

# Tudor Life

THE  
TUDOR  
SOCIETY

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Members Only

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TUDOR  
DOCUMENTS  
& SOURCES

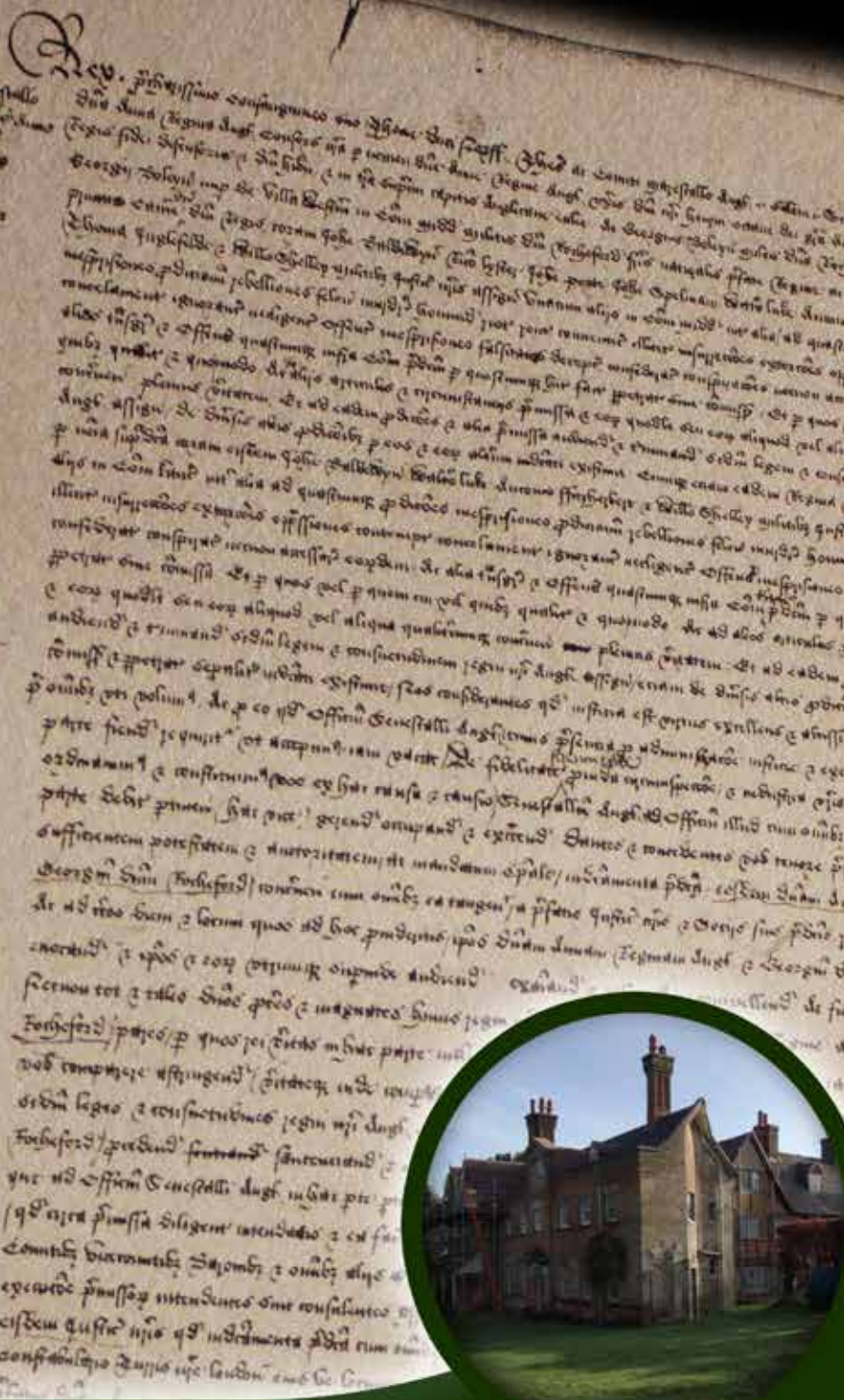
Living with the  
Lisles

The National  
Archives

A Picture tells a  
thousand words

Documents and  
Anne Boleyn's  
Imprisonment

Mysteries at St  
Mary's Collegiate  
Church



History today - Discover the  
**REAL WOLF HALL**



Join Claire Ridgway and Philippa Brewell from the Tudor Society  
who are running the

## **Executed Queens tour in July 2019.**

There are just seven spaces left so please book soon for this trip-of-a-lifetime

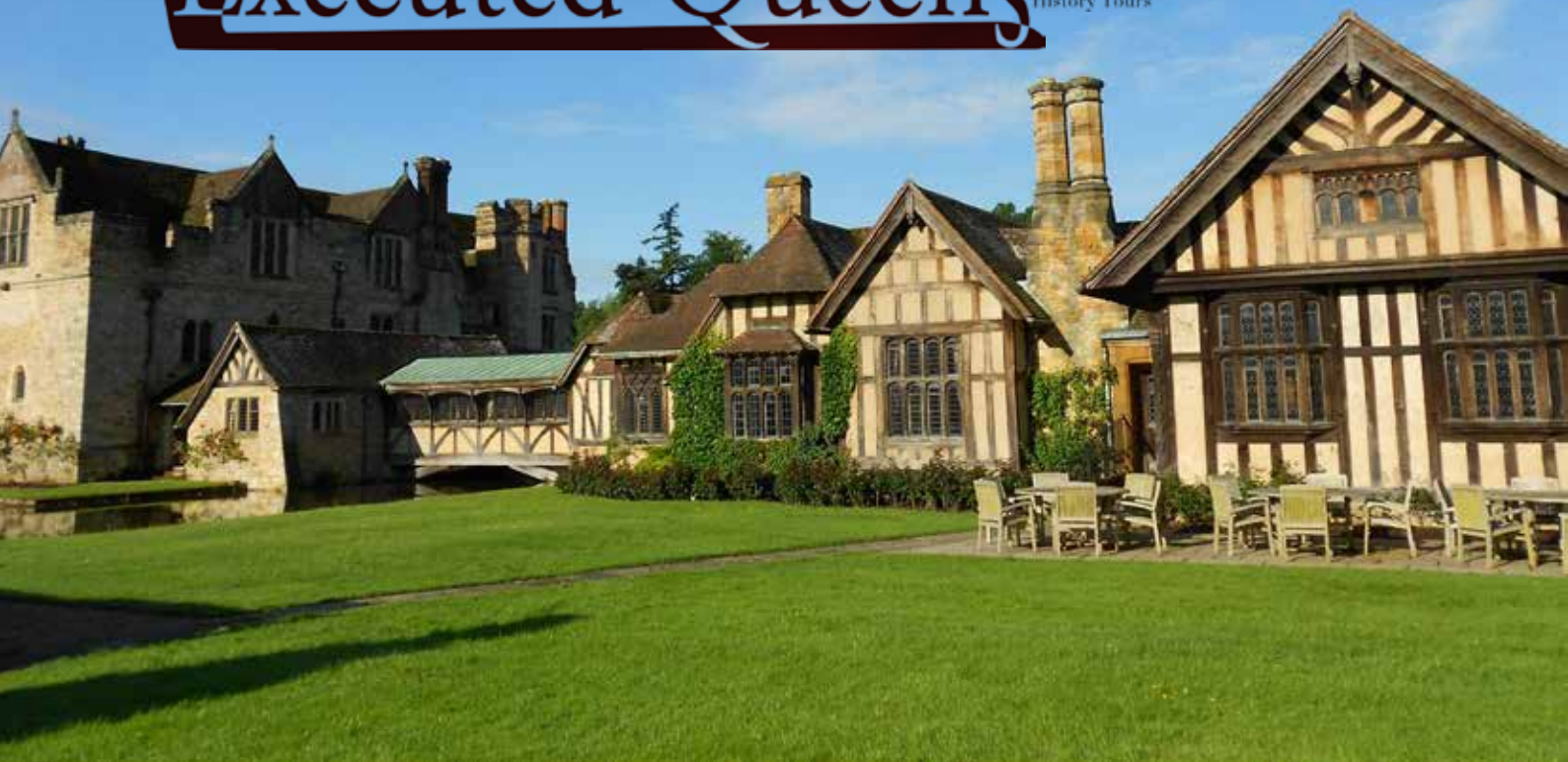
You'll be staying in exquisite accommodation including Hever Castle, dining in the Castle dining room, visiting iconic places in the lives of Mary Queen of Scots, Anne Boleyn, Lady Jane Grey and Catherine Howard.

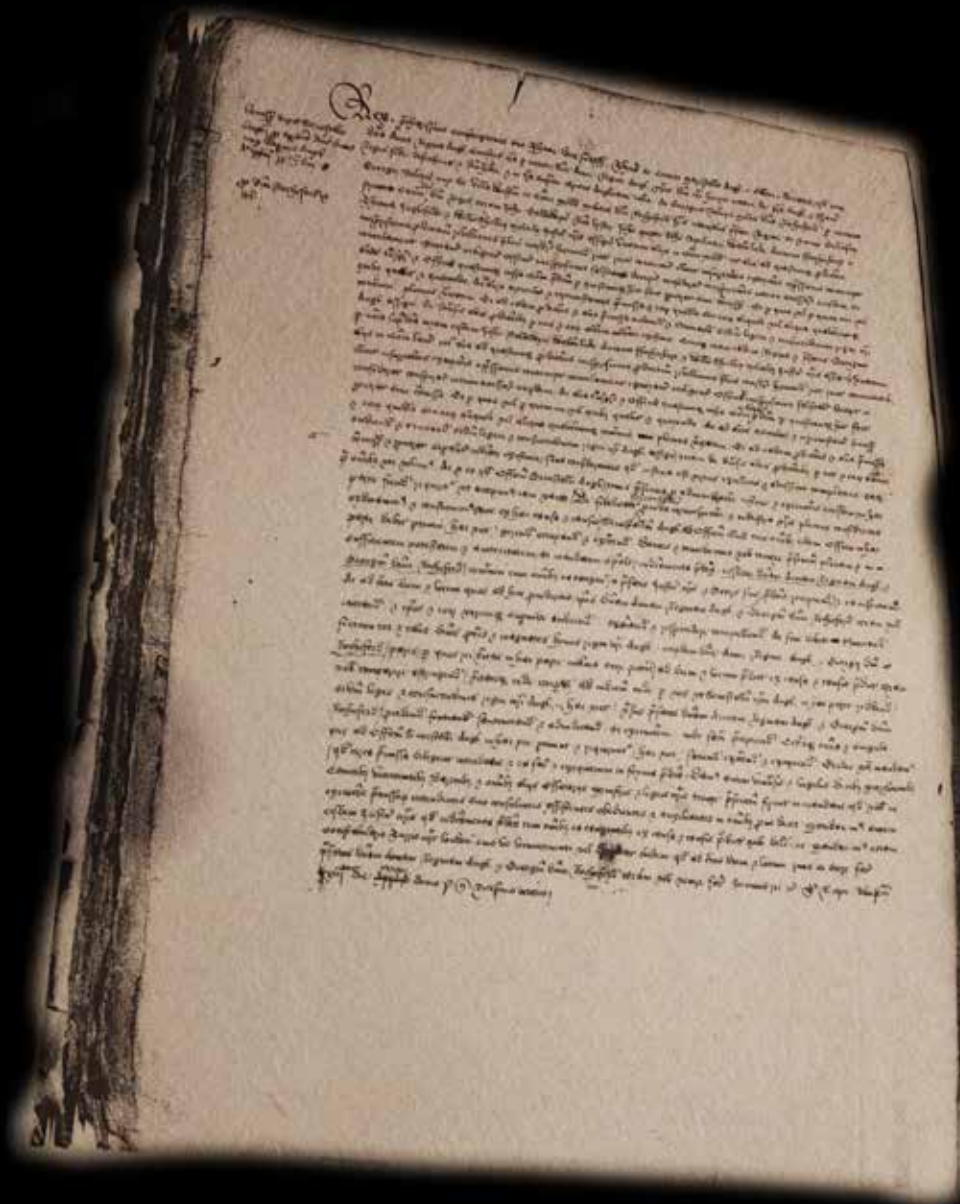
Exclusive: Guest speaker Gareth Russell, author of "Young and Damned and Fair" will be joining the tour to speak on Catherine Howard. Gareth is a fantastically engaging speaker and will have you enthralled.

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**Executed Queens** 





## TUDOR DOCUMENTS AND SOURCES

**T**HE TUDOR era left both a richly fascinating and achingly frustrating amount of original documents. On the one hand, as Roland Hui points out in his fascinating article for this issue of “Tudor Life”, we know a great deal about Anne Boleyn’s final eighteen days alive thanks to the surviving testimony of her chief gaoler, Sir William Kingston. Yet, we do not know much about significant other parts of her life including, controversially, the near decade-spanning confusion over her date of birth. These debates enliven our study of the Tudor period, while time and time again taking us back to the sources that have survived from that tumultuous ceremony.

**GARETH RUSSELL**  
**EDITOR**



# Tudor Life



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# THE REAL WOLF HALL

BY CATHERINE BROOKS



Sometimes actions can have unforeseeable consequences. When Hilary Mantel had her award-winning novel ‘Wolf hall’, (Thomas Cromwell Trilogy Book 1), published in April 2009, later adapted into the TV mini-series in 2015, it seemed unlikely that anyone could have predicted the attention it would return to a family seat where a meeting between King Henry VIII and young Mistress Jane Seymour would change the course of the succession.

**I**N OCTOBER of this year, 2018, I was truly honoured to be invited, with my wonderful friend and Tudor novelist, Adrienne Dillard, to take a tour of the excavations at Wolf Hall. We were given the warmest of welcomes by Dee (Chair of the 'Wolf Hall Advisory Group'), Aly (of the 'Friends of Wolf Hall'), and Dominic Bruce-Binney, a direct descendant of Edward Seymour, Duke of Somerset and Lord Protector, brother to Queen Jane Seymour and Uncle of Edward VI.

In 2013, upon the passing of their mother, siblings Dominic, Theo, Orlando and Genevieve inherited the property known as Wolf Hall. As someone who could get lost coming out of her own driveway, I was pleased to only have to make one S.O.S. call to Dee, who asked Dominic to come out and steer us in the right direction. I parked the car, and we stepped out to be confronted immediately by the fusion of historical building projects that he and his siblings treasure as their home. And it is a treasure, and is undeniably unique. Although much of the original Tudor building was torn down (it has been suggested that some of the materials were used to build the new Tottenham Park mansion, to the north), it retains, on the western side, the half-timbered Tudor villa, which faces the gardens. The northern frontage is Georgian, built around 1750, and a Victorian extension was added in 1880. The building today is notably smaller than in Tudor times, but for me, its history makes it even more remarkable today than in its heyday.

First mentioned in the Domesday Book of 1086, Wolf Hall lies at the edge of Wiltshire's Savernake forest, a

favoured hunting ground of Henry VIII. The title of Warden of Savernake, then held by Richard Esturmy, has been passed on from that time along the ancestral line. Historian Graham Bathe, who has made a 20 year study of Savernake and the Seymours, found that during the 1300s, the Speaker of the House of Commons, Sir William Esturmy, built there a large house in natural stone, with its own chapel. This building then became known as Wolf Hall.

The grandeur of the building rose with the royal favour of the Seymours, and Sir John Seymour, the then Warden of Savernake, would certainly have ensured the work done on it made it 'fit for a king'. Much of the old masonry was taken down, and the new work was in the style of the Tudor fashions, such as the hexagonal towers. The Friends of Wolf Hall Newsletter, Autumn 2018 (available to view on their website [www.realwolfhall.com](http://www.realwolfhall.com)), states that research has indicated that:

*'There were at least two courtyards, a gatehouse, the king's chamber reserved for royalty, a long gallery, a treasury, weaponry, evidence room, chapel (with resident priest) and massive kitchens, together with family rooms and nurseries and many outbuildings and barns. It had over 30 beds. There were eight gardens, including a box garden, primrose garden, great paled garden, and my old lady's garden and my young lady's garden.'*

Dominic described how, during their childhoods, he and his siblings had heard many tales and rumours about the original building, and where it might lie.





