have grows and the number of members grows. Combined then with ageing technology and we have to keep upgrading. Thank you for your patience as we did the move!

For the technically minded amongst us, we're now running the Tudor Society on an Intel Xeon Gold 6230R processor with 8GB memory and it is about 4 times more powerful than the last server. And yes, we know that in about two years time we'll be upgrading once again...

In seven years, we have travelled such a long way with the society. We've had 99 expert talks, 333 Friday videos, 363 weekly quizzes and this is magazine number 85! What an achievement to all the experts and contributors we've had during that time.

We're also being contacted by more and more places in the UK and abroad for us to mention their Tudor related events. Only today I was contacted by the producers of a comedy based on Mary I where the actress imagines explaining her bad behaviour. It looks like a fun play and we're so happy that we are able to send along one of our members to actually see it and report back. If you work for a historical site or are involved in anything Tudor related, we really do want to know so that we can promote your work. Our aim is to be the #1 place for all things Tudor. Help us to get there!

Well, here's to needing a new website server in a very short time as we continue to spread news and discoveries about the Tudor period to the whole world.

**TIM RIDGWAY**



# Arbella Stuart and William Seymour

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**Gayle Hulme** uncovers the story of the star-crossed lovers Arbella Stuart and William Seymour, whose love was marked by death

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As Lady Arbella Stuart lay imprisoned, ill and exhausted in the Tower of London, she may have lamented her previously coveted place in the royal succession. As a first cousin of King James I (r. 1603-1625), she had dared to marry William Seymour without the Sovereign's permission. Arbella's marriage to William was not the first time she had found herself one half of a pair of star-crossed lovers, but this time the depth of the defiance and deception brought signalled a 'death marked love'.

Since her birth in 1575, Arbella had been a pawn in the Tudor marriage game. Her parent's marriage took place via a highly clandestine plot hatched by her grandmothers, Lady Margaret Lennox and Elizabeth Countess of Shrewsbury (Bess of Hardwick). Against the express wishes of Queen Elizabeth I (r.1558-1603), Lady Margaret arranged a meeting which brought her son Charles, a great-grandson of Henry VII, and Bess' daughter Elizabeth Cavendish together.

In Margaret and Bess's version of the romance, the two young people had quickly grown inseparable while Charles lay ill at Rufford Abbey in Derbyshire. As the abbey was less than 20 miles away from Bess' home at Chatsworth, the fabricated story was

not strong enough to convince Queen Elizabeth, and she was predictably furious. The characteristics and history of both women make it more likely that they both saw the dynastic and financial advantages that a partnership between their children would bring and decided to run the gauntlet of the Queen's anger.

Orphaned by the time she was seven years old and under the control of her maternal grandmother, Arbella was treated as an heir to Elizabeth I, a haughty, entitled adolescent, and under King James I, a companion of his consort Queen Anne. Storm clouds were never far from the new Stuart court, and so Arbella's desire to marry and have a family of her own was a non-starter in the king's eyes. However, despite her previous romantic misadventures taking her close to falling foul of the High Treason laws, it didn't stop her from marrying William Seymour in June 1610. This decision proved to be a lethal miscalculation.

In January 1610, the court began to witness flirtations between 35-year-old Arbella and her cousin 22-year-old William Seymour. He was also a possible heir to the throne through his grandmother Lady Katherine Grey. Even though William was 12 years Arbella's junior, the couple did seem to have a lot in common. William was a

Arbella Stuart





**William  
Seymour**



Will<sup>m</sup> Marq<sup>e</sup> of Hertford.

highly educated Oxford graduate, and the couple shared a love of languages and books. There are few details of their courtship, but we know that William appeared in Arbella's apartments on 02 February, and the couple were betrothed. Arbella, perhaps more in hope than conviction, thought she had the blessing of the king. A few months before, he had made her promise not to try and marry a foreigner. James gave permission for her to marry anyone she wished as long as they were his subject in exchange for her agreement.

This tacit agreement obviously didn't apply to William Seymour. A marriage between two heirs would have created a strong focus for anyone looking to oust James and his newly established Stuart court. Just over two weeks later, the king found out about the betrothal. William was summoned twice to appear before the Privy Council and subsequently wrote a pleading submission that he had meant no offence and would not have proceeded had he not thought that the couple had the king's agreement. At this point, James kept faith with both parties and allowed them to return to court.

Despite James's confidence that the matter was at an end, the couple did go on, in full knowledge of the consequences in defying his and the privy council's authority. Perhaps it was true love or maybe a mixture of William's youthful bravado and Arbella's deep-seated longing for liberty that caused the couple to abandon all of their former protestations of compliance and throw caution to the wind. Despite the not too distant family miseries on both sides caused by unlicensed marriages,

William and Arbella married secretly at 4 am on Friday 22 June 1610.

The newlyweds had two weeks of wedded bliss before the news of their duplicity reached the ears of King James. Unsurprisingly both William and Arbella were arrested. William was confined to the Tower, although unlike William's grandparents Lord Hertford and Katherine Grey 50 years before, bride and bridegroom were purposely secured in different locations. This time there could be no chance of any secret assignations that may produce a pregnancy. Arbella was committed to the custody of Sir Thomas Parry at his house in Lambeth, and everyone involved systematically felt the heat of the king's wrath. Even the person who married the couple was imprisoned for his subterfuge.

Arbella remained in the custody of Sir Thomas Parry until March 1611, and William was relatively comfortable in his St Thomas's Tower apartments above Traitor's Gate. Circumstances were to change when in January 1611, the king received word that Sir Thomas's governance of Arbella was softening. Clearly, a new plan was needed, and it was agreed that Arbella should be moved to Durham, where she would be held under the custody of the Bishop of Durham. Naturally disturbed by this, Arbella tried to employ a new tactic when the king's men came to escort her on her journey - she simply refused to get out of bed. Unfazed by this stubborn royal behaviour, the men simply lifted her mattress with her still on it.

At this point, a chain of events was set in motion that could either make or break the couple's future together. The party bound for Durham had only



reached Barnet when Arbella became so ill that her doctor issued orders that she was too sick to travel any further. Initially, the stop in Barnet was only supposed to last one night, but the party stayed until June. This stop gave Arbella the chance to raise money and formulate a plan to slip her bonds and escape to the continent with her husband.

She concocted a story that she had been permitted to visit her husband in the Tower one last time, and the gullible woman assigned to wait on her accepted her word. She changed into men's riding clothes and left the house accompanied by William Markham. They made a short walk of 1.5 miles to where horses and servants were waiting to whisk them the 14 miles south-east to Blackwell and the River Thames. With no sign of William, who should have escaped from the Tower and been waiting for them at 19.00, Arbella insisted that they wait. Despite her party's warnings about the failing light and the turning tide, she could not be persuaded to move on. Critically the 1.5-hour wait was extended by Arbella to 20.00 before she finally conceded and left the inn.