The North Wing

It would, I suppose, especially when you are young, not strike you with the same sense of marvel that you could be so close to such a matchless piece of history, as it does to all of us now. But now Dominic and his brothers and sister are excited to find out more about their ancestral home and what, astonishingly, has lain beneath their feet for all these years. So when Graham Bathe approached the family to ask if he could study Wolf Hall to advance his research, a wonderful partnership was formed. Along with Bathe, archaeologist Robin Holley (both of whom work with the Wiltshire Archaeological and Natural History Society) has completed a re-appraisal of the architectural and historic significance of Wolf Hall. A team of volunteers have been working, at the time of writing, close to two years to uncover the secrets the current Wolf Hall seemed likely to be hiding. And it appears that it's been hiding quite a few...

With our warmest layers and sensible boots, we were captivated by what Dominic showed us. We approached the trenches and saw the lines of brickwork and the tiles in situ: It seems there is a

room that would've been tiled throughout. We saw how the foundation lines fed across the various sites of excavation, which showed consistency enough to demonstrate the foundations of the original building, with a bay window in alignment. There is a fireplace hearth, and defensive walls a meter thick, which appear to stem from the time when William Esturmy built his natural stone house. Stained glass has been found, perhaps indicating an Eastward-facing chapel. An Elizabethan sixpence from 1562 has also recently been discovered, and a whole heap of oyster shells (consumed in their hundreds each week!). There is a Tudor brick, complete with the fingerprints of the maker.

Below the current house is a network of tunnels which Bathe said they used to help guide them as to where to dig the exploratory trenches. These have been identified now as Tudor Sewers. These cover 140m in length, which I found incredible, and certainly a testament to the size and grandeur of the original manor. These well-preserved walk-through sewers were a real marker of the Seymour's success at court, as they were unheard of before this period.

It is unclear exactly what has happened to Wolf Hall over the centuries. It was certainly at its height of splendour when Henry and Anne Boleyn stayed there during their Royal Progress in 1535. It's apparent that its demise was rapid. After the death of Sir John Seymour, his son Edward, Lord Protector under the reign of his nephew, Edward VI, took the manor on. However, in January 1552, Edward Seymour was beheaded at the Tower of London, and Wolf Hall lay unoccupied for 20 years, where it began



to decay. His son, also Edward, built a new mansion, at Tottenham Park, and enclosed the surrounding land to form a deer park.

As with visiting any place of historical interest, it can seem a hopeless task to try put into words the feelings you have when you step into their grounds or buildings and try to absorb everything around you. The people we crave to learn more about were there, in those places, living the stories we know, leaving traces of what they did in their books and documents, décor, clothing, personal items, and much more. Sometimes, we have so little information, especially reliable information. But there is always something undiscovered, and every now

and then, something remarkable makes its way into the public eye. And Wolf Hall is nothing less than a pure gem. When we talk of ‘living history’, we think of re-enactments, or recreating the living conditions of past eras. But this project is more than that. It’s not imitating real life (although thank goodness people do), it IS real life. It’s the home of not just this noteworthy family in Tudor history, but the home of their living ancestors. The Bruce-Binney occupants of Wolf Hall can trace their direct line from not just the Seymours at Wolf Hall (and before), but have a lineage going back to the marriage of Catherine de Valois (first married to Henry V), and Owen Tudor.

So what now for Wolf Hall? Well,





the project itself is huge, time consuming and, alas, expensive. All of these factors mean that completion is still several years ahead. Exact decisions on what will lie at Wolf Hall for visitors are still to be made, but certainly the gardens are to be returned to their former decadence for everyone to enjoy. In terms of the building itself, a space has been opened inside to display Wolf Hall's history and the information and photographs from the archaeological dig. But it must be remembered that this is a family home, and this must be respected. Strangers have been known to wander in unannounced! In terms of the dig, it will now be on hold until the more favourable weather returns.

The landscape is captivating and relaxes you with every breath you take, but it lends itself rather too well to the ravages of winter weather.

If you would like to keep up-to-date with the events at Wolf Hall, and support them, perhaps by becoming a Friend of Wolf Hall, please visit their website (above). You can also follow their progress on Facebook, The Real Wolfhall, and Twitter @RealWolfhall. Finally if you think you may have any snippet of information that could be of interest to help piece together the history of Wolf Hall, then please contact the Tudor Society and we will pass it on to Dee. You never know!

**CATHERINE BROOKS**





**SOME  
FASCINATING  
FINDS AT  
WOLF HALL**



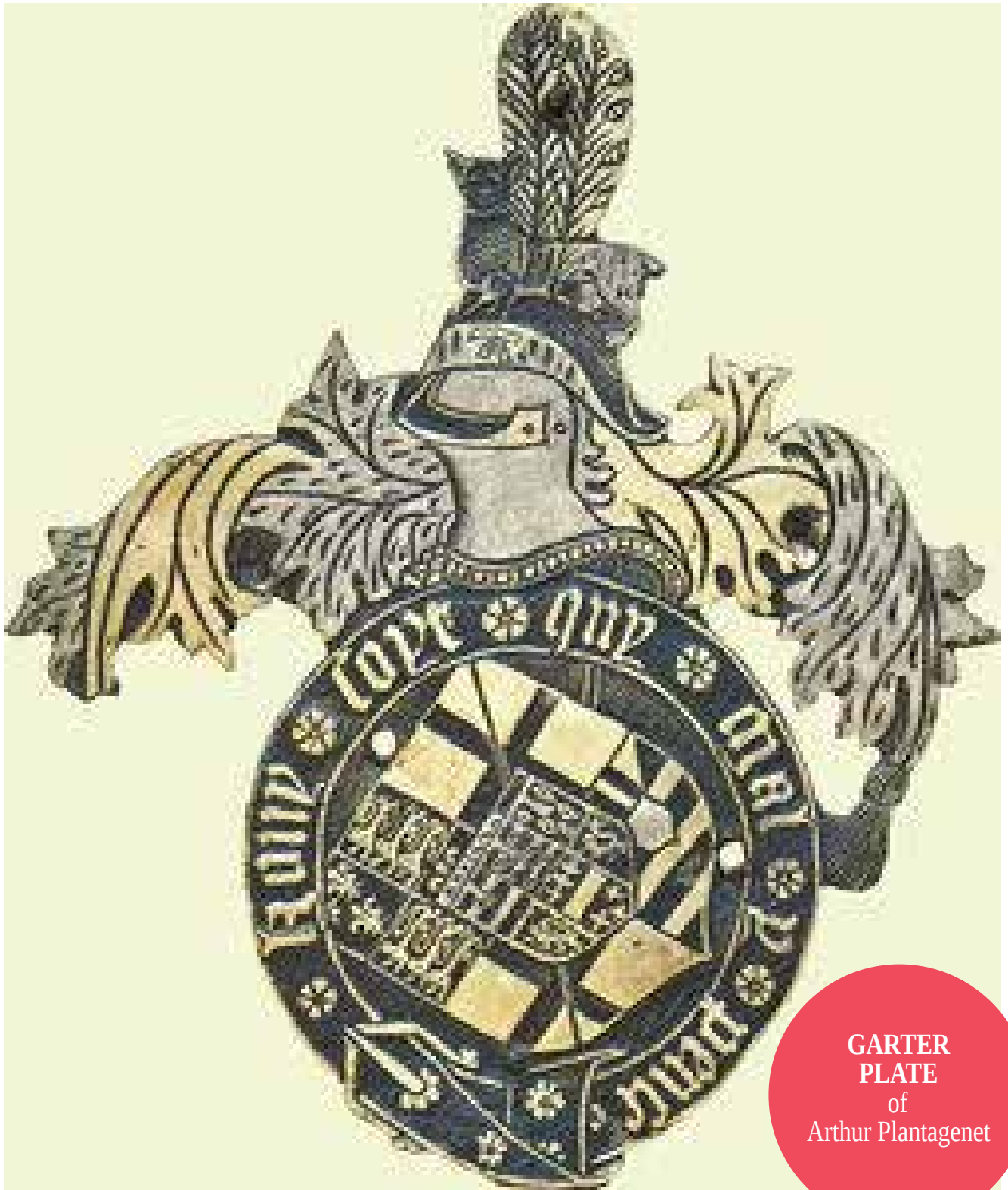


Western extension of trench



Part of the sewer network at Wolf Hall





GARTER  
PLATE  
of  
Arthur Plantagenet

# LIVING WITH THE LISLES

One of the most important and easily accessible Tudor documents are the Lisle Letters with over 3000 letters compiled in six volumes by Muriel St Clare Byrne.

by **SARAH-BETH WATKINS**





**M**uriel St Clare Byrne was a historian, researcher and writer and found a pile of these letters in what was the Public Record Office in Kew and now the National Archives. She devoted nearly fifty years to transcribing them, putting them in order and providing background information to give them context. An amazing feat and one as lovers of Tudor history we can be extremely grateful for.

Arthur Plantagenet, Lord Lisle was the illegitimate son of Edward IV making him Henry VIII's uncle who once said Lisle had the gentlest heart living. No portrait survives of him but he was known to take after his father and was a big, strong man like his nephew whom he had to borrow armour from as his was the only one that would fit.

He was made Governor of Calais in 1533. His date of birth was somewhere between 1461-1475 meaning this position came to him later in life. The administration of Calais wasn't easy. He had to make sure the town was defended and provisioned, see that the soldiers garrisoned there were paid, be available to entertain visiting nobles and keep order amongst the English officials.

He did the best he could do but there were numerous complaints about him ending in a commission of enquiry into affairs in Calais. Lisle was vindicated but during the investigation one Clement Philpott, Lisle's servant was questioned, and he told them of a plot to capture Calais for the

Pope through Reginald Pole (who later denied he had anything to do with it). The main instigator was Sir Gregory Botolf (Gregory Sweet Lips), Lisle's chaplain from 1538, who had planned to take the Lantern Gate during the time when herring was bought and sold and the guard on the gate relaxed. Philpott was to take the gate from within Calais' walls while Botolf attacked from outside. But Philpott had got cold feet and after telling the commission of the plot was sent to London. Botolf had slipped through their fingers in Calais and was staying out of reach.

Henry sent for Lisle on 17 April 1540 and he spent a month in London attending Parliament before his arrest on 19 May. The king was not convinced of his loyalty or his part in any plot so he was not put on trial whereas Philpott and other conspirators were executed 4 August 1540 for denial of the king's supremacy. Lisle's wife, Honor and her daughters Philippa and Mary were placed under house arrest in Calais and Lisle would spend the next two years in prison. All his papers were seized thus giving us a wealth of information not just about his role in Calais but also Tudor political, social and cultural life over a seven year span.

I first came across the Lisle letters whilst researching Anne of Cleves' arrival in Calais. Lisle had been instructed thus:

*The king's Majesty's pleasure is that you shall view his Grace's house here called the Exchequer, that with all diligence all things therein necessary to be amended may be undelayedly repaired... Furthermore, his Majesty would that you should cause the streets and lanes there to be viewed for the pavements, and where any default is, to give commandment to those which should repair the same to see it immediately amended, endeavouring yourselves to put all other things within the said town in the most honest and cleanly order you can devise...*

Lisle duly saw Calais spruced

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ARTHUR PLANTAGENET,  
LORD LISLE WAS THE  
**ILLEGITIMATE  
SON**  
OF EDWARD IV MAKING HIM  
HENRY VIII'S UNCLE

---

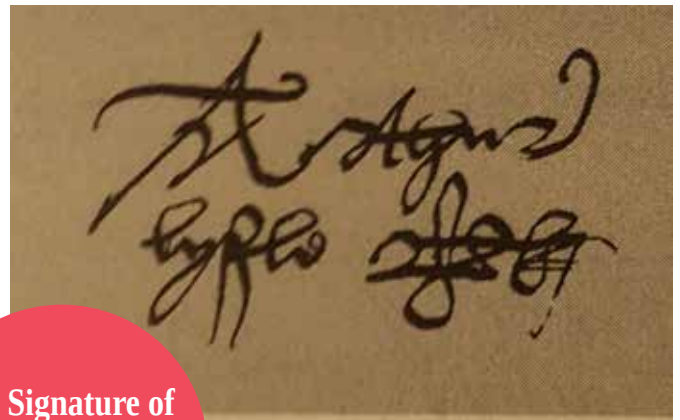
up and was there to welcome the new queen-to-be. This correspondence made me wonder what else the letters contained and I endeavoured to read through all six volumes looking for tidbits to include in my book on Anne but there was so much more there.

The letters are packed full of information and I find myself reaching for them time and time again. Not only are there instructions from Henry VIII and Cromwell but more personal letters sent from John Husee, Lisle's man in England and other prominent courtiers that tell the story of significant times in Tudor history. Take for instance the Whethill affair that led to Lisle's arrest.

Sir Richard Whethill, the mayor of Calais had fallen out with Lisle over a spear's room for his son. In 1531 Henry had granted Robert the next vacancy and by 1533 his father was complaining that he still hadn't been given it. It came to a head in 1534 when Whethill followed Lisle into his garden and raged at him. Their wives too also fell out with Lady Whethill verbally attacking Lady Lisle whilst at church.

Lisle had asked Cromwell for advice but was just told to put them in prison, something in reality he could not do. This was the mayor and his wife, well respected in Calais and the argument caused a divide between those who lived and worked in the garrison town.

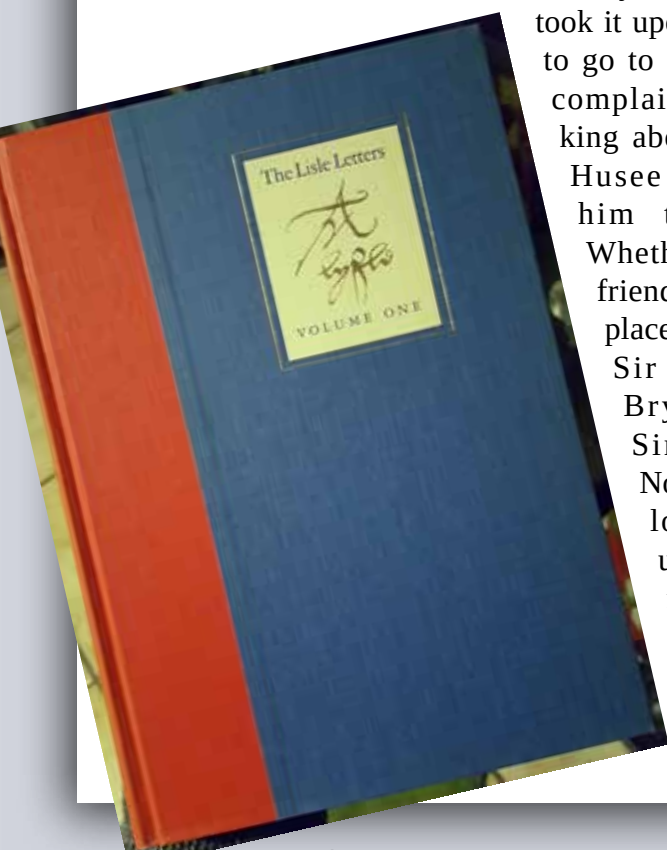
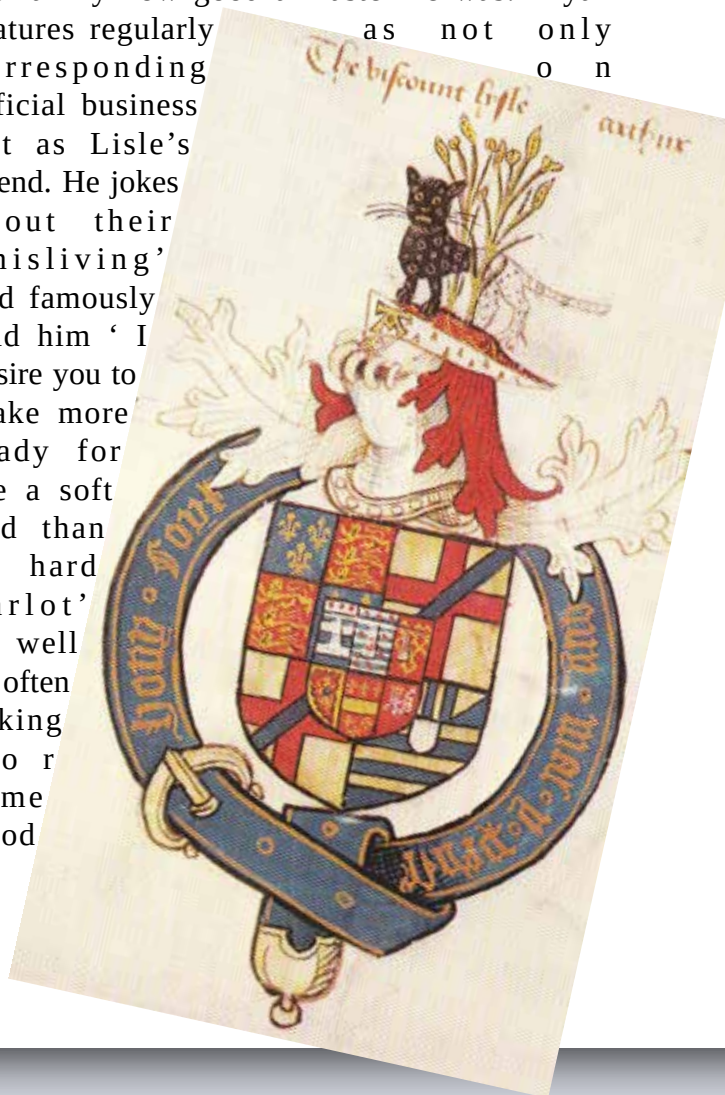
Lady Whethill took it upon herself to go to court and complain to the king about Lisle. Husee warned him that the Whethill's had friends in high places but that Sir Francis Bryan and Sir Henry Norris 'your lordship's unfeigned friends' were doing



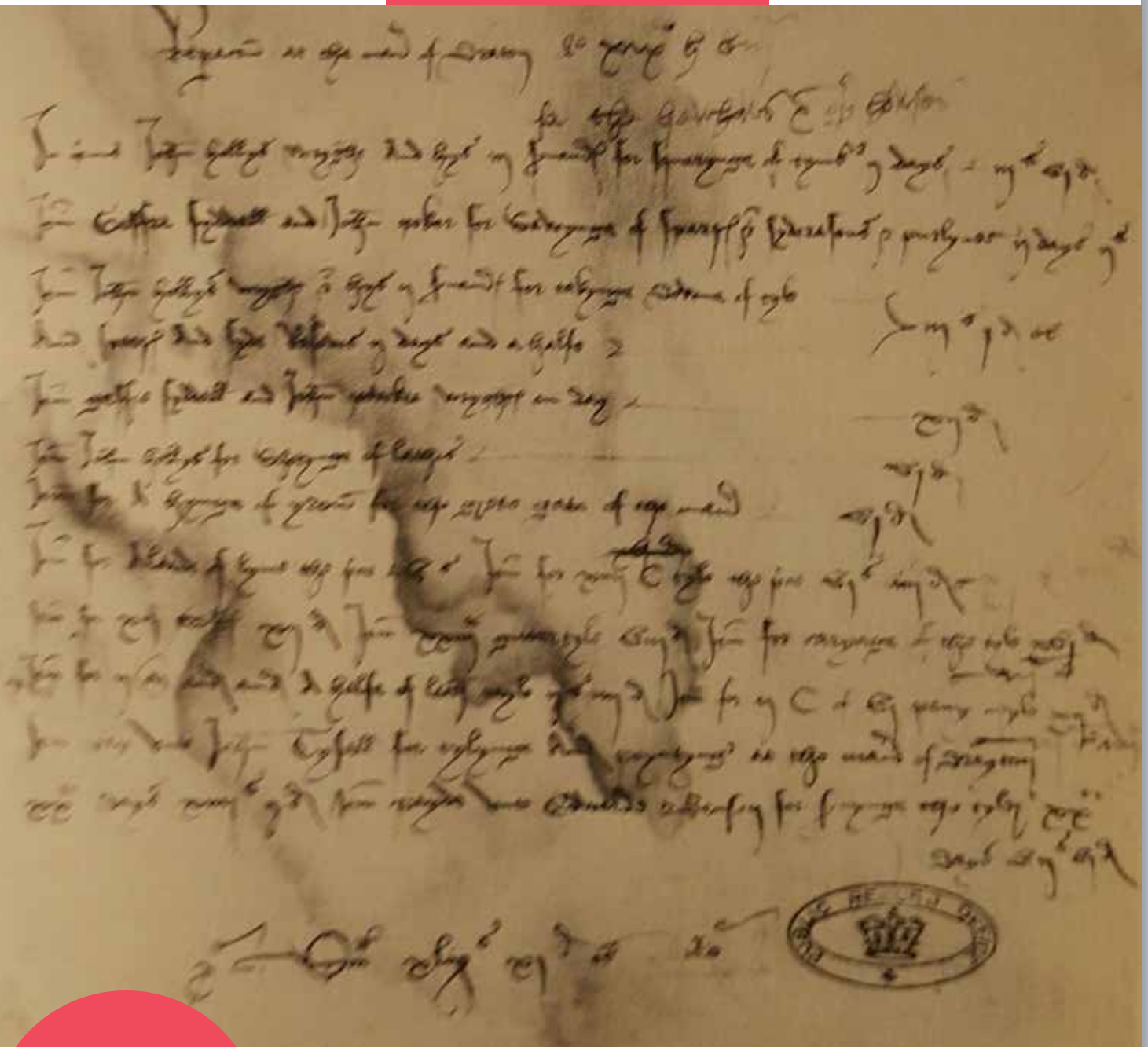
The Signature of  
**LORD  
LISLE**  
1538

their best to help him. They had counselled that he obey the King's letters and 'shew yourself to be the King's officer and be not afraid of no man in doing right and justice'. Lisle took their advice and young Whethill never did get his room.

But the letters also have small bits of information from the gifts sent to the king and queen – Anne Boleyn's little Purquoy for instance – to how the Lisle children were faring. George Bassett, Lisle's step-son was sent to join Sir Francis Bryan's household and we have letters from him telling his family how good a master he was. Bryan features regularly as not only corresponding official business but as Lisle's friend. He jokes about their 'misliving' and famously told him 'I desire you to make more ready for me a soft bed than an hard harlot' as well as often asking for some good







**A PAGE FROM  
Lord Lisle's  
Accounts of  
the manor of  
DRAYTON  
BASSET**

French wine!  
Lord Lisle was released from the Tower in 1542. The king told the French ambassador that he 'cannot believe the said Deputy hath erred of malice, but that in those things of which he stands

accused he hath proceeded rather by ignorance'. In January Henry returned to Lisle his collar of the Garter and in March sent him a diamond ring with news of his impending release. He was so excited that his heart failed soon after hearing the news and he was buried in the Chapel Royal of St Peter ad Vincula in the Tower grounds.

Thankfully, due to Muriel St Clare Byrne's hard work, we can follow his life in his later years and pick up lots of valuable information about Tudor life. The Lisle Letters now have a prominent place on my bookshelf and I know they will be delved into over and over again

**SARAH-BETH WATKINS.**

# CHRISTOPHER MARLOWE

The 26<sup>th</sup> February is the 455<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the baptism of poet, translator and playwright, Christopher Marlowe, at St George's Church, Canterbury. Marlowe was the second child of John Marlowe, shoemaker, and his wife, Katherine. Marlowe's works included "Tamburlaine", "Dr Faustus", "The Jew of Malta" and "The Passionate Shepherd to his Love". He was stabbed to death at a house in Deptford Strand, near London, on 30<sup>th</sup> May 1593, in what has been described as a "tavern brawl". However, Marlowe was killed in a private room of a house, not a tavern, and some believe that he was assassinated.

Here are some famous quotations from Christopher Marlowe's works...

"Make me immortal with a  
kiss"(Doctor Faustus)

"Hell is just a frame of mind"  
(Doctor Faustus)

"He that loves pleasure must for  
pleasure fall"  
(Doctor Faustus)

"Was this the face that launched a  
thousand ships, and burnt the topless  
towers of Ileum?" (Doctor Faustus)

"Was this the face that  
launched a thousand ships,  
and burnt the topless towers  
of Ileum?" (Doctor Faustus)

"And hold there is no sin but  
ignorance"  
(The Jew of Malta)

"I am Envy...I cannot read and  
therefore wish all books burned."  
(Doctor Faustus)

"But what are kings,  
when regiment is gone,  
But perfect shadows in a  
sunshine day?" (Edward II)

"Philosophy is odious and obscure;  
Both law and physic are for petty wits;  
Divinity is basest of the three, Unpleasant,  
harsh, contemptible, and vile."  
(Doctor Faustus)



ANNO DNI ACTATIS SVS. 21

7585

QVOD ME NVTRIT  
ME DESTRVIT

*May 24 1793*

**THE TROVBLESOME**  
**RAIGNE AND LAMEN-**  
 table death of EDVVARD the  
*second, King of England:*

WITH  
 The Tragical fall of proud  
 MORTIMER.

And also the life and death of Peirs Gowestone, the  
 great Earle of Cornewall, and mighty Favorite  
 of King EDVVARD the second.

As it was publikely acted by the right Honour-  
 able the Earle of Pembroke his  
 servants.

Written by Christopher Marlow Gent.



LONDON,  
 Printed for Henry Bell, and are to be sold at his  
 Shop, at the Lane-Hospitall Gate, neere  
 Smithfield, 1622.

66

“Accurst be he that first  
invented war” (Tamburlaine)

“Virtue is the fount whence  
honour springs” (Tamburlaine)



# THE NATIONAL ARCHIVES AND THE SEARCH FOR A TUDOR QUEEN

I spent more time at the National Archives of the United Kingdom than I care to remember. Over several years of researching the life of Queen Catherine Howard, I returned often. It's a glorious, beautiful, important spot, although one doesn't always feel that way after hours attempting to decipher the handwriting of William Fitzwilliam, 1st Earl of Southampton.

By the time I was finished analysing the interrogation transcripts of Catherine's servants, and her family's, from 1541, I could tell who one of the inquisitors was by their handwriting. In hindsight, I think that's a fantastic piece of immediacy with the past. At the time, I attributed it to a dwindling sense of bunker mentality, in which all that existed for me was what happened at Hampton Court Palace and Syon Abbey five centuries before.

Armed with what I had learned in a palaeography module during my masters degree, I still had to learn the nuances of individual handwriting, as varied in the sixteenth century as it is in the twenty-

first. Even at the end of the days and hours spent there, there were moments when those documents could still provoke a gasp from me - when I saw Thomas Culpepper's death warrant for the first time was a moment that will stay with me for the rest of my life, God willing.

The experience continued at the Bodleian Library in Oxford, where I was able to hold a score card from a jousting match that Catherine's father Edmund had participated in. It lists his score in neat ink scratches, which is an incredible thing to see.

Eventually that research culminated in my biography of Catherine, "Young and Damned and Fair", which felt like a culmination and a release. It would have been impossible to tell her story fairly or properly without consulting the originals. They give you such a sense of vibrancy, a connection to the past, and in this case the appalling tragedy and extraordinary story of a young woman who rose, and fell, as Queen of England.

**GARETH RUSSELL**





The view from the Bodleian Library, where many 16<sup>th</sup> century documents are kept. (Gareth Russell)



# A QUEEN IMPRISONED, AS TOLD BY WILLIAM KINGSTON'S LETTERS FROM THE TOWER OF LONDON

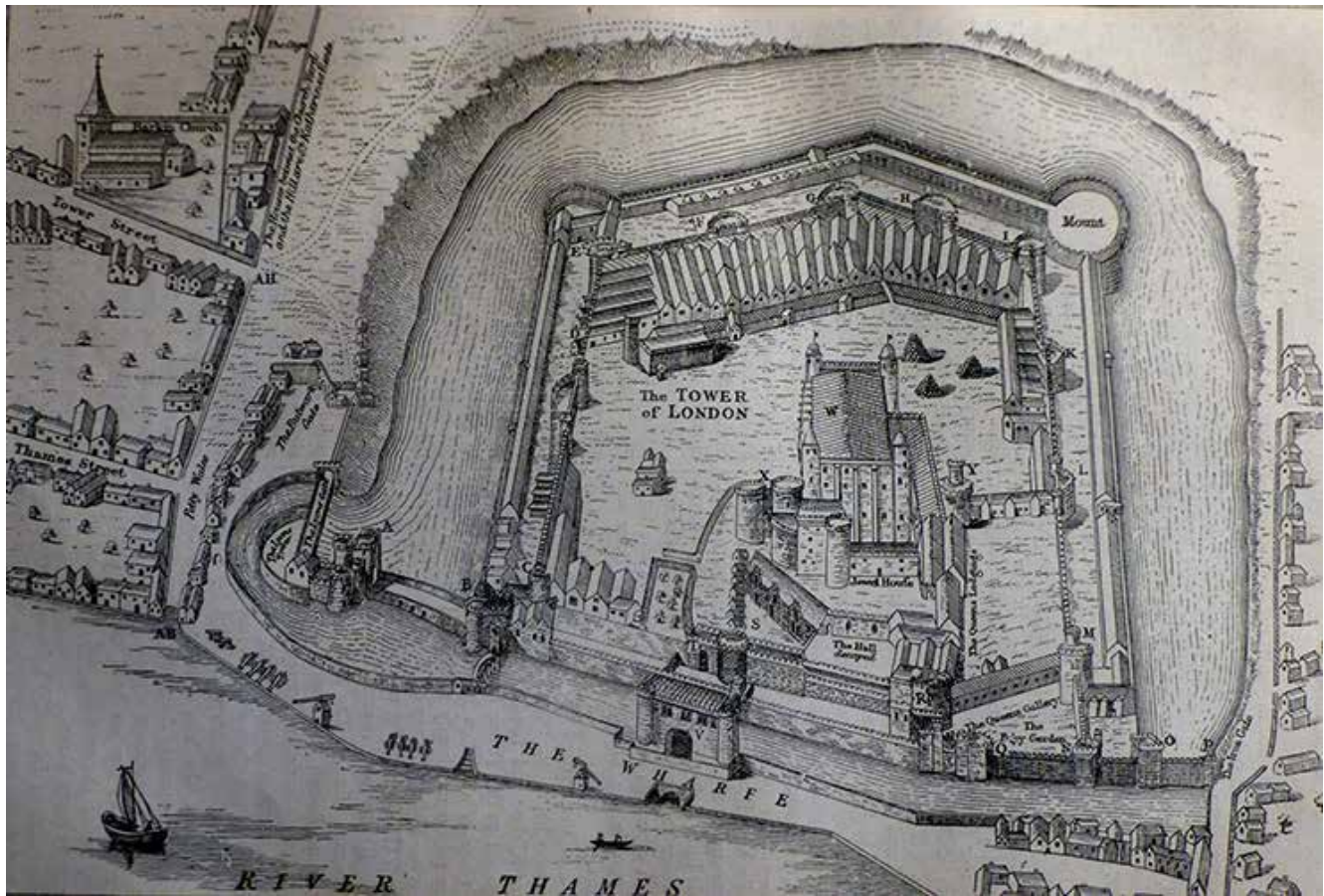
BY ROLAND HUI



By the early evening of May 2, 1536, London was abuzz with incredible news - Anne Boleyn, the 'entirely beloved wife' of King Henry VIII, had been arrested. Earlier that day, around 2 o'clock, she was seen at the Palace of Greenwich surrounded by guards taking her towards a waiting barge. For Anne, it was a harrowing journey upon the Thames. Accompanied by her unfriendly uncle, the Duke of Norfolk, who berated his niece and would tell her little if anything, she was rowed towards the City, arriving there about three hours later. At Tower Wharf, the hapless Anne was made to disembark and taken to the drawbridge leading towards the postern

Anne Boleyn by an unknown artist





**The Tower of London in the 16<sup>th</sup> century**  
 (by William Hayward and John Gascoyne)

gate of the Tower of London. There, less than three years earlier on a glorious sunny day, Anne had made a stately entry into the great fortress as Queen of England. This time, she was coming in as a prisoner.

Anne Boleyn's stay in the Tower of London - from her arrest to the final day of her life - has been well documented thanks to the letters of her jailer Sir William Kingston, the Constable of the Tower. Between May 3 and May 19, Kingston corresponded with the King's Secretary Thomas Cromwell in a series of reports about Anne's incarceration. Her words and her behaviour were all noted, with the intention of gathering further evidence of high treason against her. So far, a musician at court, Mark Smeaton, had confessed to adultery with the Queen, and it was hoped that more incriminating facts would be forthcoming.