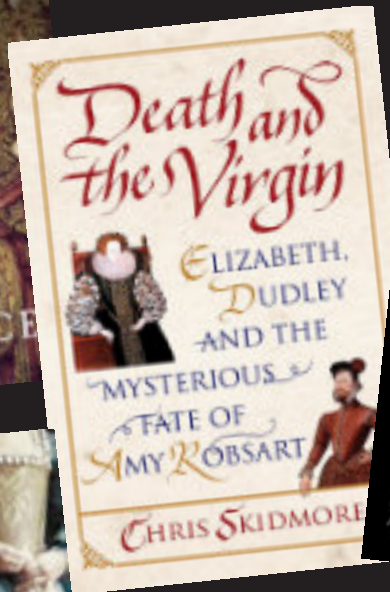
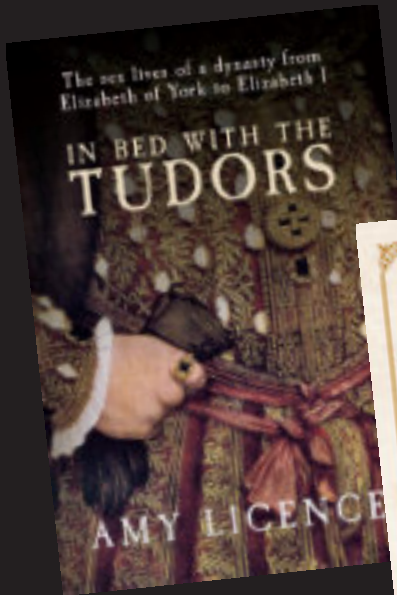
Rowing against the tide took its toll on the boatman, and they missed the pre-arranged rendezvous with the French ship assigned to take them across the English Channel. Despite the lure of a massive bribe, a local boatman refused to take them across. Still, his memory of the party was to derail the plan's chances of success when he later described the group to their pursuers. They did, eventually, with the advice of a local boatman, find their captain and ship. However, more time had been lost. A combination of delays, the tide,

and bad weather had stalled the operation and within sight of Calais, and despite a valiant effort by the crew, the vessel that carried Arbella and her hopes of freedom was overtaken. For the sake of those on board, she had no choice but to surrender herself.

Meanwhile, back in London, William Seymour had managed to pull off his escape from the Tower dressed as his barber. By now, a seething King James mobilised a massive search party to apprehend the escapees and bring them back to England and face his justice. Sir Robert Cecil was charged with issuing a stern warning proclamation to anyone willing to aid the fugitives. William's luck held, and he managed to land safely in Belgium, where he patiently waited to be reunited with his wife.

Broken-hearted and miserable, Arbella was confined to the Tower of London for the rest of her life. After five years of imprisonment, she died on 25 September 1610, never having seen William again. Perhaps the saddest circumstance of all was the conclusion of the post-mortem, which established that Arbella had starved herself to death. William was not to share Arbella's fate; after her death, he was allowed to return home, where he quickly made his way back into the king's good graces inheriting his grandfather's Earl of Hertford title in 1622. Perhaps his most extraordinary moment came in 1660 when King Charles II restored the Dukedom of Somerset to William. He married Lady Frances Devereux in 1617, who bore him eight children. He outlived Arbella by 50 years, and in his later life, he was said to be happiest in the country surrounded by his books.

**GAYLE HULME**



Amy Licence's "In Bed with the Tudors" gives a rollicking romp through the romances and lusts of the sixteenth century. If you're looking for great studies on individual cases, Leanda de Lisle's "The Sisters Who

Would Be Queen" is unequalled in showing the terrible costs paid by Ladies Katherine and Mary Grey for falling in love with the "wrong" men. Try Chris Skidmore's "Death and the Virgin" for a romance with a terrible cost in the love triangle between Elizabeth I, Robert Dudley, and Amy Robsart.

The Brandon elopement inspired Disney's sumptuous if melodramatic "The Sword and the Rose" in the 1950s, while for novels, I can recommend Karen Harper's "The Last Boleyn," re-imagining the love affair between Mary Boleyn and William Stafford, and Cynthia Harrod-Eagles's "The Dark Rose". It's a little soft on Henry VIII for my taste, but it's got a fantastic romantic subplot in the fictitious lead of Nanette Morland.

**GARETH RUSSELL**



# THE DARKNESS OF FRANCIS DEREHAM

BY GARETH RUSSELL

In many ways, Francis Dereham played more of a role in sending Catherine Howard to the scaffold than did Thomas Culpepper, the lover she was accused of becoming involved with after her marriage into the Royal Family. Of Francis's early life, we know only a little, although we have enough to paint with broad strokes a portrait of a life of privilege. He was born sometime towards the end of the 1510s into a landowning family in Lincolnshire. From a wealthy and well-connected family, Francis became a ward to Agnes Howard, Dowager Duchess of Norfolk, where he met one of her other wards Catherine, daughter of the Duchess's grandson. For the ease of reference going forward, I will be referring to her as the Duchess's granddaughter.

It was a large household, held together by the Dowager Duchess of Norfolk's significant wealth and her vast array of connections through the Tudor elite. Francis made friends, including with men from his own background like Edward Waldegrave, as well as with men who were technically slightly below his family's position in the social hierarchy, like Robert Dampont and a musician called Henry Manox. As he grew a little older, Francis, good-looking and athletic, also acquired a reputation for promiscuity, beginning a sexual relationship with a servant called Joan Acworth and it does seem as if there were others. He was literate, very well dressed, and trained in etiquette, which initially won him the favour of the Dowager Duchess.

His fling with Joan ended on amicable terms and, at some point, he became involved with the Duchess's beautiful granddaughter, Catherine Howard. Dating when this liaison began is difficult, although not impossible, as various household records strongly suggest the early summer of 1538. Catherine was about sixteen; Francis's age is less certain, although a guess of about nineteen would be reasonable. Francis's friend, Henry Manox, wrote an anonymous letter to the Duchess, warning her that Catherine had become involved with somebody who had not been approved of by her family. Catherine stole a copy of this letter, managed to convince the



FRANCIS DEREHAM (ALLEN LEECH)  
IN "THE TUDORS"

Duchess that it was a fraud, but neither Catherine nor Francis doubted for a single second that it was Manox's penmanship. Furious, Francis turned on his former friend and there seems to have been a physical altercation between himself and Manox.

The Victorian theory that the relationship between Catherine and Francis was one defined by the horrors of sexual violence was revived in the twenty-first century. There does not seem to be much, at all, by way of evidence to support this and indeed quite a bit to the contrary. On at least two occasions, friends saw the couple having sex - one person was actually in the bed she usually shared in the dormitory with Catherine and had to leave. However, Francis did begin to develop an intense attitude towards Catherine, which culminated with him asking her to marry him. On balance, she seems to have said yes, but soon came to regret her decision. Their betrothal was an open secret in the Duchess's establishment, with even porters and laundrywomen knowing about it. In the autumn of 1539, Catherine was relieved when her uncle, the Duke of Norfolk, won her a place at court in the Queen's Household. This was a perfect excuse for her to end things with the suffocating Francis, who had become increasingly obsessed with her and who was a mixture of grief-stricken and enraged.

We cannot date exactly when Francis left England for Ireland. He was still not over Catherine and, as she unexpectedly rose through the ranks thanks to the King's interest



## HAMPTON COURT PALACE

in her, Ireland seemed a safer bet for him. He may even have left London without the Duchess's permission. Regardless, we can be certain he spent several months in Ireland, on the island's prosperous eastern seaboard, where he found work as a merchant. There were later rumours that he had been suspected of engaging in piracy while there, which may explain why he came back to England in the autumn of 1540. He returned to the Duchess's London mansion, Norfolk House, where I argue in "Young and Damned and Fair" a deal was struck to buy his silence. His former employers took him to court to meet Catherine, now queen, at Halloween that year. In return, he handed over the ballads and love letters he had written about Catherine into a locked chest, which the Duchess kept, while Francis kept the key.

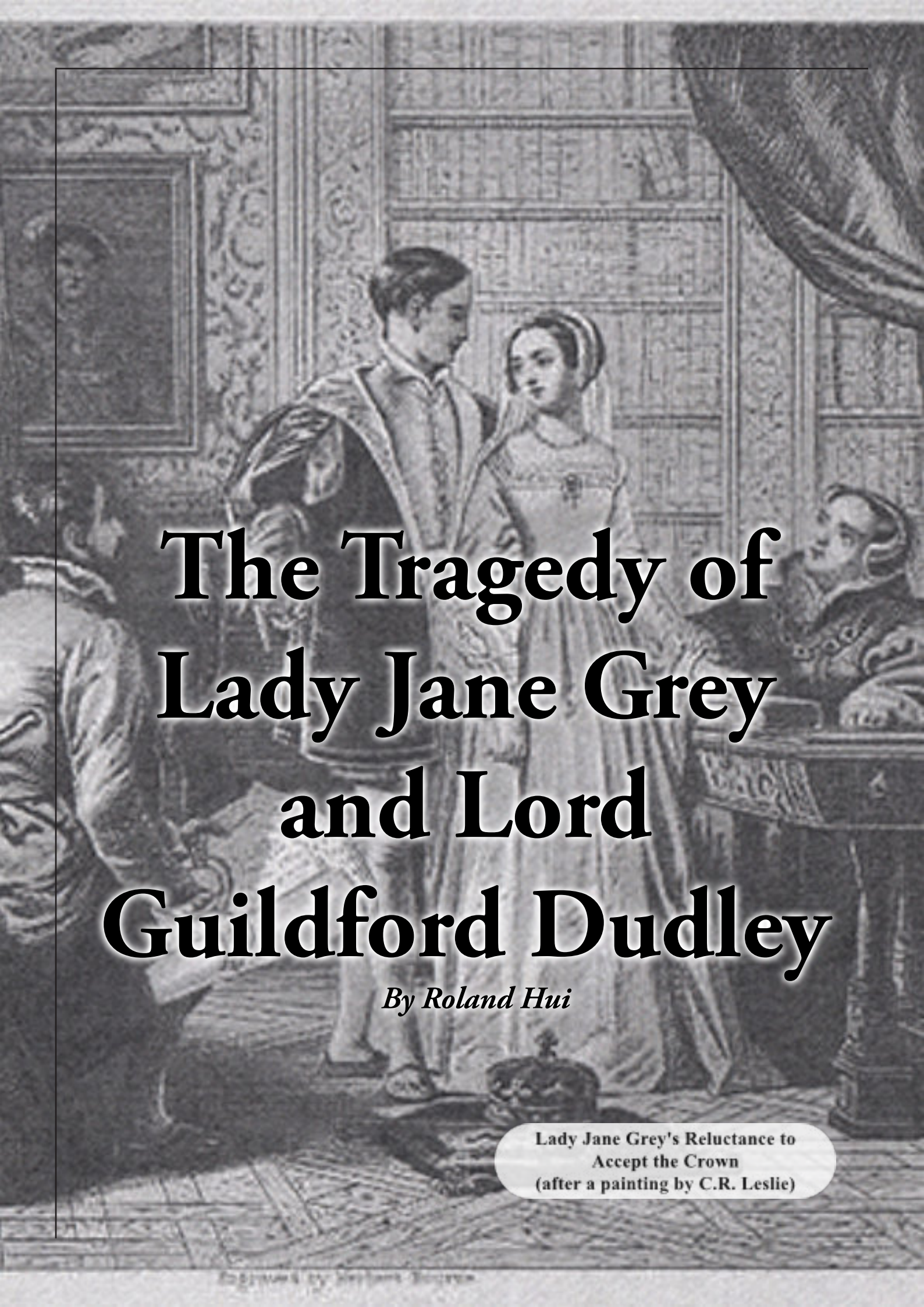
His obsession with Catherine festered, however, and, in the summer of 1541, he quarrelled with the Duchess and stormed home to Lincolnshire. Queen Catherine was at Pontefract Castle and Francis went there, this time demanding she hire him. She did, as an usher, where his odd jokes about familiarity with the Queen and disrespect for etiquette angered many other household staff. Francis was almost unrecognisable from the confident, slightly arrogant, teenager in the Duchess's care. He had become brooding, obsessive, cocksure, insensitive. In November, he was arrested at Hampton Court Palace, allegedly about the piracy in Ireland allegations. In reality, a former servant to the

Dowager Duchess, Mary Hall, had told her brother about Francis's former relationship with the Queen. He had brought that news to the Archbishop of Canterbury. To royal councillors, the most damning corroboration was Francis's decision to join Catherine's service after she became a queen. Surely, they argued, that suggested a desire to resume their former romantic relationship? Poor Queen Catherine had almost certainly hired Francis to silence him, under pressure of blackmail, yet his presence at her side ironically turned Mary Hall's claims into a credible scandal.

Francis was later tortured, repeatedly, on Henry VIII's direct orders. Throughout, he denied that he and Catherine had ever had sexual contact after she married the King, nor had he secretly hoped for Henry to die so that he could propose to Catherine again. His intention alone could be construed as the desire to commit treason, for which he was hanged, drawn, and quartered on 10<sup>th</sup> December 1541. The former Queen was beheaded two months later. While it was Catherine's love letter to a courtier, Thomas Culpepper, that damned her as an adulteress in the eyes of later historians, it was the proximity of Francis Dereham in 1541 that first left her fatally vulnerable. For this, Francis Dereham's narcissistic preoccupation with Catherine Howard must bear a very large portion of the blame for the tragedy that consumed him and her in 1541-2.

**GARETH RUSSELL**



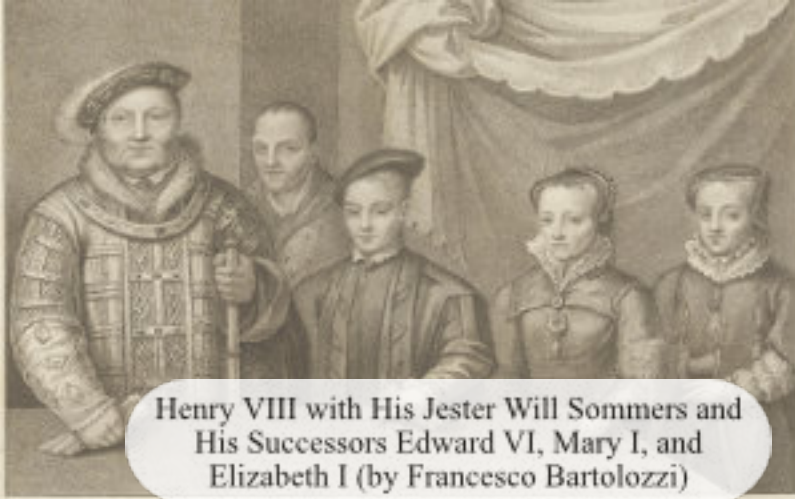


# The Tragedy of Lady Jane Grey and Lord Guildford Dudley

*By Roland Hui*

Lady Jane Grey's Reluctance to  
Accept the Crown  
(after a painting by C.R. Leslie)





Henry VIII with His Jester Will Sommers and His Successors Edward VI, Mary I, and Elizabeth I (by Francesco Bartolozzi)

To be born to wealth and privilege is a great thing, but for two young people it was a deadly birthright which ultimately destroyed their lives. Lady Jane Grey, the great granddaughter of a king and Guildford Dudley, the son of the most powerful nobleman in England, went from being the highest in the land to being condemned traitors, and both were still only teenagers.

Jane Grey, born in about 1536,<sup>1</sup> was the daughter of Henry Grey, Marquess of Dorset (later Duke of Suffolk) and his wife Frances Brandon. Jane's maternal connections were especially important as they would later dictate the course of her life. Frances's mother was Mary Tudor, the daughter of King Henry VII, the founder of the Tudor dynasty. Mary is best known for marrying for love - most unusual for a princess as she was expected to tie the knot to make family and political alliances. After her first husband, the French king Louis XII, died after their brief time together, Mary, determined to seek her own happiness, married Charles Brandon, Duke of Suffolk, without the knowledge or permission of her brother King Henry VIII. Henry was furious, but in time, he forgave the couple. They were permitted to return to England from France and raised a family, which included their daughter Frances.