The Constable's first letter, written on May 3, described the Queen's arrival at the Tower the day before. She was in a state of shock, 'weeping

a good pace, and in the same sorrow, fell into a great laughing, as she has done many times since', Kingston notified Cromwell.<sup>1</sup> Anne's mood swings, from despair and then to hope, would be a constant; 'for one hour she is determined to die, and the next hour much contrary to that'.<sup>2</sup> When she was not grieving, Anne was full of bravado. On one occasion, she made a great feast and was 'very merry'. At times, she even joked. Flippantly, Anne had asked whether anyone made the beds of the men accused with her. When told no, she replied that then they 'might make *ballads* well now', punning the word 'pallets' (that is beds). Her black humour was evident even in the face of death. She had heard that the executioner sent to kill her was an expert, Anne later told Kingston, and that she had but 'a little neck'. She then shrieked with laughter.

The details about Anne Boleyn's stay in the Tower of London were described by Kingston. She was not to be put in a dungeon as Anne herself

thought she would be, but in 'the lodging you lay in at your coronation', the Constable told her.<sup>3</sup> By this, Kingston meant the royal apartments which once stood near the great White Tower. Since medieval times, a palace complex was in use for the sovereign whenever he stayed at the Tower. By tradition like previous Kings and Queen-Consorts, Anne herself was put up there just before her coronation in the summer of 1533. A great deal of money was spent in refurbishing the apartments for Anne's triumph, but by the 17<sup>th</sup> century, the buildings were falling into neglect and decay, and were subsequently torn down. In their absence, the Victorians, who developed a great interest in the history of the Tower, then created a fantasy that Anne had occupied a set of rooms in the existent 'Queen's House' in the southwestern corner of the fortress.<sup>4</sup> In actuality, she could not have stayed there as they were built in 1540, three years after her death.<sup>5</sup>

Despite the comforts of her lodgings, as a prisoner, Anne had to put up with the company of four women - the Lieutenant's wife Lady Kingston, her aunt Lady Boleyn, a Mistress Stoner, and a Mistress Cosins - assigned to her service. These wardresses were no friends of hers (Lady Kingston in particular was known to be a supporter of the Princess Mary)<sup>6</sup>, and Anne complained bitterly to the Constable that her husband the King did her 'much unkindness... to put such about me as I never loved'. All Kingston could say was that Henry VIII 'took them to be honest and good women'.<sup>7</sup>

Despite her antipathy towards them, Anne, ever talkative, did not hold back in conversation with her new servants. Initially, none of the women (that is Lady Boleyn and Mistresses Stoner and Cosins) were allowed to speak with their royal inmate unless Lady Kingston, who was put in charge of the Queen, was present. However, as Anne's incessant chatter might prove useful in building a case against her at her trial, the ladies were consequently encouraged to speak to her. They reported to Kingston how Anne had spoken of Sir Francis Weston bantering flirtatiously with her, of Mark Smeaton lurking

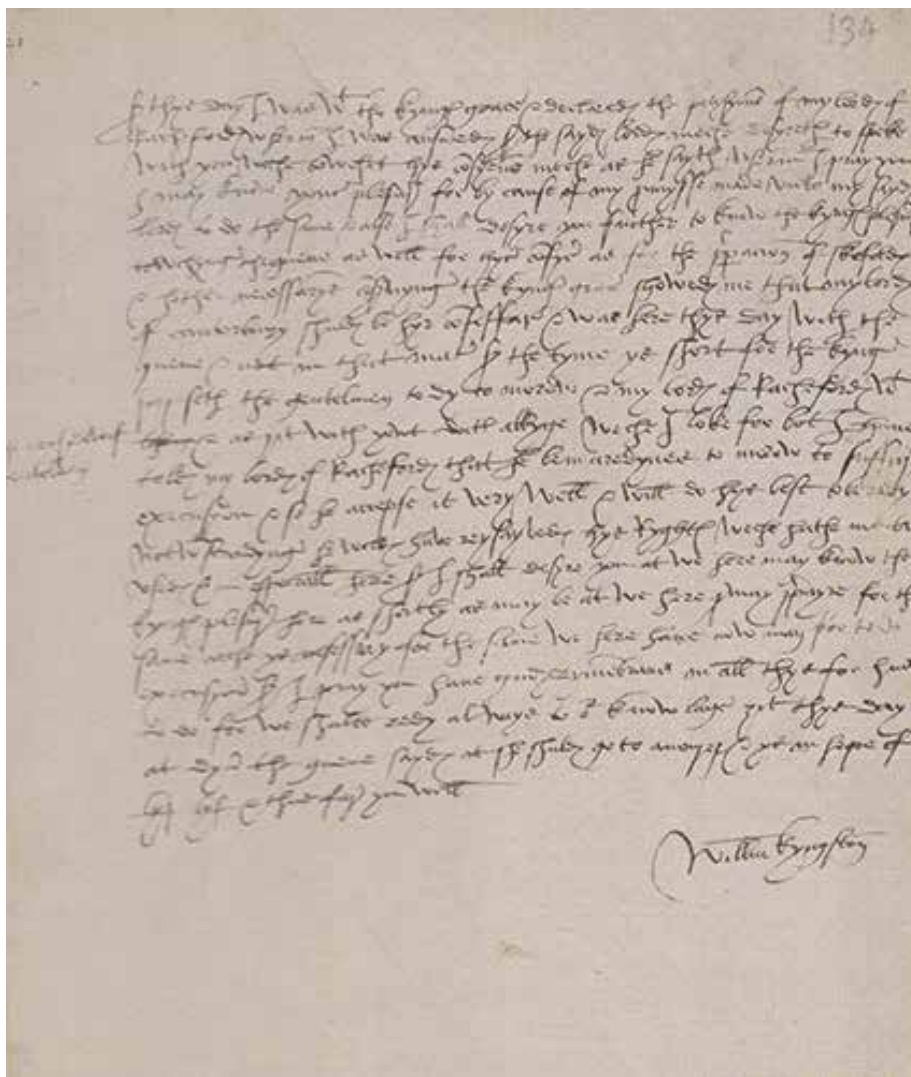
about her chamber acting lovelorn, and of Sir Henry Norris quarreling with the Queen after she had accused him of wanting her if the King were dead. That a very close watch was being kept over Anne was evident. Kingston informed Cromwell that her attendants slept in her bedroom upon a pallet-bed, while he and his wife occupied a room at 'the door without' the Queen's own chambers.<sup>8</sup>

The hostility between Anne and her women was mutual. 'She defied them all', and she was especially resentful towards her aunt and Mistress Cosins. Whenever she asked them for any information about her family, they would tell her nothing, she complained. Perhaps this was genuine ignorance on their part, but Anne took it as deliberate malice. Perhaps she was not wrong, Lady Boleyn for one, did not mince words when it came to speaking to her niece. She bluntly told Anne that 'such desire as you have had to such tales has brought you to this', probably in reference to Anne's insatiable desire for gossip.<sup>9</sup> That Lady Boleyn dared to make such a rude response, showed how greatly Anne had fallen and was without hope of regaining her former state.

Anne's references to her family indicated that they were close-knit. It pained her to have no word of them. She had inquired of the whereabouts of her father Sir Thomas Boleyn and of her 'sweet brother' George. She was also heard to lament how her mother 'would die with sorrow'.<sup>10</sup> Interestingly, Anne apparently made no mention of her daughter the Princess Elizabeth. Cut off from her family, Anne attempted to appeal to Thomas Cromwell for help. She had asked Kingston for permission to write him a letter, but the Constable told her that he would give him a message by 'word of mouth', for which Anne was grateful.<sup>11</sup>

Anne Boleyn's imprisonment has shed light on her religious beliefs. Although her enemies, such as the Imperial ambassador Eustace Chapuys, had labeled her a Lutheran, or worse a heretic, Anne was essentially a conformist Catholic. Though she did have an avid interest in religious reform, her views remained largely conventional. While Anne apparently did not





**William Kingston's letter in which he describes the preparations being made for the executions of Anne and her brother Lord Rochford**

of her innocence. As she told Kingston, she was 'clear from the company of man as for sin' and was the 'King's true wedded wife'.<sup>14</sup> The bishops she had appointed to office would all go the King on her behalf, Anne was sure, and as if even Heaven were on her side, 'England would suffer the greatest punishment for me within these seven years' should she come to harm. In fact, most of the Country was praying for her, Anne believed.<sup>15</sup>

One of Kingston's letters made mention of Jane Parker, Anne Boleyn's controversial sister-in-law. The arrest of Lord Rochford has always puzzled historians. Was it his wife Jane who gave evidence that brother and sister were lovers, condemning them both of incest? If so, what was her motive? Was she forced by the authorities to lie and betray

believe in purgatory (she expressed the view that she would go to Heaven immediately upon her death), she did accept the efficacy of doing good works as a means to salvation, as Kingston noted in her utterings.<sup>12</sup> She also took solace in confession. After she was tried and condemned, the Constable jotted down how she 'desires much to be shriven' before going to the scaffold. Most importantly, Anne had an attachment to the Mass. One of her first requests to Kingston was to 'have the Sacrament in the closet by her chamber, that she might pray for mercy'.<sup>13</sup> That is, she wanted the consecrated Host (set in a monstrance) nearby for devotion.

That she was not guilty of any treason was a subject Anne touched upon several times. Even at her very arrival at the Tower, she made declaration

George Boleyn, or did she do it of her own volition, supposedly out of jealousy? According to Kingston, Lady Rochford had sent her husband a message of goodwill promising to plead to the King on his behalf. For this, George 'gave her thanks'.<sup>16</sup> That Lady Rochford spoke up for her husband indicated that she probably had no part in George's fall, and that she continued to think well of him. If Jane did appeal to Henry VIII as she promised, it was of no avail. George, like the other men accused with the Queen, was sentenced to death. As Kingston told Cromwell, Rochford 'accepts it very well, and will do his best to be ready'. All he asked was that his debts be settled, and that he be allowed to receive the Eucharist one last time.<sup>17</sup>

The letters as a whole were a testament to both jailer and prisoner. While Kingston was said to be loyal to the former Queen, Katherine of Aragon,<sup>18</sup> to his credit, his personal feeling never affected his relationship with her supplanter Anne Boleyn. Throughout Anne's confinement, Kingston was always professional and courteous towards her. One of his last kindnesses to Anne was that when she lamented of the delay of her execution - she had hoped to be 'dead by this time, and past my pain' - Kingston reassured her that she should feel nothing as death by the sword 'was so subtle'. And while others were quick to denigrate Anne at her fall, Kingston made no statement. Though he never defended her, he never slandered her either. His dispatches about the Queen were always matter-of-fact and unbiased.

While Anne Boleyn may not always have been sympathetic in character, her stay in the Tower as reported by Kingston, allowed her better qualities to shine through. She was courageous, and she was steadfast in her religious faith. Despite

her hysterics and grief - all understandable - Anne upheld herself with strength and dignity. Shortly before her execution, Kingston described how 'this lady has much joy and pleasure in death'.<sup>19</sup> Her bravery - and her dying 'boldly' as described elsewhere by a contemporary<sup>20</sup> - was Anne's retort to her unjust sentence; her means of defiance.

Though he never expressed an opinion whether the Queen was guilty or not, Kingston did report to Cromwell how Anne had asked him to join her at Mass so that he may hear her make a public declaration 'touching her innocence' as she received Holy Communion.<sup>21</sup> Knowing Anne Boleyn's belief in the sanctity of the Mass, Kingston's statement is noteworthy and invaluable. As Chapuys also heard it (from his spy the Constable's wife), Anne 'before and after receiving the Sacrament' swore 'on the damnation of her soul, that she had never been unfaithful to the King'.<sup>22</sup> By this mention, Kingston, though it may not have been his intention, paid Anne Boleyn the greatest tribute by reaffirming her innocence.

**ROLAND HUI**

## NOTES

1. *Letters and Papers, Foreign and Domestic, of the Reign of Henry VIII (L&P)*, (edited by J.S. Brewer), London: Longmans, H.M.S.O., 1862-1910, X, no. 793.
2. *L&P*, X, no. 797.
3. *L&P*, X, no. 793.
4. The Queen referred to is the present sovereign Elizabeth II. The Queen's House even contains a so-called 'Anne Boleyn's Bedroom'.
5. Anna Keay, *The Elizabethan Tower of London – The Haiward and Gascoyne Plan of 1597*, London: London Topographical Society, 2001, p. 38.
6. Lady Kingston, 'the lady who had charge of her', as Eustace Chapuys called her, provided him with private information about Anne's stay in the Tower. See: *L&P*, X, no. 908.
7. *L&P*, X, no. 797.
8. *L&P*, X, no. 793.
9. *L&P*, X, no. 798.
10. *L&P*, X, no. 793.
11. *L&P*, X, no. 798. There is no mention by Kingston of Anne ever writing a letter to the King. The famous rather accusatory letter supposedly addressed to the King by Anne (*L&P*, X, no. 808) remains suspicious.
12. *L&P*, X, no. 797.
13. *L&P*, X, no. 793.
14. *L&P*, X, no. 793.
15. *L&P*, X, no. 797.
16. *L&P*, X, no. 798.
17. *L&P*, X, no. 890 and 902.
18. Alison Weir, *The Lady in the Tower*, New York: Ballantine Books, 2010, p. 139.
19. *L&P*, X, no. 910.
20. *L&P*, X, no. 919 and 920.
21. *L&P*, X, no. 910.
22. *L&P*, X, no. 908.





ANNA BULLEYN, Gemalinne van HENDRIK.DE VIII  
Koning van Engeland. binnen Londen onthalst .



# TUDOR PORTRAITURE: PICTURES TELL A THOUSAND WORDS

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‘primary sources are absolutely fundamental to history’ - Arthur Marwick

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When examining the Tudor period, academics will habitually examine primary written material for the entirety of their research. Such material will manifest in a variety of styles, including: letters, chronicles, household accounts and ambassadorial reports; just to name a few. These sources provide scholarly writers with extensive accounts of ‘what happened’ during their period of research; reinforcing their arguments and debates. As Professor Arthur Marwick once rightly stated, ‘primary sources are absolutely fundamental to history’; indeed, without them the study of history as an academic discipline would be virtually impossible. Similarly, in supporting their research, historians engage with secondary literature in order to evaluate the historiography of their chosen research subject. This provides them with both the original material and the relevant contemporary debates/ arguments to further their own work. While these styles facilitate sophisticated research, visual imagery is becoming

widely respected as a utilitarian research tool for academics. Figures such as Sir Roy Strong and Frances Yates were the primary twentieth-century historians who engaged with sixteenth-century artwork; they had seldom been analysed previously. Strong’s *The Cult of Elizabeth. Elizabethan Portraiture and Pageantry* examined a number of original (for the time) themes regarding the myths of Queen Elizabeth I’s imagery. While many of Strong’s arguments have been challenged and innovated by contemporary critics, his pioneering study into Tudor portraiture has paved the way for future art historians and academics. With this in mind, this article will intend to examine a series of related themes. Firstly, the evolution of portraiture during the Henrician (the reign of King Henry VIII, not to be confused with his father’s tenure) and Elizabethan reigns, and their respective intents. Secondly, and lastly, the benefits and limitations of visual sources and the challenges they pose to researchers.

Once the Renaissance movement had travelled across continental Europe into



Medieval England during the early sixteenth century, the country witnessed an 'artistic revolution', particularly in portraiture, literature and music. In an effort to remain fashionable and contemporary, western royal-houses began to adopt this innovative style. Historian David Starkey characterised king Henry VIII with the affectionate sobriquet 'renaissance prince'. There is truth to this statement, as during the 1520s Henry began to recognise the importance of self-fashioning an authoritative royal image of himself. Visual imagery was adopted as a means of self-immortalisation and self-preservation for the king. It cemented his

The Embarkation of Henry VIII at Dover portrait, currently on display at Hampton Court Palace. The painting depicts Henry, and his colossal fleet, embarking from Dover to Calais en-route to meet King Francis I of France at the diplomatic event, The Field of Cloth of Gold. Ultimately, the portrait is an overly exaggerated and unrealistic depiction of the entire event. However, this style of portraiture was non-existent in England prior to the reign of Henry



**The Whitehall Mural, 1734. Copy of the original that was destroyed in the Whitehall fire of 1693. School of George Vertue. Housed in the Royal Collections Trust.**







**The Field of Cloth of Gold, France,  
1520. British School, c1545.**

promotion in terms of imagery, his youngest daughter, Elizabeth, undoubtedly surpassed her father in creating an immortal image of herself. Luckily for historiography, a significant number of Elizabeth's portraiture have survived up until the modern day; a result of her posthumous reputation as 'Gloriana' and 'Good Queen Bess'. Historian Frances Yates once concluded in her study of Elizabeth that she utilised her virginity throughout the 'entirety of her reign'. However, revisionist historians have refuted this claim, and rightly so. Historian Kevin Sharpe has argued that prior to 1580 Elizabeth's portraiture emphasised a revival in national Protestantism and royal authority, rather than a state of perpetual virginity; indeed, Elizabeth's imagery was a means of reinforcing her bespoke style of queenship. For example, in John Foxe's *Acts and Monuments*, Elizabeth is depicted on the title page triumphing over the Catholic pope and enthroned in the letter 'C', in association with the emperor Constantine; stressing both Protestantism and her legitimacy to rule. Indeed, Elizabeth's earlier depictions in portraiture and manuscripts scarcely allude to virginity at all, as it was expected throughout the 1560s and 1570s that she would marry. While she humoured a number of potential suitors, in an

attempt to appease her councillors, none of them came to fruition.

Upon the end of the marriage negotiations with the Duke de Anjou in 1581, Elizabeth's representation in portraiture entered a new phase; a state of perpetual

**Queen Elizabeth I of England as Emperor  
Constantine in the initial C; woodcut from the  
1563 edition of *Actes and Monuments* by John Foxe.**







**The Procession Portrait, attributed to Robert Peake the Elder, c.1600. Housed at Sherborne New Castle, Dorset, England.**

virginity. In essence, the commissioners of her portraits (Elizabeth was not always the author of her own image) promoted England's queen as a celestial being, one in a state of symbolic matrimony with her country. This is evident in the c. 1583 Sienna Sieve portrait of Elizabeth. Historian Susan Doran provides a convincing argument, stressing that the queen's virginal appearance was employed to protect her from the numerous plots against her mortal body. Traditionally, the sieve relates to the classical story of the Vestal Virgin Tuccia, whose closed sieve magically protected her chaste body and allowed her to ward off attacks on her life. By being represented as Tuccia, Elizabeth was symbolically using virginity to protect her physically and politically from attacks by foreign powers, such as Spain. It is worth mentioning that during the 1580s, Anglo-Spanish relations were precarious, with a number of thwarted assassinations attempts against the queen's mortal body. Similarly, Frances Yates argues that Elizabeth's c.

1600 Procession Portrait is reminiscent of her as a celestial being. Rather than promoting royal authority, as her pre-1580 imagery emphasised, Elizabeth becomes a replacement for the veneration of the Virgin Mary, transported across the country for her subjects to adore. This is supported by her white clothing that is reminiscent of virginity, and her elevated position above the other figures in the portrait. While this analysis may seem far-fetched, there is credibility to it. Roy Strong argues that the portrait was likely commissioned by Edward Somerset, 4<sup>th</sup> Earl of Worcester, a nobleman renowned for his Catholic sympathies. By commissioning the portrait, he could depict the queen in his own image; to be represented as a Marian replacement for the kingdom to worship

As is evident from the examples examined in this article, Tudor era portraits encompass a number of political and/or religious themes. This poses the question: how do visual images

benefit historians? Firstly, they offer an invaluable study into specific themes within historiography; material culture, for example. Historians, such as Professor Maria Hayward, have utilised sixteenth-century imagery to analyse the changing styles in textiles, clothing and décor during this period. Indeed, portraiture is also examined alongside written sources: privy purse accounts, household accounts and inventories. While these convenient documents enable historians to examine royal expenditure on goods such as fabrics and household furnishings, they do not provide visual images of the items listed. In terms of the monarchs discussed in this article, the extravagant and ornate clothing in Elizabeth I's portraiture has benefited art historians when undertaking research into the political and/or religious climate of Tudor England, as is evident from Roy Strong's work. Additionally, visual sources enable the historian to gain a primary understanding of how historical figures adopted imagery as a means of self-promoting an unrealistic image of themselves; particularly relevant in Henry VIII's military imagery and Elizabeth's post-1580 portraiture. During the latter end of her reign, Elizabeth adopted the 'mask of youth', an artistic technique that essentially maintained a youthful, strong appearance; executed in order for the queen to remain an authoritative, royal figure. As a result of her vanity, Elizabeth did not intend for her eternal images to represent a fragile, elderly woman. Rather, her youthful aesthetic meant that to her adversaries, particularly Spain, England's queen was wholly in control. While beneficial, imagery, alongside written sources, can be problematic in terms of academic research. As stated, the majority of Tudor era royal portraits offer exaggerated, stylised representations of

individuals and/or inanimate objects, as is the case with Elizabeth's later portraits. Additionally, a significant number of portraits have been lost to history, as is the case with Queen Anne Boleyn, whose varying array of remaining images continues to frustrate historians; never quite able to certify which one, if any, is an accurate depiction.

In conclusion, visual sources are ultimately beneficial to researchers of sixteenth-century Europe. Not only are they a convenient research tool, they enable historians to analyse both the commissioners and the artists. For example, Henry's leading court artist, Holbein, was revered for decades following his death as the cultivator of the 'Henrician' image. Equally beneficial is examining how portraiture evolved throughout the Tudor period, with regards to portrait miniatures; small, intimate paintings that were gifted as love-tokens and/or to celebrate events. Ultimately, what makes the Henrician & Elizabethan portraits fascinating is their longevity and legacy, entering popular culture and remaining engrained in the national consciousness. Holbein's Henry, with his striking authoritarian pose, is emblematic of royal majesty and magnificence, and is one of the primary images that history enthusiasts would recognise; indeed, portraits do tell a thousand words. Most importantly, these images are housed in fashionable, contemporary museums across western Europe, including London's National Portrait Gallery and Paris's The Louvre; attracting tens of thousands of tourists annually. One would think that both Henry & Elizabeth would enjoy their images being gazed upon by the general public; reinforcing the social divide between 'them and us', which only perpetuates their posthumous magnificence and royalty.

**ALEXANDER TAYLOR**



ELIZABETH

LEVEL: EASY

		L			E	I
	E		A	I		H
Z			E			
A					Z	
L		I	E	T	H	E
		E				L
				H		A
T		L	E		B	
E		Z			L	

# Tudor

## “Worduku”

The basic rules are the same as regular sudoku, but with letters instead of numbers: fill every row, column and 3x3 region with each given letter exactly once.

MARYTUDOR

LEVEL: MEDIUM

	U			D	T	O
		M				
Y			A			
M			Y	A		O
R				R		A
		R		O	U	D
					R	
					A	
	T	Y	R			D

SONEDWARD

LEVEL: HARD

						O	A	
S	D		E			W	D	
D	A		N					
			W		A	E	D	
				R				
	W	A	O		E			
					R		E	W
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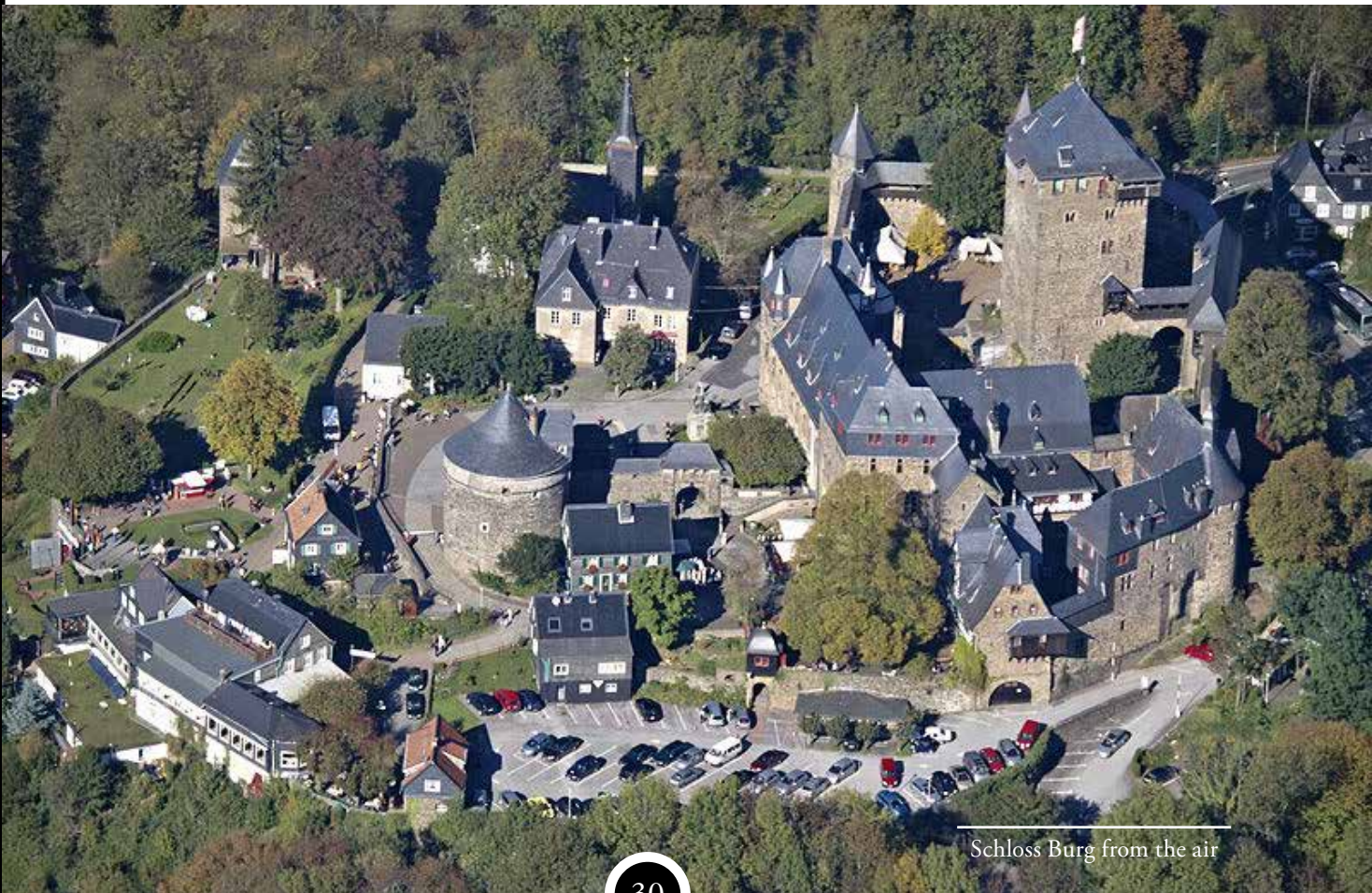




# ANNE OF CLEVES' GERMAN FOOTSTEPS

*by Debra Bayani*

**T**hroughout the centuries monarchs and nobles travelled frequently from one residence to another and this was probably no different for Anne of Cleves' parents, the Duke and Duchess of Cleves-Jülich-Berg and Count and Countess of Mark and Ravensberg. Unfortunately not much



Schloss Burg from the air





Schloss Burg

is known about the places Anne stayed or lived at during her childhood and early adulthood. What we do know is that Henry VIII's fourth wife, Anna von Kleve or Anne of Cleves, was born in Solingen

at **Castle Burg**, around 21 miles east of Dusseldorf.

Castle Burg was the seat of the Counts of Berg and in the first half of the 12<sup>th</sup> century, Count Adolph II of Berg had a new castle built in Solingen on the foundations of an older fortification. The castle was built on top of a hill, overlooking the River Wupper, and consisted of a much smaller building than what can be seen today. Throughout the centuries, many alterations were made. In the 13<sup>th</sup> century, another Count of Berg founded the nearby city of Dusseldorf. After the childless death of the next count, Adolf VI, in 1348, county and castle were inherited by his niece Margarete von Ravensberg-Berg and her husband Gerhard I von Jülich-Berg. The castle became their son William II's



Effigy on Tomb of Duke Wilhelm von Kleve in St. Lambertus Church Dusseldorf



**Tomb of Duke Wilhelm V  
von Kleve, Dusseldorf**

favourite residence, which he continued to expand in subsequent years. In the next century and a half, the place was mainly used as a hunting lodge and no longer suited the status of a castle.

In the late 15<sup>th</sup> century, Duke Wilhelm von Jülich-Berg had changes made to the buildings for a special event that was to take place on 25 September 1496. His only child and heir, the five-year-old Maria, was betrothed to the six-year-old Johann von Kleve-Mark, the future Duke Johann III. In order to guarantee befitting accommodation for the numerous guests during the celebrations, the narrow light slits of the building were replaced by larger windows, and the expansion of the attic to guest rooms ensured a high level of living comfort. In addition, the castle kitchen on the ground floor had become too small

and was extended to the south, and new decorative designs like oriels and turrets were added, which softened the previously austere, military exterior of the facility. The place gradually turned into a castle again and from that time it was accordingly considered as such, while the name Burg was retained for the surrounding settlement. This resulted in the current name of the place: Schloss Burg. The marriage of Johann and Maria took place fourteen years later and was celebrated on 1 October 1510 in Dusseldorf. Johann came from the House of Kleve-Mark and after the death of his father-in-law Duke Wilhelm of Jülich-Berg in 1511 he, through his wife, inherited the duchies of Jülich and Berg and the county of Ravensberg.

In 1521, Johann also received the inheritance of his father Johann II of Kleve and Mark and thus formed the United Duchies of Kleve, Jülich and Berg and the counties of Mark and Ravensberg, which covered much of today's North Rhine-Westphalia, making him the most powerful prince in West Germany. In addition, Johann was, through his mother Mechthild of Hesse, a great-grandson of the last reigning Count Philip I of Katzenelnbogen and also received the title of a Count von Katzenelnbogen.

In the time of the Reformation, Johann, also called 'The Peaceful' or 'The Peacemaker', showed a balanced attitude and sought a middle way between the Reformers and Catholics. Johann III is said to have been of an honest disposition and had a good eye in selecting his highest officials and advisers, which were shaped by the ideas of humanists Desiderius Erasmus and Konrad Heresbach. With their help, Johann reorganized the central administrations of his duchies.



After the main residence of the House of Mark at Dusseldorf had become the victim of a fire on 23 December 1510, Duchess Maria lived at Castle Burg with their son Wilhelm and three daughters Sybille, Anne and Amalia for quite some time. On 8 September 1526, the engagement of Anne's eldest sister, Sybille, to the future Saxon Elector Johann Friedrich I was celebrated at the castle. Amalia, Maria and Johann III's youngest daughter, remained unmarried and used Castle Burg in later years as a retreat. Because Amalia firmly held the Lutheran faith, it brought her into conflict with her increasingly Catholic brother William V the Rich, who succeeded their father as the new duke in 1539. Maria received the castle assigned to her as a widow's residence after her husband had died. It is said that Anne visited her mother at the castle right before her departure to England.

Schloss Burg proudly stands on top of a hill, more than 100 metres above the River Wupper. Today, it is the largest reconstructed castle of North Rhine-Westphalia and is well-worth a visit. It houses an interesting museum that has been there since 1894 and it focuses on the history of the country in the Middle Ages and early modern times. A model of Schloss Burg shows how courtly life was shaped at that time. There is armour on display and historic rooms with large exhibitions and the walls are decorated with huge paintings all over, paintings that tell the stories of the rulers of Berg

Another place where Anne lived was *Schloss Schwanenburg* in Cleves. It is thought that Anne lived here alternately with Schloss Burg or at least during adulthood, before becoming Henry VIII's short-term queen. Schwanenburg Castle functioned, and

still does so, as a landmark of the Klever country and shapes the silhouette of the town. The first castle on castle hill was built between the 9<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup> Century and consisted mostly of wood and earthworks. The first written mention of Schwanenburg Castle was in 1162 and, over the next two-hundred years, many alterations were made before it became the permanent seat of the Dukes of Cleves and its government from 1341. According to the inscription on a plaque above the entrance of the Tower, the Swan Tower collapsed on 7 October 1439. The construction of the new tower started in 1440 and was finished in 1448. The knight's hall, built around 1170, stood where today's linden-tree-surrounded car park is located in the outer courtyard. Remains of the richly decorated hall have been used on entrances in the courtyard of the castle and can still be seen today. In the centuries following, the castle decayed but was restored again twice more. The completion of its latest reconstruction dates from 1953.