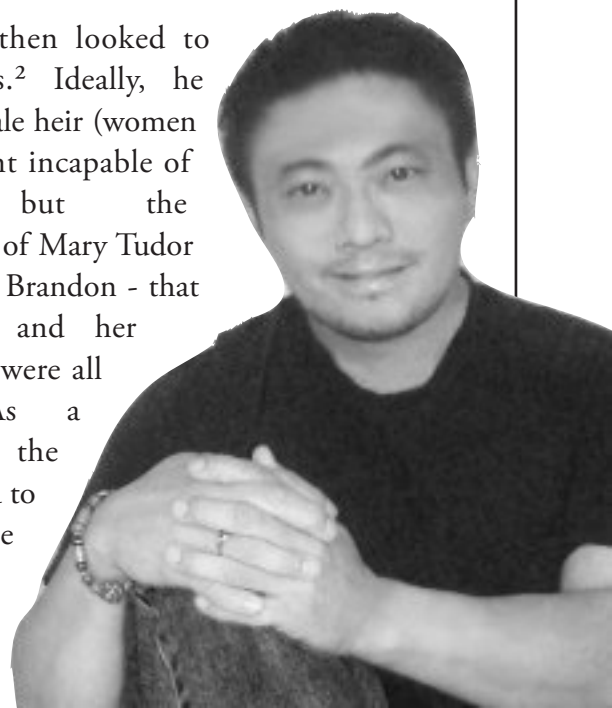
Besides their eldest Jane, Frances and her husband Henry had two other offspring, Katherine and Mary. Being that they were all girls was undoubtedly a disappointment to the Greys as sons were preferable to carry on the family name. Nevertheless, the three children were all given thorough educations, and Jane in particular excelled as a scholar. She also became extremely devoted to the new Protestantism,

which the new king Edward VI was a great proponent of as well. The Catholic faith of olden times was suppressed, and some of those who remained attached to the ancient doctrines, such as Edward's half-sister Mary Tudor, were persecuted. The princess was twenty years older than her brother, and the newfangled beliefs were abhorrent to her. They had arisen through her father Henry VIII's painful and scandalous divorce from

her mother Katherine of Aragon, which resulted in the English Reformation. Not only that, Mary, as a result, was declared illegitimate to her immense shame.

There was every expectation that Edward VI would live a long life and that the Protestant faith would continue to prosper. But in early 1553, the king grew increasingly ill and his life was despaired of. The young king, still unmarried, had no children of course, and the royal succession was thrown into crisis. Under Henry VIII's will, the next sovereign was Princess Mary, but Edward and John Dudley, the Duke of Northumberland (the young king's senior adviser and thus the mightiest noble in the kingdom) both thought Mary unacceptable. As a Catholic, she would restore the old religion and bring back the hateful authority of the pope. Even Edward's other half-sister, Princess Elizabeth, was considered equally unfit. After the execution of her mother, Anne Boleyn, and Henry VIII's third marriage to Jane Seymour (Edward's mother), she was made a bastard like Mary.

Edward then looked to his cousins.<sup>2</sup> Ideally, he wanted a male heir (women were thought incapable of ruling), but the descendants of Mary Tudor and Charles Brandon - that is Frances and her daughters - were all female. As a solution to the problem and to allow the





Duke of Northumberland to maintain control of the realm, it was suggested that Jane Grey be married to Dudley's son Guildford. A son of theirs could one day inherit the throne.

It was said that when the idea was presented to Jane, she was wholly against her. If this was true, her reasons were unclear. Perhaps she still felt an attachment to Edward Seymour, the son of Edward VI's former Lord Protector, to whom she was once betrothed. Whatever the explanation, if Jane was indeed defiant, her behaviour was extraordinary. She had always been brought up to respect and obey her parents, and the question of her marriage was not one of her own choosing. Young girls, especially those of the elite, were expected to wed as their parents or betters decided. Jane's grandmother, Mary Tudor, had dutifully married King Louis, and her mother Frances had done likewise to her father Henry Grey. Jane too was bound by convention, so perhaps her opposition was exaggerated or entirely untrue.

Whatever her personal feelings about Guildford Dudley were, Jane took him as her husband on May 25, 1553. Described as 'a comely, virtuous and goodly gentleman', Guildford was about Jane's age, and he was raised as a Protestant as she was, but beyond that, little else was known about him.<sup>3</sup> The wedding celebrations were a grand affair with a great number of guests invited. The king himself did not attend the nuptials because he was sick, but he did provide for the newlyweds. Edward sent jewels and an abundance of rich cloth from the royal storehouses for their pleasure.

In the days after their marriage, Jane and Guildford did not initially live together as man and wife. According to the Imperial ambassador who always had his ear to the ground, the couple did not immediately consummate their marriage 'because of their tender age'.<sup>4</sup> Nonetheless, being Guildford's wife, Jane was obligated to go to the Dudley household for a period of time in June. She did not get along with her mother-in-law, the Duchess of Northumberland. She was a difficult and argumentative woman, whom Jane would later accuse of trying to poison her.<sup>5</sup> It was

most likely that at this time, Jane and Guildford began being sexually intimate together as they were expected to.

It was Edward VI's hope that his cousin Jane would have a son to carry on the Tudor succession should he himself worsen. But by late June, it was evident to him and his councillors that he would not live long. The dying king drew up a will where he nominated Jane and her future sons as his successors; her mother Frances was entirely ignored. Perhaps it was Edward's hope that even though Jane would be queen, once she had given birth to a male heir, she would step aside and allow the boy to rule in her place, ensuring a male succession.

When Edward finally expired on July 6, Jane was summoned and the crown presented to her as Queen of England. In tears, she protested that it was not her right, but that of her cousin Princess Mary. But browbeaten by her parents and by the Duke of Northumberland, Jane finally gave in. Despite her reluctance, perhaps a part of her came to believe that it was God's will that she be queen, and that it was her duty as the late king wanted.

On July 10, Jane made her formal procession to the Tower of London to await her coronation. Her train was held by her mother, and she was escorted by a beaming Guildford. But her reception was anything but joyous. The people who loved Princess Mary and not her obscure relative backed by the unpopular John Dudley, raised no cheers. One who dared to speak up was punished by having his ears cropped.

Later, there was tension inside the Tower as well. When Guildford took on airs and demanded to be made king consort, Jane refused. She would only make him a duke, she said. Guildford complained to his mother, and the duchess in great 'anger and disdain' told him to not sleep with his wife anymore. Later, Jane would recall how 'ill-treated [she was] by my husband and his mother'.<sup>6</sup>

Jane's queenship would last a mere nine days. When Princess Mary was notified of her brother's death, she immediately fled to Framlingham Castle in Suffolk. There, she rallied



The Tower of London  
(photo by B. Collowan)

the people to her, and she wrote to the royal councillors in the Tower demanding their allegiance as the rightful Queen of England. In response, Northumberland sent forces to make war on Mary and her followers, but to no avail. By June 19, the kingdom was hers. Jane was abandoned by the nobles and even by her parents, and she found herself removed from the royal apartments to imprisonment in a house by Tower Green. Guildford was likewise confined in the Beauchamp Tower nearby.

On November 13, Jane, Guildford, two of his brothers, and Thomas Cranmer, the Archbishop of Canterbury, were all taken to the London Guildhall for their trial. The charge was high treason for usurping Queen Mary's authority. They had little hope for clemency; in August, Northumberland was executed for his part in making Jane queen. The prisoners were all found guilty and sentenced to death.