The Schwanenburg can be visited but is limited to the Swan Tower and accessed only by stairs. The first floor is reached by a spiral staircase with almost 90 steps. After the spiral staircase, a narrow corridor leads around a corner to the museum room. Four or Five more floors can also be reached by stairs. The rooms show the local surroundings throughout the ages as well as the history of the area of Cleves, including one floor displaying information boards about the Dukes of Cleves and their families, including Anne, her brother, sisters and parents. There are many windows on each floor in the tower, providing visitors with great panoramas from all viewpoints of the town and surroundings.

Before Anne's parents had taken residence at Castle Burg, **Dusseldorf Castle** was the main residence of the House of Mark. It is not known whether Anne ever visited the place after it had been burned down, but her brother Wilhelm preferred it over Castle Burg and had the castle rebuilt from around 1550. Now only a tower (called Schloss Turm) remains of this once large building. It overlooks the River Rhine and houses a maritime museum. Anne's brother became an extremely wealthy monarch and was additionally chosen as Duke of Gelre (modern day Gelderland and Northern Limburg in the Netherlands)



**DEBRA BAYANI**

**Schlossturm, Dusseldorf**



**Schloss Burg by Erich Philipp Ploennies 1715**

### **Further Reading:**

- Marita A. Panzer: *Englands Königinnen*. 2003  
 Helga Thoma: *Ungeliebte Königin*. 2003  
 Wilhelm Janssen: Johann III. In: *Neue Deutsche Biographie (NDB)*. Band 10, Duncker & Humblot, Berlin 1974  
 Wilhelm Janssen, *Kleve-Mark-Jülich-Berg-Ravensberg 1400-1600*, in: *Land im Mittelpunkt der Mächte. Die Herzogtümer Jülich Kleve Berg*, hg. v. Städtischen Museum Haus Koekkoek Kleve und vom Stadtmuseum Düsseldorf, Kleve 1984, S. 17–40  
 Woldemar Harleß: Johann II., Herzog von Cleve und Graf von der Mark. In: *Allgemeine Deutsche Biographie (ADB)*. Band 14, Duncker & Humblot, Leipzig 1881, S. 210–213.  
 Deutschen Nationalbibliothek



# THE TUDOR SOCIETY



## MEMBERS' BULLETIN

Welcome to all of our new members!

Claire Ridgway, founder of the Tudor Society, started out 2019 by announcing that she would be recording one video for each day of the year. It's going well and as I write this piece we're well into January. If you haven't seen her videos yet, you don't want to miss them as they are very informative.

<https://bit.ly/2CL8OTX>

We also made a change to the menu and navigation of the website at the beginning of the month. The menu is now at the side of the screen and we hope this means it's easier to log in and then get around all the content that we've added since 2014. Would you believe that there are now around 200 hours of video exclusive for members, and we are nearly at our 70<sup>th</sup> expert lecture? I hope that you've found time to watch at least a little of our past material.

While I'm on the case of reminding you of what you get as a member, do remember that we have an e-book series which was made specifically for you. There's one book for each of the Tudor monarchs, available as PDF, Mobi and Kindle versions. You can download them all here:

<https://www.tudorsociety.com/tudor-monarchs-book-series/>

Enjoy your membership!

**Tim Ridgway**





**ST MARY'S COLLEGIATE  
CHURCH IN WARWICK  
WITH CAROLE JUNG**



**S**T. MARY'S COLLEGIATE CHURCH stands proudly at the highest point in Warwick, its early 18<sup>th</sup>-century tower a landmark visible for miles around. However, it's the 14<sup>th</sup> and 15<sup>th</sup>-century chapel, vestry and chancel that visitors 'in the know' gravitate towards. For underneath the church's respectable façade, rebuilt after the Great Fire of Warwick in 1694, lies a history of intrigue, bigamy, same-sex love affairs, and perhaps even the truth behind who really wrote the plays of William Shakespeare.

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## FULKE GREVILLE'S TOMB

Walking through the early 18<sup>th</sup>-century nave to the Chancel you pass the Regimental Chapel on the left and enter the outer, 14<sup>th</sup>-century vestry. Here, completely dominating the Chapter House, stands the huge double storeyed monument to Fulke Greville, 1<sup>st</sup> Baron Brooke.

Greville had originally intended his monument to be erected in St Pauls Cathedral, London, to house both himself and his adored friend Sir Philip Sidney, who had died at Zutphen in 1586 but was advised against this idea. After Greville's mysterious death in London in 1628, supposedly murdered by his manservant, he was brought back to Warwick by friends and laid to rest in St. Marys. What is strange, though, is that he is not actually in this huge monument but underneath it, in the Crypt where the entrance is bricked up.

There was speculation that he had written some of Shakespeare's prose and the monument was scanned in 2010 however, only metal fragments suggesting possible manuscripts were found. Unlike grammar educated Shakespeare, Greville was educated privately at Shrewsbury School along with Philip Sidney, then studied at Jesus College Cambridge. He was highly intelligent, an amazing poet, dramatist and statesman and one of Queen Elizabeth's close entourage living through, not only her reign but

James I and into that of Charles I.

Appointed Treasurer of the Navy he became a Rear Admiral in 1599, was extremely well travelled and possibly a spy for both William and Robert Cecil. One could easily imagine Greville, Shakespeare, Marlowe, Bacon and Jonson all drinking together in a London tavern discussing their works and travels.

Could Greville have been gay? This would certainly account for some of the animosity towards him and his writings and, like Shakespeare and Jonson, has been suggested by some historians. An academic and historian himself, both Greville and Bacon sought permission from James I to write the history of the Tudors but were denied. He was on the periphery of the Essex uprising and this might have been another reason he was disliked by both James I and Robert Cecil. Although Greville was granted Warwick Castle by Cecil in 1604 on condition he restored it, at a cost of over £25,000, he was never made Earl of Warwick.

On his monument are the words: 'Fulke Greville, Servant to Queen Elizabeth, Councillor to King James and Friend to Sir Philip Sidney'. He never married, devoted a great part of his life to publishing Sidney's works and wrote 'Caelica number LXXXII' as a memorial and testimony to his lasting love and admiration for his great friend.

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## THE BEAUCHAMP CHAPEL

Another mystery lies to the right of the chancel where, through the wonderful gateway, you step down as though through a portal, from the 18<sup>th</sup>-century into the magnificent, breath-taking fifteenth century Beauchamp Chapel. This Chantry chapel was built for Richard Beauchamp, richest Knight in England and best friend of Henry V, who helped bring up Henry VI and even had him crowned King of France at the age of nine in Paris. It houses Beauchamp's wonderful latten and Purbeck marble image and tomb where, among the Weepers on the bottom right, is the only image to be found anywhere of Richard Neville, the Kingmaker. Neville, Beauchamp's son-in-law, was killed at the Battle of Barnet and buried at Bisham Abbey. Many, including William Shakespeare, have and still do confuse the two.

To the front right of Richard's tomb lies Ambrose Dudley, Earl of Warwick, in his wonderful alabaster tomb. He was given the title of Earl of Warwick by Elizabeth I, being the remaining elder Dudley son. His younger brother Guilford had been married to Lady Jane Grey before they were both beheaded. Dudley's father and Grandfather were also beheaded as traitors and on release from the Tower of London, his older brother John had, sadly, died. Never having children of his own, Ambrose Dudley appointed his younger brother Robert's son by Lady Douglas Sheffield as his heir. He helped school the boy and took a large part in his upbringing, encouraging his love of navigation and discovery. On entering Christ Church College Oxford in 1587 he was admitted in the style of 'Comitis Filius'

i.e. an Earl's son.

Across to the left side of the Chapel stands the incredibly ostentatious Elizabethan tomb of Robert Dudley, Earl of Leycester, and his wife Lettice, but was she his second or third wife as suggested by some historians?

They lie together with Lettice slightly higher, possibly signifying she was of more noble birth, being the granddaughter of Mary Boleyn and daughter of Sir Francis Knollys. Many historians have argued that Lettice is Robert's second wife, the first being Amy Robsart and that his supposed second marriage to Lady Douglas Sheffield was just a secret engagement and long affair. Others, such as Derek Wilson, Adlard and even Dugdale argue that Robert married the widowed Lady Douglas in May 1573 in a private house in Cannon Row. Two years later, according to Dugdale, 'a more solemn affair was performed in her chamber at Esher by a lawful minister according to the form of matrimony by law established in the Church of England in the presence of Sir Edward Horsey, Knight, Robert Sheffield and wife, Dr Julio, Henry Frodsham, gentleman, plus five other unspecified persons'. After the first secret wedding, Lady Douglas had given birth to a son, Robert, at Sheen, his Godfather Ambrose, Robert's brother.

To complicate matters even further, above their tomb to the right hangs a plaque to Katherine Leveson, one of Robert's four 'forgotten' granddaughters. Their mother, Lady Alice Leigh of nearby Stoneleigh Abbey, married Robert Dudley the Earl of Leycester's son after his first wife died in childbirth. Sir Robert Dudley tried desperately to get his just inheritance on





The Noble Impe

the deaths of both his Uncle Ambrose and father. However, in 1605 after a disastrous Star Court hearing, heavily influenced against him by Lettice, Sir Robert failed and left England in disgust. He obtained a three-year travel licence and, leaving behind his wife and four daughters, travelled to France with a lady of the court dressed as a page. This Lady was no other than the beautiful Elizabeth Southwell, Maid of Honour to Queen Anne, a half-cousin of Dudley, and who had been with Queen Elizabeth I in her final hours.

After arriving in France they declared themselves 'adherents of the Church of Rome' and, after a dispensation from the pope they married. They travelled further on to Florence, Italy, and, with his navigation, engineering, education and experience he became indispensable and extremely close to Grand Duke Ferdinand I of Tuscany and

his Medici family, helping with the building of amongst others Livorno harbour. He was acknowledged by the Medici's as, 'Roberto Dudley, Duca di Nortumbria'. A plaque to his memory lies on the house he once lived in Florence.

This son by Lady Douglas Sheffield appears to have been forgotten by historians in favour of 'the Noble Impe', also named Robert, son of Lettice and Robert. He is buried in the Beauchamp Chapel to the right of the Reredos, and, thought to have died aged about five but possibly between three and seven as there is no date on his tomb and he is not yet in breeches. Why was he called the 'Noble Impe'? It was thought that he was possibly born with difficulties perhaps due to his parent's age. His death was devastating to both Lettice and Robert, as having married Lettice possibly bigamously, he was left with no apparent heir. He had





Robert and Lettice Dudley

deserted and supposedly threatened Lady Douglas into releasing him and apparently offered her money demanding his 'base' son into his custody. Lettice had already had five children with Walter Devereux, Viscount Hereford, later Earl of Essex. She had been nearly forty at 'the Noble Impes' birth and Robert fifty. Robert now spent time developing his stepson also Robert, heir to the Earl of Essex.

According to some historians Robert Devereux, Earl of Essex, son of Lettice could also possibly have been Leycester's as the Earl was sent twice to Ireland at his bequest and while absent had started an affair with red-haired Lettice. She was seven years younger than Queen Elizabeth I and supposedly much prettier. Years later he rekindled his affair with Lettice and after her husband's death from possible dysentery in Ireland, she became pregnant and they were married. Lettice was, however, taking no chances with

Leycester, who had wanted to keep this marriage secret too. Unlike Lady Douglas, Lettice was determined her marriage would count and ultimately, to her own detriment, flaunted it in front of Elizabeth I.

If Robert Dudley, Earl of Leycester, had acted differently he would have been remembered as the father of an amazing son and heir of whom he could have been so proud. Through his son, Sir Robert and Elisabeth Southwell, he had another fourteen grandchildren, many of whom married into Italian nobility.

Katherine Leveson and her sisters would eventually receive some of their due inheritance, released by James I, and would put it towards charities and good causes. The Beauchamp chapel itself still receives money from the charity Katherine started.

St Mary's is a wonderful, atmospheric, welcoming church and has so much history to discover.

**CAROLE JUNG, HISTORIAN AND TOUR GUIDE**



**FEBRUARY'S  
EXPERT  
LECTURE**

**ROSZA GASTON  
ON  
ANNE OF  
BRITTANY**





# Member Spotlight

## CALDEY ISLAND

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Author and long-term member **Kyra Kramer** shows us that the policies of Henry VIII had a very far-reaching impact on England

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The Dissolution of the Monasteries in 1536 hit the religious communities of England hard. Although many reformers applauded the destruction of systems they viewed as being irretrievably corrupt, not everyone who backed the dissolution of monasteries did so from sincere spiritual conviction. For many wealthy people in Henry VIII's realm, a monastic land-

grab was just a way to become even wealthier while donning a mantle of self-righteousness to justify it. Additionally, the royal treasury was able to fill its coffers to bursting by leasing the lands the crown had confiscated.

Some of the smaller, more out of the way monastic sites that were leased were lucky enough to fall into a gentle ruin, rather than







# Member Spotlight



being deliberately destroyed or repurposed into a private residence. A case in point is the monastery on Caldey Island, located about half a mile off the southern coast of Wales, near

to the Tudor stronghold of Tenby. The fact is the monastery stood on an island in a sparsely populated area of Henry VIII's kingdom probably saved it. It was too inconvenient for







the man who leased it from the crown, John Bradshaw, to want to live there. Moreover, instead of destroying the former priory, the farmers who rented it from Bradshaw and his predecessors simply used it for agricultural storage. Thus, the remains of the 13<sup>th</sup> century priory and church are still largely intact and a significant tourist destination in southern Wales in the modern times.

Caldey Island had been a sacred site since the days of pre-Christian Wales, when inhabitants of the mainland brought their dead to be buried on the holy island. As a sacred place, it was a natural destination for the earliest Christians in Britain to establish places of worship. It's Welsh name, *Ynys Bŷr*, means Island of St Pyr, the abbot of the Caldey Island monastery listed in the 6<sup>th</sup> century hagiography, the *Life of St Samson*. The monastery was built and inhabited by monks who had trained under the famous

and seminal Welsh saint, St Illtyd, in his 6<sup>th</sup> century school of divinity, Cor Tewdws, which he founded in the Vale of Glamorgan. St Illtyd is theoretically the scholar who taught and consecrated such famous Celtic Christians as St David and St Patrick. Another of the men Illtyd taught was St Samson of Dol, who replaced Bishop Pyr around 500 AD as the abbot of the Caldey monastery, and became the patron saint of the island.

The Celtic monks who inhabited the island for centuries often had to be as warlike as they were mindful of prayers, due to the occasion raid by Viking invaders, who called the island either the 'Island of the Spring' (kelda/ey), for its fresh water source, or 'Cold Island' (kaldr/ey). The later Norman invaders of the 11<sup>th</sup> century adopted the Norse name, Caldey Island, for the tiny landmass, rather than the original Welsh moniker. The Normans would also replace the original





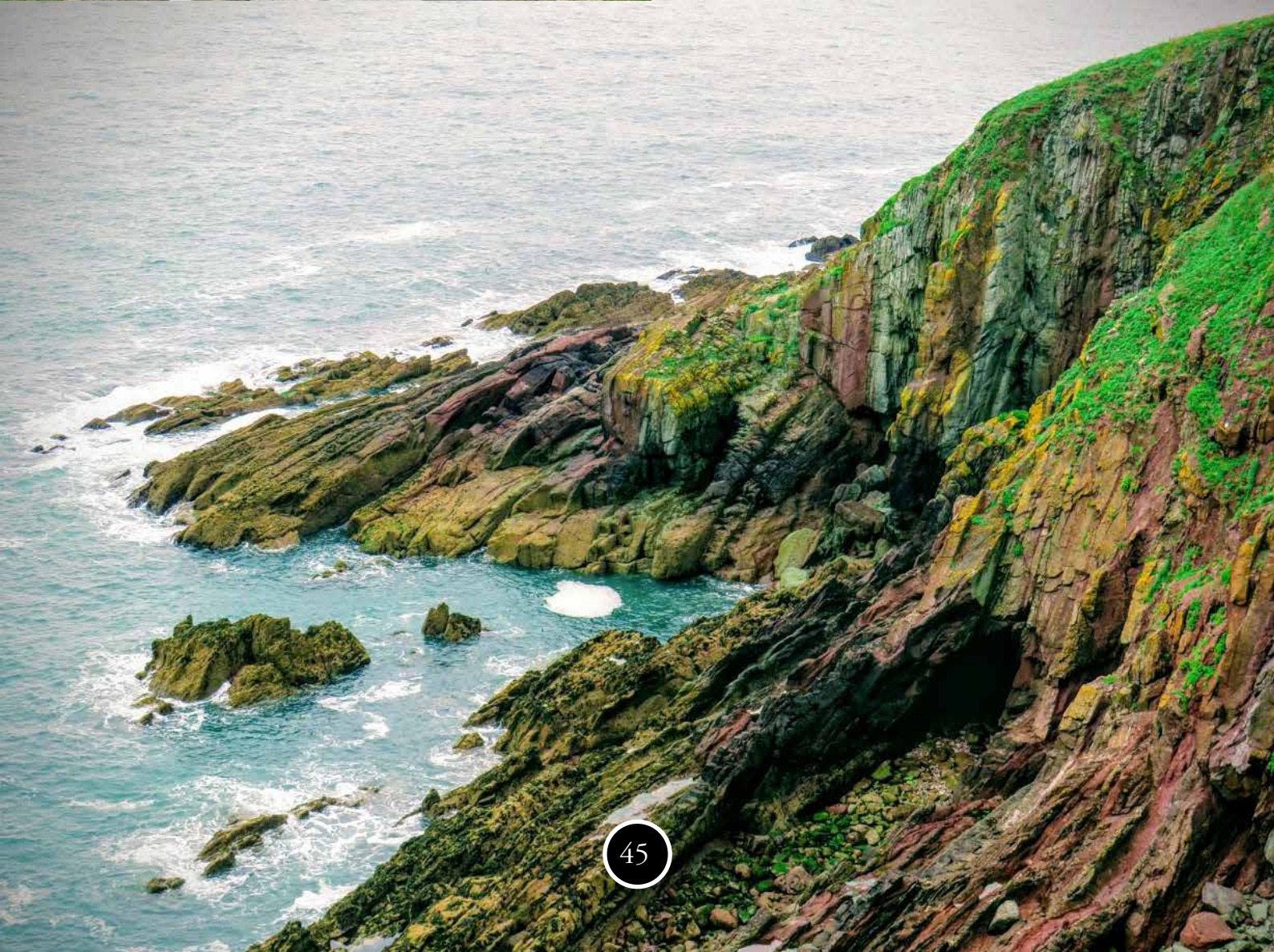
# Member Spotlight



Celtic Christian monks on the Island with a more continental brand of Christians.

An Anglo-Norman warlord named Robert Fitzmartin was given the title of Lord of Cemaes and lands in Pembrokeshire when he helped King Henry I invade Wales in the early 12<sup>th</sup> century. Fitzmartin destroyed the clas church of Llandudoch near Cardigan, and built the Tironesian Order monastery (a branch of the Benedictines) called St Dogmaels in its place, and then did the same to the religious community on Caldey Island. The building the newcomers erected, called the Old Priory, was occupied until the Dissolution. Although the monks were driven out, the ruins of the Old Priory are still standing and can be walked through by visitors to island in the present.

The Anglo-Norman monks did not erase all traces of the earlier Celtic devotion,







# Member Spotlight

however. They named their newly-built house of worship St Illtyd's Church, in honor of the Welsh saint who taught in Glamorgan centuries before. They also kept on of the pre-Norman ogham crosses intact, and it remains safely in the church even now. St Illtyd's Church is still a consecrated Roman Catholic place of worship to this very day, in spite of the upheaval to the religious community caused by the Dissolution. Additionally, the Benedictine monks constructed a parish church to be used by the laypeople who also lived on the island. This church was originally known as St Mary's by the Sea, but was eventually renamed St David's. Sadly, this church as allowed to fall into ruins as England became increasingly Protestant in the 16<sup>th</sup> century.

Caldey island remained a small farming community until it was purchased by Anglican Benedictines in 1906. The Benedictines turned the island back into a monastic retreat, building the present Caldey Island Abbey and restoring St David's church for the use of the island's parishioners once more. The monks also build several cottages to house the expanding lay population on Caldey. The community converted to Roman Catholicism in 1913, and became the home of the Cistercian Order in 1925. Monks continue to live on the island in the present, sustaining their retreat by dairy farming and selling the chocolate, perfume, cheese, and other comestibles they produce.

The most fascinating thing about Caldey Island for a Tudor history buff, however, is its role in the beginning of the Tudor

dynasty. When Jasper Tudor needed to escape Wales in 1471 with his young nephew, the future King Henry VII, they sailed right past the harbor of Caldey Island in their getaway boat, which had been supplied by Tenby's Lord Mayor, Thomas White. The monks on the island would have long sheltered under the wings of Jasper Tudor, the Earl of Pembroke, and were probably praying for their lord's safe voyage, in spite of the new Yorkist reign in England. Did they feel personally betrayed when Henry VII's son dissolved their monastery in a snit over his marital status?

One cannot help but wonder what the earlier inhabitants would think of how much the island has changed, yet how much it has stayed the same place of worship for eons. Would the displaced monks of the 16<sup>th</sup> century feel somewhat vindicated to know St Illtyd's church remains a sacred Catholic site, half a millennia after the Tudor era? Would it please them to know Catholic monks still pray there? Would the Celts that the Norman monks displaced feel vindicated to know their ogham cross remains in an honored spot, and that St Illtyd is not forgotten? Would the pagan Cymry who buried their dead on the island be glad to know the ground where the bones were interred remains as hallowed now as it was thousands of years ago? Would they be even happier to see that seals still use the beaches of Caldey to give birth to their pups in late summer, and that the native seabirds still nest in the cliffs?

If you can, visit Caldey Island and enjoy pondering the deep history of this holy site.

**KYRA KRAMER**





# Tudor Life

## EDITOR'S PICKS



For those who thought an issue themed around original documents might struggle when it came to on-theme fictional recommendations, I am relieved to recommend two novels by C. J. Sansom - "Sovereign" and "Lamentation", two instalments in the author's series of 16th century political thrillers. Both novels bring the series' eponymous fictional lawyer and sleuth, Matthew Shardlake, into contact with Tudor queens at crucial moments in their careers - in "Sovereign", it's Catherine Howard during her 1541 tour of the North, with "Lamentation", it's Katherine Parr. Both novels turn on the incendiary impact of certain documents in the Tudor era.

Of course, there is an embarrassment of riches when it comes to non-fiction publications here. There are certain biographies, like

Eric Ives's magnum opus on Anne Boleyn, which quote at length original sources, then there are also edited anthologies or restorations of originals, like the recent re-release of "Two Gentleman Poets at the Court of Henry VIII", translated by Claire Ridgway. For those looking at what hidden sources, or altered ones, could do in Tudor politics, I recommend Stephen Alford's "The Watchers: A Secret History of Elizabeth I".

Lastly, let us not forget that architecture and physical remains are also an original source, to which end I loved "In the Footsteps of Anne Boleyn" by Natalie Grueninger and Sarah Morris, "Discovering Tudor London: A Journey Back in Time" by the former, and "A Visitor's Companion to Tudor England" by Suzannah Lipscomb.

# Charlie Brown Books

## DARING DYNASTY

MARK R HOROWITZ



Compared to his son, there are very few books on Henry VII and it can be difficult to find a good academic overview of both the king and his reign. Mark R. Horowitz's latest book *Daring Dynasty: Custom, Conflict and Control in Early Tudor England* remedies this. It is a book comprising a collection of academic essays on the reign of Henry VII, the majority of which were previously only available through journals. It explores both how the ordinary people were affected by his rule, his policies and how much influence his ministers actually had, as Empson and Dudley are generally credited with being the driving force behind his later financial policies.

The book gives a balanced overview of Henry VII's reign and how he made it successful, with an interesting part on how the previous usurpations helped Henry VII do this - particularly the usurpations of Edward IV and Richard III. He knew how to handle things, what he should try to do and what he should avoid. As well as that, it puts to rest some myths about Henry VII, mainly the myth that his rule was unjust and he enforced unfair financial policies:

*'Henry VII and his working councillors crafted a national policy for royal finance and justice based on centuries of private transactions between parties and the various remedies at law afforded to them. That it worked and worked well attested to the acceptance by English men and women of procedures that they had been using in their daily lives - indeed, six London*

*parishes today still retain receipts for "hocking", an apparently old rural Easter ritual where men and women bound each other "in order to extract playful fines". Less-than-playful excesses and dubious or illicit extractions occurred during Henry VII's reign, and people were harmed by the misuse of both the bond policy and the power to enforce it. But no recognisance revolt resulted, in part because the national policy was congruent with local experience, although greatly intensified by the first Tudor king.'*

Horowitz makes a crucial point about the fact that there was no revolt over Henry's financial policies and that Henry only enforced things that had previously been enacted by other kings. He may have been a little harsher in his dealings than other kings, but not unreasonably so.

The only problem with this book is that it is obvious that the chapters were originally separate essays that were written at different times and so because of that, it does repeat itself a little. For instance, it mentions the arrest of Henry VII's ministers, Empson and Dudley, several times throughout the book. It is not a book you would read cover to cover anyway and is more of a reference work, so this would not be much of a problem if used like that.

In conclusion, this is a useful academic book on the reign of Henry VII and allows scholars to easily access articles that were previously only available in journals. It also includes appendices on historical fiction and what PhD students have to do for their oral exam (invaluable to any students reading this). However, I am not sure how useful this would be to the general reader and so would only recommend it to those studying the subject and have some knowledge of his reign anyway.





# IN PURSUIT OF CIVILITY

KEITH THOMAS



Keith Thomas has written many impressive books on what life was like in the Early Modern period, with his 2003 book on religion and magic being a masterpiece and the go-to work on the subject. His latest work, *In Pursuit of Civility: Manners and Civilisation in Early Modern England*, is equally impressive and will certainly earn itself the same reputation as his previous works in years to come.

There is a lot of information at the beginning of the book about the changing definitions of civility and how it differed from things like courtesy. It is a fascinating subject and one the author explains very well, considering it is not the easiest of things to explain. He talks about how courtesy initially was to do with the

behaviour associated with the court, hence the name, whereas civility was to do with citizens.

Personally, one of the parts I found most interesting was how people in Early Modern Europe used the concept of civility to justify the invasion of certain countries. The author states that:

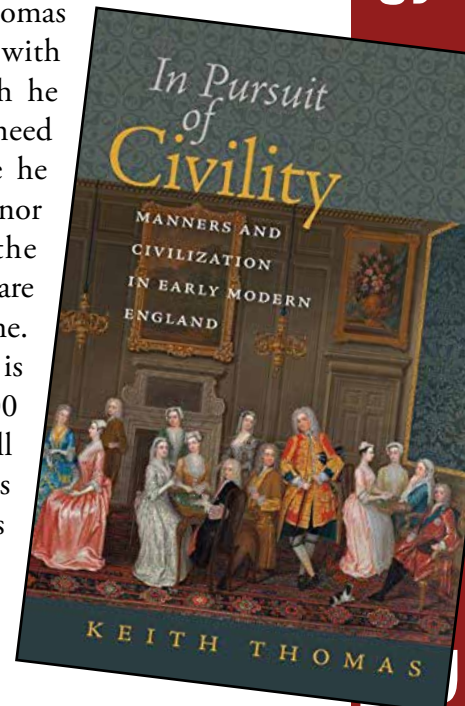
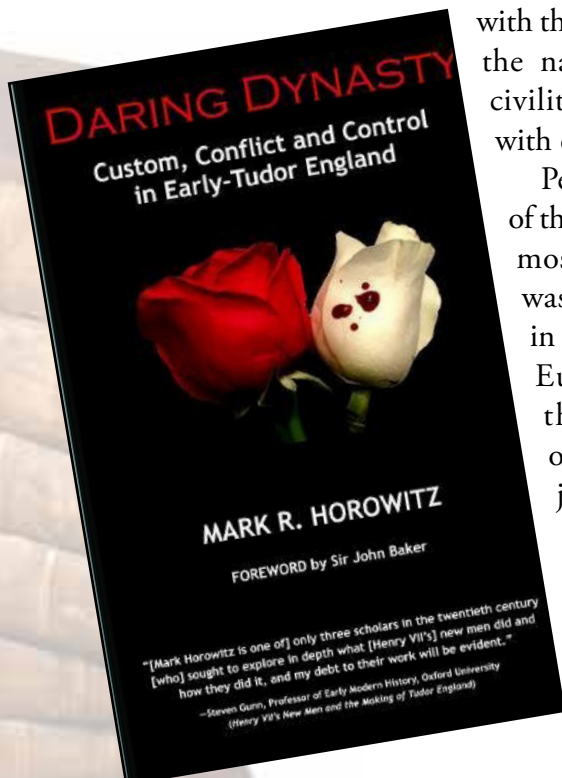
*'differences in levels of civility were regularly invoked to justify the invasion, conquest and colonisation of 'uncivilised' countries. It was usually claimed that in this way the inhabitants would be introduced to a higher form of existence. Aristotle had maintained that Greeks were entitled to make war against barbarians in order to rule them; and the Romans had shown that violent conquest, followed by authoritarian rule, could be a necessary preliminary to the growth of civility (cultus and humanitas). The Romans had brought nomadic peoples to a settled existence and suppressed barbarous practices such as human sacrifice.'*

This is something that is not often thought about and it is interesting how people could use this concept, one of manners and being polite, to justify invading another country and probably killing many of its inhabitants.

One of the problems with this book is that it seems to be made up mainly of quotations. Admittedly, these are from contemporary accounts and so are useful, but it does seem sometimes like Thomas is trying to show off with just how much research he has done and did not need to include every source he found. This is only a minor thing though and the quotations and examples are still interesting all the same.

*In Pursuit of Civility* is a large book at nearly 500 pages and even then it still feels like this subject needs several different books if it wants to cover the whole of Early Modern Europe. It does also repeat itself a lot and is not the most engaging of reads due to the subject matter itself. However, it is still a brilliant book and will be useful to anyone studying social history and the history of manners and how people behaved at the time. It is very well researched and fully referenced, with there being around 100 pages just of notes.

CHARLIE FENTON





# THE NOT-SO- GOLDEN AGE OF ELIZABETHAN ENGLAND





## TONI MOUNT

In March 2003, on the 400<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the death of Queen Elizabeth I, *The Times* newspaper had this to say about her:

*Tolerance found a patron and religion its balance, seas were navigated and an empire embarked upon; a small nation defended itself against larger enemies, found a voice and a purpose... Something in her reign taught us what our country is and why it matters. ... She came to embody our best selves: courageous, independent, eccentric, amusing, capricious and reasonable, when reason was all. The greatest prince this country has produced was a prince in skirts.*



With so marvellous a monarch upon the throne, the royal court aglitter with splendid costumes, sumptuous feasts and banquets and extravagant entertainment, all was set for a Golden Age in Elizabethan England. Except that for most of Elizabeth's humble subjects, life was very different.

While the rich lived in their elegant manor houses with ornate candy-twist chimneys denoting how many fireplaces they could boast, the poorest Tudor houses would be no better than hovels. The walls would be of wattle-and-daub construction – woven willow or hazel withies to form the basic shape within a timber frame, then daubed with a mixture of mud and animal dung, bound together with horsehair, straw or whatever was available. An unglazed hole in the wall served as a window with wooden shutters to keep out the worst of the weather and the roof was most likely thatched or turfed. A fire in the middle of the floor of the single room provided heating, lighting and cooking facilities with a few pots and pans and treenware – wooden platters, cups and spoons – as the only eating utensils, along with knives.