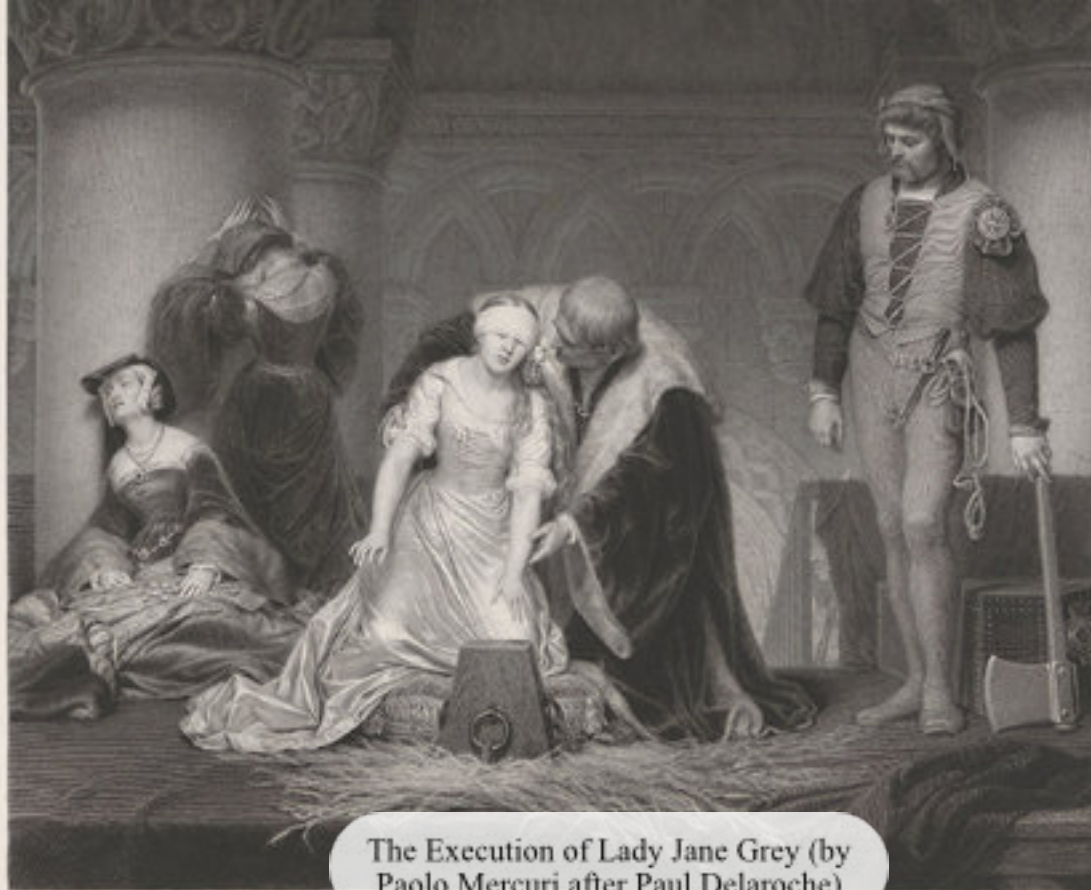
But Mary had no intention of harming Jane. Although they disagreed on religion, she was prepared to be merciful. Her cousin, Mary was convinced, had no designs on her crown, but was merely the puppet of evil men such as John Dudley. Instead of ordering her death, she would

let Jane live in peace where she was until it was safe to release her. When Jane received the happy news, she praised the queen as a good and compassionate lady.

For the time being, Jane spent her days reading and studying as she used to do, and when she was permitted outdoors, she took walks about the Tower grounds for exercise. Guildford was given such privileges too, though it is not known whether he ever ran into Jane or was allowed to speak to her. Tradition has it that he carved her name 'IANE' (that is 'JANE') upon the wall of his room in the Beauchamp Tower, where it can still be seen today.

Both Jane and Guildford expected to be released soon, but fate dictated otherwise. Later that year, Queen Mary announced her intention to marry Prince Philip of Spain. The match was highly unpopular to her English subjects. Accusing the queen of surrendering her kingdom to the Spaniards, men like Thomas Wyatt rose in rebellion in January of 1554. Even Jane's father, the Duke of Suffolk, joined the insurgents. But the revolt was a failure. Wyatt and Grey were both captured and afterwards paid the ultimate penalty for their treason.





The Execution of Lady Jane Grey (by Paolo Mercuri after Paul Delaroche)

Guildford bravely met his end. Even though Jane would not see him, she did purposely stand by her window to see his remains brought back in a cart. She uttered a cry of sorrow, but then composed herself for her own ordeal ahead.

After Jane - with great dignity and courage - was despatched about an hour later upon Tower Green, she and Guildford were

Even though Jane had nothing to do with the rebellion, the queen's government let out that it had been aimed to put the 'nine days queen' back on the throne again. Perhaps this was to deflect attention that it was actually meant to stop the marriage alliance with Spain. Regardless, Jane's earlier sentence of death was upheld, and she and Guildford Dudley - innocent as they were - were to suffer on the block.

Before Guildford was taken out to the scaffold on Tower Hill (where his father had lost his head and his grandfather Edmund Dudley too for high treason in the reign of Henry VIII), he asked for a final meeting with his wife. However Jane declined. It would be too upsetting, she said, and besides, they would meet in Heaven soon enough. On the morning of February 12,

both buried in the Chapel of Saint Peter ad Vincula. Their graves, like those of others near them, were unmarked, but in the 19th century, Queen Victoria saw fit to commemorate some of the victims with their heraldic emblems set in marble above their interments by the altar. Among them was Jane Grey. In 2006, a further tribute was made to her. Outside the chapel, a glass monument was created by artist Brian Catling whereby those who had been executed on Tower Green were remembered. As for Guildford Dudley, he was not forgotten either. Inside the chapel, his name (along with Jane's) was included in memorials to those who were laid to rest within.

**ROLAND HUI**

1. John Stephan Edwards, 'A Further Note on the Date of Birth of Lady Jane Grey Dudley', *Notes and Queries*, vol. 55, no. 2 (June 2008).
2. Mary Queen of Scots (another descendant of Henry VII) was never considered as her branch of the family had been excluded from the English succession by Henry VIII.
3. Eric Ives, *Lady Jane Grey: A Tudor Mystery*, Chichester: Wiley-Blackwell, 2009, p. 185.
4. *Calendar of State Papers, Spain (CSP Span.)*, XI, Jehan Scheyfve to the Bishop of Arras, May 30, 1553.
5. J. M. Stone, *The History of Mary I Queen of England*, New York: E.P. Dutton and Co., 1901, pp. 498-499. Jane's alleged poisoning was almost certainly entirely accidental. That June, there was an incident in the Dudley household where Guildford and some others had food poisoning because a cook had carelessly 'plucked one leaf for another'. See: *CSP Span.* XI, Jehan Scheyfve to the Bishop of Arras, June 12, 1553.
6. *ibid.*



The Advantageous  
Marriages of the Howards  
by  
Catherine Brooks



# Sir Richard Clement at Ightham Mote



View of Ightham Mote from the south  
[photo by GM]

In 1521, Richard Clement bought Ightham Mote for £400, along with land in the village and at nearby Shipbourne, Seal and Wrotham, making Clement a man of significance in Kent. Before the purchase, his only connection with the county was through his friends, the

Sidneys at Penshurst. He may have heard that the place was for sale from them or from the Haute family – the previous owners – at court.

Richard Clement was active at the royal court of Henry VII. As a Page of the King's Privy Chamber, both he and



**Drawing by Wrothesley of Henry VII's deathbed. Clement is pictured under his coat-of-arms top right.**

Edward Haute had attended the funeral of Henry Tudor's queen, Elizabeth of York, in 1503. Promoted to Groom of the King's Privy Chamber, he was at the deathbed of Henry VII at Richmond Palace in April 1509. His presence was noted in a drawing done by the Garter King of Arms, Sir Thomas Wriothesley.

For two days, the king's intimate servants, including Clement, kept his death a secret, going about their duties as though he were still alive, until the succession of his son, Henry VIII, was confirmed. Apparently, the reason was that the old king's scheming and infamous financial managers, Richard Empson and Edmund Dudley, were to be arrested before they learned that their master and protector was dead. This was accomplished and one of the new king's most popular acts was to have his father's hated tax officers executed. Clement attended Henry VII's funeral as a Groom of the Chamber

and the issue of his 'mourning clothes' for the event is on record.

Clement had been involved in money-making ventures at court. For example, in 1506, he received 30 shillings for *vij yerdes of crimosyn sarcenett at iiij s the yerde*, thus making a profit of two shillings. However, the new king dismissed him from court for a while, making a clean sweep of his father's intimate servants, although by 1513, Clement was reinstated as a Gentleman Usher to Henry VIII and fought at the battle of the Spurs against the French that year. [Not quite a second Agincourt but the English archers and men-at-arms put the French cavalry on the run, making much use of their spurs – hence the name of the battle.]