Furniture would be minimal and probably homemade. Straw-stuffed mattresses on the packed-earth floor provided the bedding and would have been rolled up and put out of the way during the day, along with the family's precious blankets. There may also have been a storage chest for their few belongings. Water had to be fetched

## TONI MOUNT

from a stream or a river, or perhaps the well, if the village had one. The toilet was a hole in the ground well away from the house, perhaps fenced around with wattle hurdles to give a little privacy, but the Tudors were never shy about bodily functions and the purpose of the hurdles might have had more to do with creating a windbreak and a gesture towards containing the smell.

The disposal of rubbish would not have been too much of a problem because nothing was ever wasted. Larger animal bones could be used to make tool- or knife-handles. Smaller bones were boiled up to make glue. Any vegetable matter was, of course, fully bio-degradable and since nothing was purchased in packaging of any kind, there was little left to dispose of after a meal. Worn-out clothes could be used as pot-holders, mattress-stuffing and a dozen other household uses. Everything was of natural fabrics: wool, linen or leather, so all was ecologically friendly – not that the Tudors were concerned about such things. Linen rags could be sold for a few pence to papermakers. The children of the poor would have no education because they had to work, to contribute to the family's meagre income or help in the home, perhaps caring for younger siblings.

One thing was certain, however grandly royalty and the nobility might live, there were always far more poor people than rich and during the sixteenth century, the population rose dramatically. In the year 1500, there

had been around 2.5 million people in England. By 1600, that number had reached 4 million and was still increasing. The economy simply couldn't keep pace. Landowners saw sheep-farming as a get-rich-quick alternative to growing crops. Sheep required fewer farm workers and English wool was the country's most profitable export. Large expanses of fields that had once grown wheat, barley, oats, peas and beans were now fenced off for sheep pasture. Labourers' hovels were demolished, if they were in the way, and able-bodied farm workers found themselves homeless and jobless, their families destitute. Although children, the disabled and elderly beggars were regarded as deserving of charity, the fit and healthy were labelled as idle and shiftless, even though they were desperate to work and earn a living. There simply weren't enough jobs to go around. As the standard of living dropped, the problem of vagrancy worsened and this was to have repercussions for the country as a whole.

Added to this was the problem of rising prices. In the last years of his reign, Henry VIII had debased the coinage which meant that the proportion of gold and silver in the coins was reduced. In 1560, Elizabeth's government took steps to remedy this by replacing all debased coins with new ones, restoring the country's currency to its proper value. This did reduce the problem of inflation in the early years of her reign but in 1563, wages were further affected by another government move to curb inflation. The



## TONI MOUNT

Statute of Artificers set upper wage limits for skilled workers, such as butchers or carpenters, but this meant that as food prices rose, even their wages could not cope with these increases. Again, the standard of living dropped for many workers.

As if things were not already hard enough for the ordinary Tudor family, the country was hit by a series of poor harvests, particularly in the 1590s, which put increasing pressure on a limited supply of food. The resulting rise in food prices led, in some cases, to starvation amongst those who could not afford to pay. The price of grain – everyone's staple diet consisted of bread and beer, requiring wheat and barley – rose by 600% whereas since King Henry's day real daily wages had hardly doubled. 1596 saw a disastrous harvest as shown by the figures in the parish registers. The little town of Kendal in Westmorland [now Cumbria] usually buried an average of twenty parishioners a month. But in December 1596, fifty burials were recorded, rising to seventy in March 1597, as the last meagre resources ran out. People were starving to death and were forced to eat the grain that was set aside as seed for next year's crop. If nothing was planted, there would be nothing to harvest, setting up a lethal cycle of want.

Towns grew in size throughout Elizabeth's reign, as changes in agriculture led to people leaving the countryside, in the hope of a better life. They were most likely going to be disappointed. London fared little better than Kendal,

relying as it had to on grain brought in from the countryside. The city always buried more people than it baptised, its population rising through immigration, rather than birth-rate. But in 1597, with supplies of produce drastically reduced and unaffordable for the poor, London parish registers show that twice as many people died that year than were born, the high number resulting from starvation or famine-related diseases, such as scurvy, or from illnesses that were normally not fatal to people, unless they were malnourished. Matters were worse still for those in gaol, awaiting trial. Prisoners' bread rations were paid for by a tax – the county levy. This remained the same as grain prices soared. In 1595, before the famine, coroners' inquests were carried out on twelve prisoners who had died in gaols in the counties around London: Essex, Middlesex, Hertfordshire, Kent, Surrey and Sussex. In 1596, the year the harvest first failed, there were thirty-three prisoner deaths attributed to famine-induced maladies, rising to a staggering 117 cases in 1597. Many of these prisoners were likely to have been among that class of able-bodied poor, forced to steal to feed their family and already half-starved.

For them, the Elizabethan era was hardly the Golden Age of popular history books and films.

Next time, we will look at life on the streets of London, ever a magnet for outsiders who hoped those streets were paved with gold... if they were even paved at all.

FROM THE

SPICERY

WITH  
RIOGNACH

ON  
CUCKOOS



Above: Cinnamon (*Cinnamomum verum*) & Cassia (*Cinnamomum cassia*)

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Back when I did my Tudor Society live chat session in January 2016, some people asked questions that I didn't get a chance to answer at the time. So, I'd like to take the opportunity to respond to a couple of those questions in this month's article and take a look some common, period spices that I call "spice cuckoos".

My re-enactment persona is a female Hiberno-Irish (Viking Irish) spice trader who 'lives' between 850 and 1050AD. As you'd expect, she's very widely travelled, and very well versed in all things spice and spice-related. When my spice trader first took to her trade, she was often stumped when she came across certain spices that imitated others, so she coined the term "spice cuckoos". OK, so what are "spice cuckoos"? Spice cuckoos that look the same as, or have similar taste or aroma profiles to other spices, but belong to different botanical families, and have different culinary uses and medicinal properties.

The first pair of spices I'd like to look at is Cinnamon and cassia (not to be confused with cassis – the delicious French black currant liqueur). Cinnamon and cassia are prime contenders for causing confusion as cassia is frequently sold as cinnamon under the name of "Dutch Cinnamon" or "Baker's Cinnamon", or even "Chinese Cinnamon". While both are members of the genus *Cinnamomum*, they have different physical characteristics and uses.

Cinnamon and cassia are sold in two forms. Cinnamon quills are tightly rolled, have a smooth, light brown bark and are easily crumbled. On the other hand, cassia quills are usually only a single curl, have a rough dark and mottled brown texture, and are much harder to break, so much so I've had to use a hammer to crush them (no kidding). Cinnamon has a warm and spicy, yet sweet taste and delicate flavour, where as cassia has a much darker and more earthy taste. In terms of medieval cookery, cinnamon appears to have been widely used and appears in both sweet and savoury dishes. Cassia on the other hand, doesn't rate a mention. However it is not impossible that unscrupulous spice merchants may substituted ground cassia for cinnamon and 'forgotten' to lower their prices accordingly.

Way back in January 2017, Michelle N asked if there were any potential health issues from eating spices in medieval cooking. Obviously, over-indulging in anything has consequences, and spices are no different. Cinnamon is well known in Ayurvedic medicine for being used to lower blood sugars<sup>1</sup>, but if the cinnamon is really cassia, then there are problems. Cassia contains high levels of a blood thinning agent called *coumarin*, and if eaten in large enough quantities, may potentially cause liver damage.

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<sup>1</sup> Khan & Safdar, et al, "Cinnamon Improves Glucose and Lipids of People with Type 2 Diabetes" in *Diabetes Care*. Volume 26, Issue 12, 2003.





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**Green Cardamom (*Elettaria cardamomum*) & Brown Cardamom (*Amomum subulatum*)**

While both green (aka 'true' cardamom) and brown cardamoms come from the same family of plants, they are very easy to tell apart. As the name suggests, true or green cardamom has a green seedpod (white

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**Pepper (*Piper nigrum*), Cubebs (*Piper cubeba*), & Grains of Paradise (*Aframomum melegueta*)**







**Bay (*Laurus nobilis*) and Indian Bay (*Cinnamomum tamala*)**

cardamoms are simply a bleached and inferior version of the green), and are much smaller than their brown-skinned cousins.

True cardamom, also known as the Queen of Spices has a delicate fresh and sweet, spicy flavour, vaguely redolent of eucalyptus. Brown cardamom has a pronounced dark, resinous and earthy aroma. True cardamom can be used in both savoury and sweet dishes, while brown cardamom should only ever be used in savoury dishes. I can absolutely guarantee that should you mistake brown for green and use it in a sweet recipe, it's a mistake you'll only ever make once!



Pepper is easily one of the most prominent spices in medieval cookery. But the question is, which one? As a re-enactor, I have come across at least six different varieties of “pepper”, so I have chosen the three most common types.

Funnily enough, black, white and green peppercorns are all the same thing. Green peppercorns are the unripe fruit of *P. nigrum*, while black pepper is the dried unripe fruit, and white is the ripe fruit. Clear as mud? Good.

Cubeb also belongs to the family *Piperaceae* and is also known as tailed pepper since it is sold with the stalk attached to the seed. Cubeb doesn't have the familiar peppery taste that we associate with black pepper, but rather a pleasant juniper-like flavour. Cubeb was used as a spice for food, added to gin, as well as medicine. Constance Heiatt cites cubeb (written as *quibibis*) as an ingredient in a spiced almond milk soup<sup>2</sup>, while good Master Culpepper finds an altogether unexpected use for it.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>2</sup> Heiatt, C. *An Ordinance of Pottage*, Prospect Books, 1991.

<sup>3</sup> Culpepper, N. *The English Physitian* (aka *The Compleat Herbal*), Peter Cole, 1652, <http://www.gutenberg.org/files/49513/49513-h/49513-h.htm>, pg 248 (flatulence and 'vernery' aka lust).



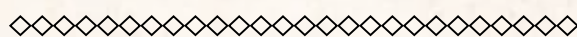
Also in January 2017, Doc Clark asked about the exotically named grains of paradise. But despite their piquant peppery taste, grains of paradise are not a member of the family *Piperaceae*. It belongs to the ginger family, *Zingiberaceae* and is closely related to cardamom. Historically, grains of paradise was one of the most expensive forms of ‘pepper’, and this is still the case.



I need to make a confession here; for a very long time I was using bog-standard bay laurel in my Indian curries.

I mistakenly thought that the author of my favourite Indian cookbook had simply mistaken Indian bay for bay laurel. It turns out that I was wrong; there is such an ingredient as Indian bay.

The type of bay that Roman emperors were crowned with has relatively small, glossy dark green leaves and a familiar slightly lemony or pine smell. By comparison, the leaf of the Indian bay is much larger, are light olive in colour, and the veins have an altogether different patterning to them. The flavour of Indian bay is more reminiscent of cinnamon or cassia, which is hardly surprising given that it belongs to the same genus. Indian bay is also used in Ayurvedic medicine to lower blood glucose levels and is noticeably more effective in doing so than cinnamon.<sup>4</sup>



The last spice cuckoo that I’d like to look at is one that frequently confuses people.

Cumin seeds are small, brown and ovoid in shape, and taste and smell

**Cumin** (*Cuminum cyminum*) vs **Nigella** (*Nigella sativa*)





somewhat like (but not to be confused with) caraway. White cumin is nothing more than bleached cumin seeds, and is of an inferior quality. Cumin is found in such things as Leyden (one of my favourite cheeses), and is a member of the parsley family.

For some unknown reason, the tiny black seeds of the cottage garden favourite Love-In-The-Mist, are

frequently mislabeled as black onion seed or black cumin. This particular spice is known as nigella, and has a resinous and earthy character. Nigella is commonly used in Middle Eastern dishes, to top Russian black bread. Nigella is also used in Indian cooking, and often in combination with cumin; just to confuse people I'm sure.

## RIOGHNACH O'GERAGHTY

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ANSWERS

# FEBRUARY'S "ON THIS"

**1** Feb  
1587

Elizabeth I called her secretary, **William Davison**, to her and asked him to bring her **Mary, Queen of Scots'** death warrant. She then signed it.

**2** Feb  
1550

Sir **Francis Bryan**, courtier, diplomat, poet, nicknamed "the Vicar of Hell", died suddenly at Clonmel in Ireland.

**3** Feb  
1554

**Thomas Wyatt the Younger** and his rebels reached Southwark, London.

**4** Feb  
1520

**Mary Boleyn**, sister of **Anne Boleyn**, married **William Carey**, a relative of **Henry VIII**.



**8** Feb  
1587

**Mary, Queen of Scots** was executed at Fotheringhay Castle.

**9** Feb  
1604

Death of **Anne Dudley** (née Russell), former maid-of-honour to **Elizabeth I**.

**10** Feb  
1542

**Catherine Howard** was taken to the Tower of London by barge.

**14** Feb  
1492

Death of **William Berkeley**, Marquis of Berkeley and a man known as "William Waste-all".

**15** Feb  
1564

Birth of **Galileo Galilei**, the Italian physicist, mathematician, astronomer, and philosopher, in Pisa, Italy.

**16** Feb  
1497

Birth of **Philipp Melancthon**, German reformer, scholar and colleague of **Martin Luther**.

**20** Feb  
1547

King **Edward VI** was crowned King at Westminster Abbey



**21** Feb  
1513

Death of Pope **Julius II** from a fever. He was buried in St Peter's in the Vatican.

**22** Feb  
1511

Tragedy struck **Catherine of Aragon** and **Henry VIII** when the fifty-two day-old **Henry, Duke of Cornwall**, died.

**23** Feb  
1601

Burial of **Job Throckmorton**, religious pamphleteer and Member of Parliament, at Haseley in Warwickshire. It is believed that he was one of the men responsible for the "Martin Marprelate tracts".

**27** Feb  
1574

Death of Sir **William Harper**, Lord Mayor of London, in London. He was buried in St Paul's, Bedford, in the chancel. He was Lord Mayor from September 1561 to his death.

**28** Feb  
1540

Execution of **Thomas Forret**, Protestant martyr. He was burned at the stake in Castle Hill in Edinburgh in front of **King James V** after being condemned as a heretic. **John Knox** and **David Calderwood** record the year of his execution as 1539, but **John Foxe** and **George Buchanan**, who had actually spent time with Forret, recorded it as 1540.



# DAY IN TUDOR HISTORY

**5 Feb**  
1556

*Treaty of Vaucelles* between **Philip II of Spain** and **Henry II of France** was signed.

**6 Feb**  
1561

Baptism of **Tailboys Dymoke** (pseudonym **Thomas Cutwode**) at Kyme in Lincolnshire. He was the son of Sir **Robert Dymoke**, and his wife, **Bridget** (née Clinton). Dymoke is known for his allegorical poem, *Caltha poetarum*, or, "The Bumble Bee".

**7 Feb**  
1587

Sir **Amyas Paulet** read out Mary, Queen of Scots' death warrant and informed her that she would be executed the following day.



Edward Seymour

**11 Feb**  
1503

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

**12 Feb**  
1554

**Lady Jane Grey** and her husband, **Guildford Dudley**, were executed for treason.

**13 Feb**  
1542

**Catherine Howard** and **Lady Jane Rochford** were executed at the Tower of London.

**17 Feb**  
1547

**Edward Seymour**, uncle of King **Edward VI**, was made Duke of Somerset.

**18 Feb**  
1516

**Catherine of Aragon** gave birth to a little girl who they named **Mary**. She went on to become **Mary I**.

**19 Feb**  
1473

Birth of **Nicholas Copernicus**, mathematician and astronomer, in Thorn, in the province of Royal Prussia, Poland.

**24 Feb**  
1540

Birth of **Henry Howard**, Earl of Northampton, courtier, author and administrator, at Shottesham in Norfolk. He was the second son of courtier and poet **Henry Howard**, Earl of Surrey, and his wife, Lady **Frances de Vere**.

**25 Feb**  
1570

Excommunication of **Queen Elizabeth I** by Pope **Pius V**.

**26 Feb**  
1564

**Christopher Marlowe**, poet, translator and playwright, was baptised at St George's Canterbury.

## TUDOR FEAST DAYS

1 February – Candlemas Eve

2 February – Candlemas

3 February – Feast of St Blaise

14 February – Valentine's Day

24 February – Feast of St Matthias the Apostle

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NEXT MONTH IN YOUR REGULAR

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