But being a Gentleman Usher mostly required Clement to 'work from home', reporting to the king any nefarious activities in the local area. At first, he was living in Northamptonshire, having married a wealthy widow of that county, Anne Whittlebury. She was the sister of the famous Sir William Catesby, Richard III's Chancellor who was executed after the battle of Bosworth in 1485. But after 1521, Clement was more concerned with sniffing out possible trouble-makers in and around Ightham Mote.

In 1528, he assisted the Archbishop of Canterbury, William Warham, at nearby Knole, in dispersing 'a host of belligerent Kentishmen' who demanded money they said was owed by the churchman. It also seems likely, according to Malcolm Mercer [1995], that another near neighbour at Hever Castle [below] was Clement's patron: Thomas Boleyn, father of Anne. Involvement with men of such





standing led to Clement receiving a knighthood in 1529.

Now Sir Richard, he set about refurbishing and modernising Ightham Mote to do justice to his new status. To declare his loyalty to Henry VIII and the House of Tudor, Tudor badges and heraldry were used as decorative motifs all around the Mote. The additional upper storeys and crenellations of the Gatehouse Tower in the west range probably date to Clement's time and would have looked suitably impressive to visitors with the Clement coat-of-arms in the stained glass windows. The Great Hall windows have the Tudor emblems and arms in stained glass, including Catherine of Aragon's pomegranate which must date these windows to the time before Anne Boleyn supplanted Catherine in the king's favour.

Clement also added a long gallery linking the two halves of the family

quarters. He attended Anne Boleyn's splendid coronation in 1533 and the grandeur of the Mote makes me wonder if he was hoping for a royal visit. The superb guest room and the long gallery now form the New Chapel with its barrel-vaulted ceiling displaying Clement's Tudor loyalties. Concerning Clement's refurbishments, Sandi, my friend and National Trust volunteer at Ightham Mote, told me this story:

*One of the curators from Hampton Court Palace visited IM a few years ago and was hugely excited to see the Tudor linenfold panels we have throughout the first floor of the house. Some have a cross on them and he called them 'Biblefold' because they look like the binding of a bible. The curator said the only other place he has ever seen these is in the Wolsey Rooms at Hampton Court Palace. Having learned more about Richard Clement's 'wheeler dealer' activities, I can*



# TONI MOUNT



Henry VIII's Great Hall at Hampton Court Palace  
[Historic Royal Palaces]

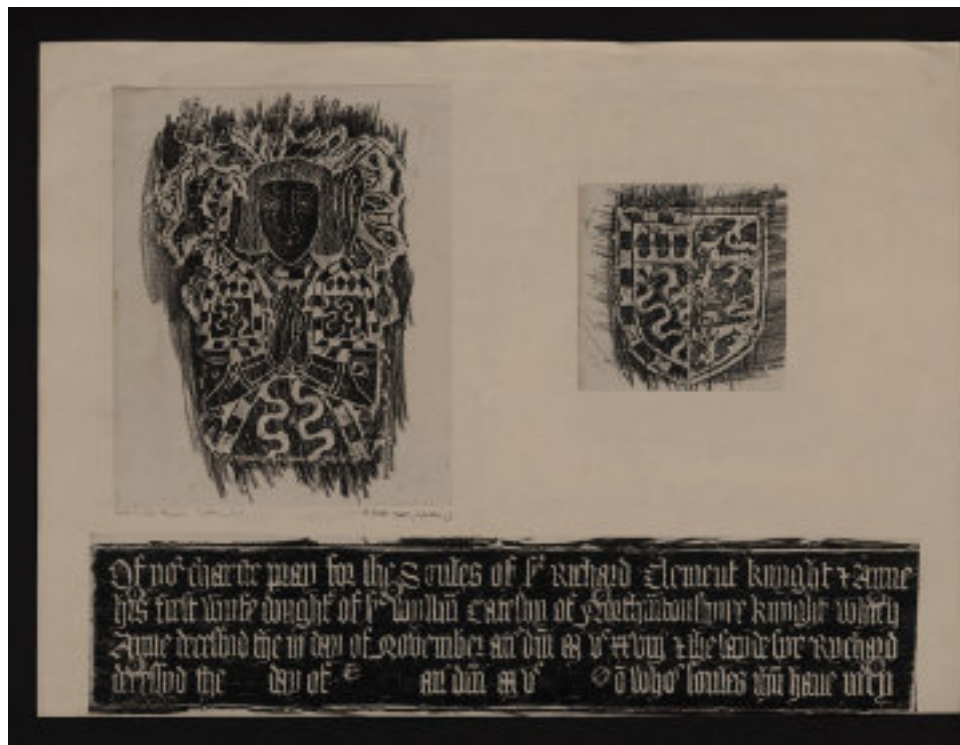
*imagine Clement procuring the beautiful panels for Cardinal Wolsey, charging a handsome fee, and discovering that a few had fallen off the back of a Tudor wagon – just enough to create a feature wall at his new home at Ightham Mote!*

[Readers can glimpse the panelling in Wolsey's Closet at Hampton Court Palace by viewing the BBC clip on <https://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/p02gb8rb> ]

In November 1528, Clement's first wife, Anne Catesby, died. He had a brass made to commemorate her at her burial place in Ightham Mote Church. From the inscription, it's clear that he intended to be buried beside her, despite the fact that, by 1530, he had married Anne Barley, Lady Grey, widow of Lord John Grey, hoping to gain further connections at court. She was the widow of Sir John Grey, grandson of Elizabeth Woodville, and brother of Thomas, 2nd

Marquis of Dorset. [John Grey's first wife had been Elizabeth Catesby, sister to Clement's first wife.] This would have been considered a prestigious marriage for Clement.

Clement was appointed as Sheriff of Kent and a Justice of the Peace a number of times, beginning in 1531. However, he overstepped his authority in 1534 when he led 200 men to Shipbourne during an argument over property between John Crosse, the Rector of Shipbourne, and Robert Brenner of Hadlow, a servant of Sir Edward Guildford. Clement's men surrounded Brenner's place, demanding that he surrender. When a rude reply was



A rubbing of the brass in Ightham Church with the Clement and Catesby arms combined on the right  
[V&A collection]

The inscription reads - Of yo[ur] charite pray for the soules of S[ir] Richard Clement knyght & Anne his first wyfe daught[er] of S[ir] Wyll'm Catesby of North'mptonshire Knyght, which Anne decessyd the III<sup>th</sup> (sic) day of November an<sup>o</sup> d'm Mv<sup>c</sup>XXVIII<sup>th</sup> & the sayde Syr Rychard decessyd the... day of... An<sup>o</sup> d'm MV... o[n] who[s] soules J[e]h[s]u have m[er]cy

Note that Sir Richard's date of death hasn't been added.



returned, shots were exchanged and Clement forcibly removed Guildford's man. Brenner and two other men were sent to Maidstone gaol but Guildford complained. Clement was summoned and tried in the Court of the Star Chamber and found guilty of using excessive force without having made proper enquiries into the case beforehand. As a result, he spent time in



**Richard Clement's memorial brass in Ightham Church**

the Fleet prison which must have been dire compared to the luxuries of the Mote. He was shortly released, possibly because the Boleyns put in a good word for him. But not everyone approved of Clement's release. John Dudley wrote to Thomas Cromwell, saying:

*I beg you do not give too much credence to some great men who wish to make the best of it for Mr Clement, as when I show you how hotly the sending of Mr Clement to the Fleet was taken by some that, may chance, you think your friend, you will not a little marvel.*

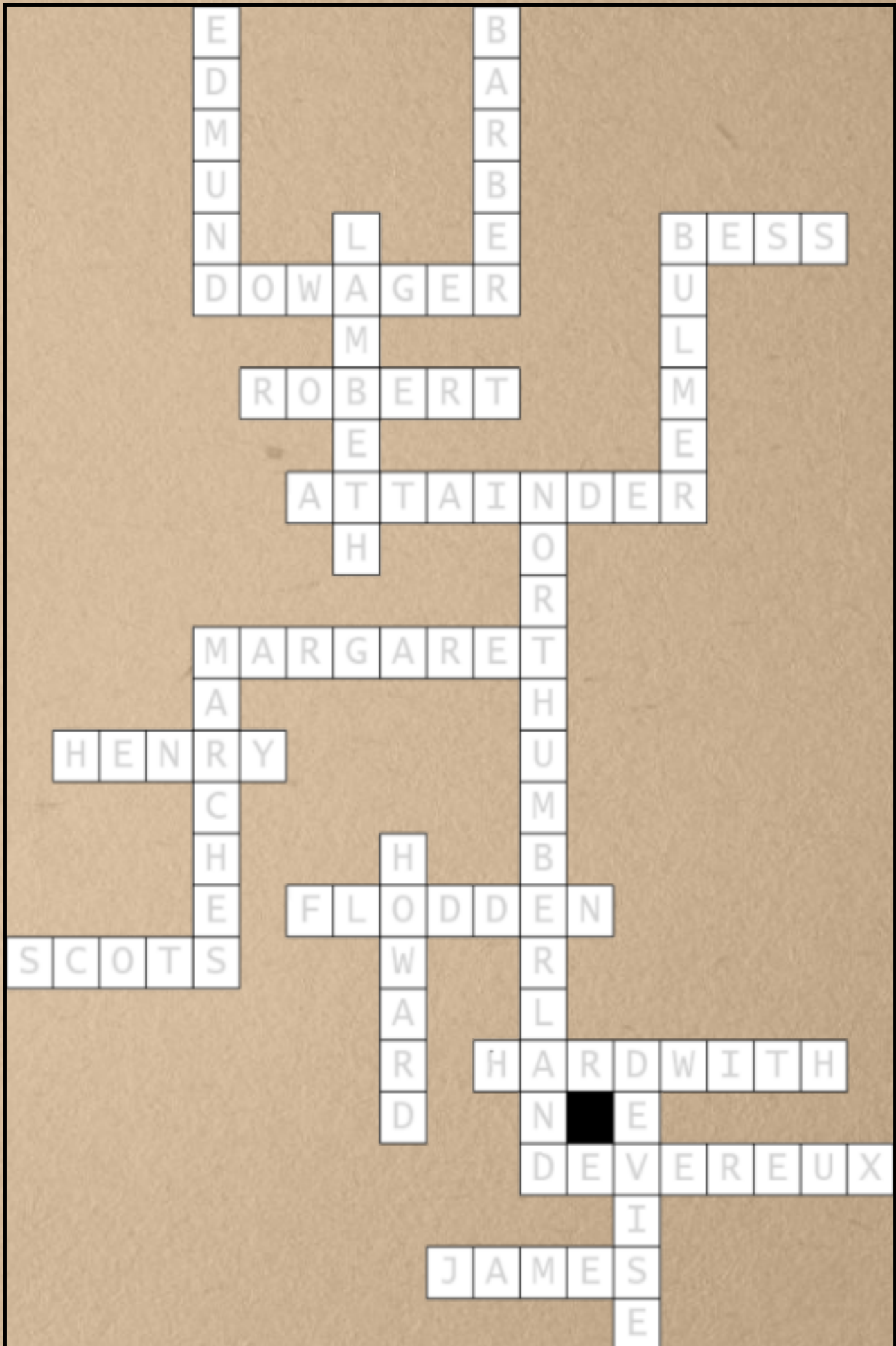
However, to keep your head in Tudor times, you had to be prepared to change sides. Clement's patronage by Sir Thomas Boleyn didn't prevent him from being involved in the trial and downfall of Anne Boleyn to please the king in May 1536, just three years after he attended her magnificent coronation. Clement sat on the Grand Jury of Kent at Deptford to consider and rule against the alleged crimes of the queen.

Later that year, in October, he raised a contingent of twenty men to help put down the Pilgrimage of Grace, a northern rebellion against Henry VIII's religious reforms. In February 1538, he was at Tonbridge, investigating cases of manslaughter and hunting on Sir Thomas Boleyn's estates. The last mention of Clement's activities features in a

letter from a John Baker to Thomas Cromwell in March 1538 where Baker writes: *Tomorrow I must meet Mr Clement, Mr Sidney and others on the content of your Lordship's letter of 4th March about the seditious words about the levying of the Fifteenth and Tenth.* The 'fifteenth and tenth' refers to taxes, so this letter probably concerns tax evasion.

Clement died in 1538, sometime between the end of October and the beginning of December – the exact date isn't recorded. In his will, he made provision for his three daughters by two mistresses, having no legitimate heirs. He left the residue of his estate to his second wife, the Lady Anne Grey, and was buried next to his first wife in Ightham Church. His daughters, Elizabeth, Anne and Margaret, all made good marriages to local gentry. His widow, Anne, died in 1558 and so ended the Clement era at Ightham Mote.

# QUIZ ANSWER





# Charlie

## The Tudors and Europe

John Matusiak



Book



There are many books out there on the Tudor dynasty, with most focusing solely on the impact the monarchs had on the country they ruled. John Matusiak's latest work *The Tudors and Europe* looks further out and examines their relationship with the other countries in Europe. Matusiak has written several books on the Tudor period, including a biography on Wolsey and *The Tudors in 100 Objects*, so he is no stranger to this topic, but it is one of the first looking at how the dynasty was perceived outside of England and the close relationship England had with other countries.

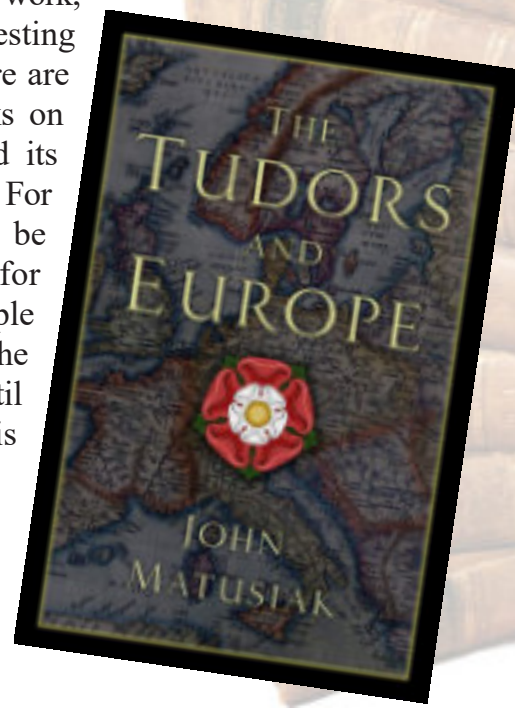
The book is heavy going from the start and requires some background knowledge, but it is still interesting enough to draw in the reader. It starts with looking at the general perceptions of Europe and Christendom at the time. Matusiak explores the prejudice against foreigners, looking at how this came out in various works of literature of the time, as well as actual events:

*'Mob violence on such a scale was, it must be said, rare. But ill feeling, in the capital especially, continued to surface against a variety of real or imagined offences associated with outsiders. Low-standard price-cutting, the forging of trademarks, and the seduction of honest citizens' wives were, for example, perennial complaints, as even the more law-abiding found themselves*

*accused in a no-win situation of keeping themselves aloof from the native community among whom they dwelt and reaped their profits.'*

Sadly the author does not seem to be very focused and jumps from idea to idea, making it hard for the reader to keep track. It includes many interesting ideas, such as the development of maps during this time, but this is not enough to sustain it.

There are no references or even a bibliography in this work, which greatly lets it down. It is clear that the book has been well researched, as it often quotes from numerous sources, so this is disappointing. It also reads more like an academic work, but cannot be used as such due to this, making the target audience an uncertain one. It is hard to recommend this work, as it is an interesting subject and there are few other works on the dynasty and its place in Europe. For now, it may be worth a read for some people interested in the topic, until another book is written.



# Katherine Parr

Don Matzat



There are a few biographies out on Katherine Parr, the wife known for 'surviving' Henry VIII. In recent years, her religious beliefs have come to the forefront of many discussions about her, but her love life and marriages to both Henry and Thomas Seymour have still always taken precedence. *Katherine Parr: Opportunist, Queen, Reformer* by Don Matzat is not a traditional biography, instead looking at Katherine's life from a theological perspective.

Matzat looks at her life with particular focus on the ideas she expressed in her 1547 work *The Lamentation of a Sinner*. He includes an appendix comparing her teachings from that work with the theologians of the Reformation, including Martin Luther and John Calvin. He includes the text of *The Lamentation of a Sinner* after the biography itself too, which is useful for anyone interested in her work.

Most of the beginning is on Henry's life, the Great Matter and the changes that happened before he married Katherine Parr. We only turn to her life 60 pages in, where we see just how well educated she was and how this would be put to good use later on:

*'There is evidence to suggest that Katherine received a good education. She was proficient in French and Italian and perhaps even knew some Greek and Latin. She was also taught mathematics, which she would put to good use in her later capacity as Lady Latimer and Queen of England. In addition, she was schooled in manners and courtly etiquette, developing an easy conversation style.'*

There is a lot of reliance on other historians, like Linda Porter and Elizabeth Norton, in this book. The author even quotes directly from Porter on numerous occasions, instead of looking at the primary sources these historians used.

Without spoiling anything, Matzat does propose an interesting theory as to when exactly Katherine's faith emerged. The author's knowledge of theology and Protestantism is a sound one and is one of the draws of this book, but it is not enough to sustain it. He also sometimes seems to let some of his personal views come through, like with this odd statement concerning Henry and Katherine's relationship: *'I do not think it is possible, because of his appearance, for any woman to fall romantically in love with King Henry'*.

The theological perspective and look at her religion as expressed through her works is the main draw of *Katherine Parr: Opportunist, Queen, Reformer*. Unfortunately, as much as there are some interesting points raised about her religious beliefs, there isn't enough here to recommend it over the existing works on Katherine Parr. Some good ideas are put forward, but it is based on the work of other historians and there is no evidence of looking at any contemporary sources, apart from Katherine's own work. It is a difficult book to recommend, with the appendix being the part of the book that will interest most people, and the main part being in better biographies of the sixth wife of Henry VIII.







# THE WEDDING FEAST



My friends, it has simply been far too long! I'm sorry we've been apart for so long, and I know I should have invited you back to my humble chateau sooner. I've simply been too overwhelmed, too exhausted since my darling nephew's wedding to even consider entertaining friends! It was a magnificent affair, but I fear nothing would have been good enough for *mon petit cochon* Hennequin. I suppose Hennequin's bride, Oriane-Amalie, is pleasant enough to look at, and of course, she brings him several plump estates. While the money those estates will bring him should be enough, but one can never be certain with Burgundians. We thought that perhaps Charles *le Roi* himself might grace our humble celebration with his presence. My brother *Duc* Etienne-Anselme did promise me that he would speak with *le Victorieux*, but alas, our divine king did not appear. Perhaps he was too preoccupied with those impertinent English across the sea.

I know you have not come here to listen to the politics of men but hear of the grandeur and splendour of my nephew's wedding. It was just a small and intimate family affair; only three hundred of our closest friends. Oriane-Amalie's family had the nerve to complain that they had not been permitted to invite many of their family, but there simply wasn't room for everyone in the grand dining hall of my brother's humble palace. And then there was our reputation to think of. Had we not invited people of importance, then our reputation would have been

ruined! Ruined, I tell you! So we simply must keep up our reputation at all costs.

To that end, my brother, the *Duc* and I held the wedding ceremony in the charming Basilica of Saint-Denis, not far from Etienne-Anselme's home. *Abbé* Jean de Borbon conducted the ceremony, but I felt his presence was unnecessary as the bride's father and my brother had already concluded the agreement. I am led to believe that that bride's *mama* complained most bitterly when she was told that *Abbé* Jean would not conduct the wedding. Apparently,





her poor husband gave in just to silence her! Once the good *Abbé* had finished, we returned to my brother's house for the wedding breakfast. And let me say this, his household excelled themselves! My brother hired a famous cook and his varlets to ensure that all the dishes were of the highest quality, and bakers, pastry cooks, and vintners of the greatest renown. His steward also hired two bread-slicers whose jobs were to make the trenchers, two kitchen equerries and their helpers, and ten big strong sergeants to guard the doors. One can never be too careful! My brother also instructed two of his most honest and knowledgeable servants to accompany Hennequin all day and go to the table with him. We began

with little pies made of the most delicate paste and filled with grapes and peaches lightly poached in honey and cinnamon. Then came our first remove was a light soup from Alsace with almonds. Such a gentle dish and the perfect way to introduce our Burgundian visitors to the delights of Paris. This was followed by hares cooked in black sauce with cherries and a selection of humble pates, including several outstanding *fois gra* from my brother's estate in Lorraine. Then came veal pies with beef marrow, pies made from young chickens and rabbits, pigeon breast tartlets, and several delectable forcemeats.

Our second remove began with several styles of roasted meats served with a yellow sauce that was both sweet and sour at the



same time! A miracle! A man from my brother's retinue sent several casks of fine wine from Perigord, which complimented the yellow sauce. The kitchenmaids had made fresh almond milk which was also served in case our Burgundian guests found the wine not to their liking. And the crayfish jelly was simply a triumph! I have never tasted something so utterly sublime! At this point, there were tedious speeches made by my brother, and the bride's papa. Unfortunately, I found the bride's papa to be very hard to understand. I do not know if this was because his accent was so horrendous or if he had drunk too much Perigord wine.

Next, we had a course of pink soup, accompanied by goslings cooked in their own fat. I was horrified, simply horrified, to see members of the bride's family wiping their fingers on my brother's table cloths! He employs the good sisters from a silent and contemplative order to make his linens from the finest and most expensive linen fabric money can buy, and to see them so soiled was almost more than I could bear!

Seeing my distress, my brother discreetly spoke to his steward, who instructed the servants to bring in several silver basins filled with delicately scented water for his guests to wash their fingers in.

Then, apropos of fine linens, my brother had commissioned several sets of the most luxurious bed linens, pillows, bolsters and bed hangings for the bridal chamber from the same order of nuns.

Capons with mushrooms and served with a poultry sauce then graced the tables, along with a good gruel of frumenty with eggs and pheasant meat that our guests particularly enjoyed. And so they should as the frumenty alone contained three hundred and fifty eggs! The capons were accompanied by pomegranates and red almonds. Then, after a brief interlude during which my young niece entertained us by playing the virginals, roasted hens were served basted with a fragrant saffron sauce. And the chamber-spices were simply divine! We enjoyed candied orange peel, candied citron, whole almonds covered in rose sugar, saffron wafers with sweet cheese, and a delightful hippocras.

As always, the *Duc* was generous towards the poor and gave them alms straight from his own table. *Abbé* Jean assured my brother that his generosity would indeed be noted in heaven, especially when he said he would donate both a bell and a new window to the *Abbé's* basilica.

**RIOGHNACH O'GERAGHTY**



ANNA

BOLINA

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## REGULAR CONTRIBUTORS

Charlie Fenton  
Riognach O'Geraghty  
Roland Hui  
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Lauren Browne  
Sarah-Beth Watkins  
Susan Abernethy

**LAYOUT** Tim Ridgway

Joel Ridgway

**VIDEOGRAPHER** Tim Ridgway

## MAGAZINE EDITOR

Gareth Russell

[info@tudorsociety.com](mailto:info@tudorsociety.com)

## CONTACT

[info@tudorsociety.com](mailto:info@tudorsociety.com)

Calle Sargento Galera, 3

Lucar 04887

Almeria

Spain

## ONLINE

[www.TudorSociety.com](http://www.TudorSociety.com)

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