

Tudor Life

THE
TUDOR
SOCIETY

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MEDICINE & HEALTH

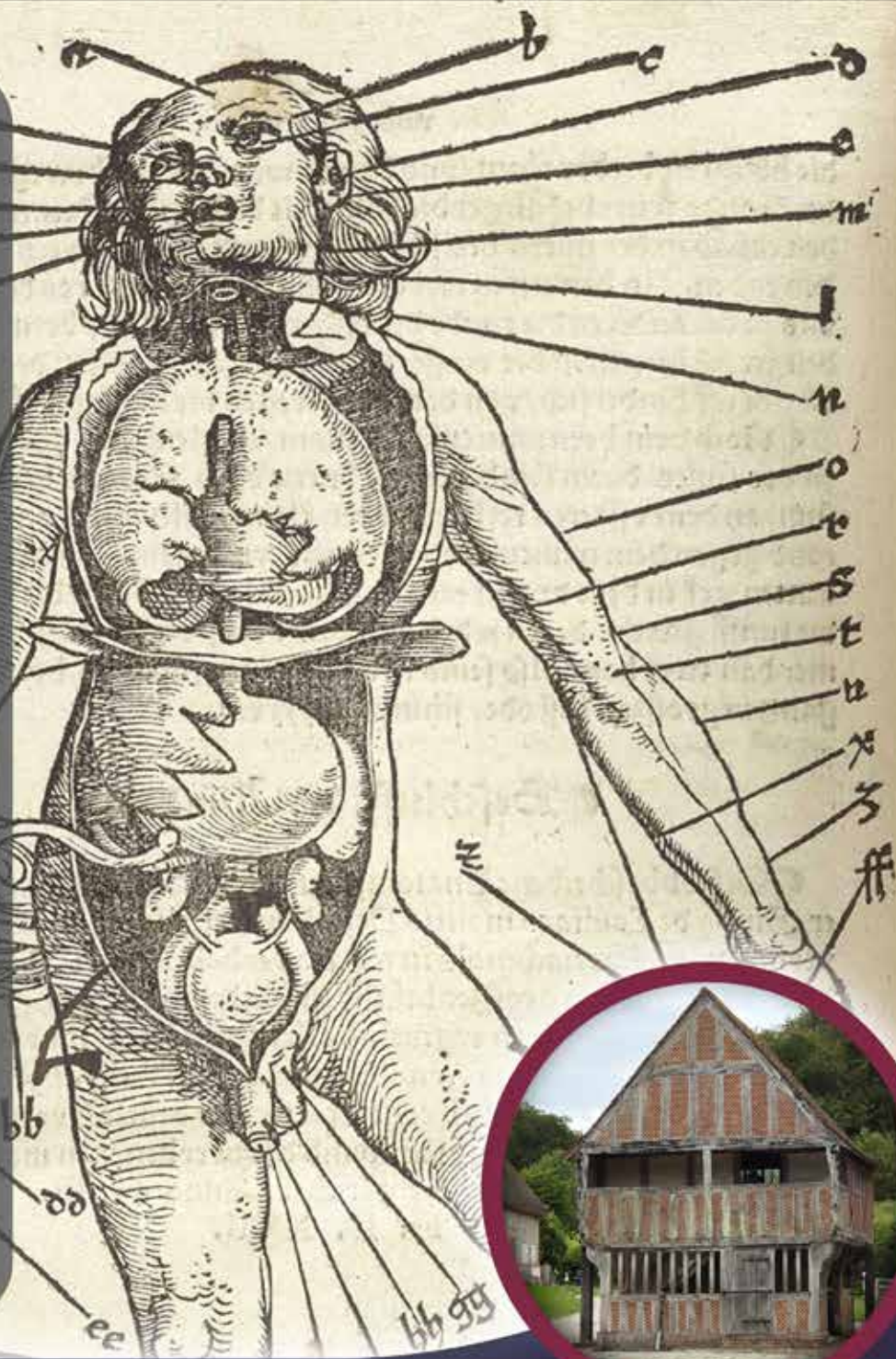
Childbirth in the
Tudor Age

Mary I's
Illness and potential
diagnosis

PLUS

10 Things you
didn't know about
Reginal Pole

AND
MUCH MORE



*THE WEALD & DOWNLAND
MUSEUM BY IAN MULCAHY*



The Anne Boleyn Experience 2020

17th - 21st May 2020

The Anne Boleyn Experience has proven extremely popular in 2018 and 2019 and so it's back again in 2020!

This tour explores the life and death of the ill-fated second wife of Henry VIII and mother to Elizabeth I, Queen Anne Boleyn.

You will stay at Anne's childhood home, the magical Hever Castle, for 4 nights and enjoy exclusive access to the entire Astor Wing including music room, billiard room, lawns, tennis court and outdoor swimming pool.

You will enjoy a private after hours tour of Hever Castle, a 3 course dinner in the Castle dining room, visit Hampton Court Palace and the Tower of London - a particularly poignant visit as it falls on the anniversary of her execution.

Join the Tudor Society (open to non-members too!) on this amazing trip-of-a-lifetime.

www.britishhistorytours.com/history-tours/anne-boleyn-2020



Tour Highlights

Jonathan Foyle - Guest Speaker

Private After Hours Tour of Hever Castle

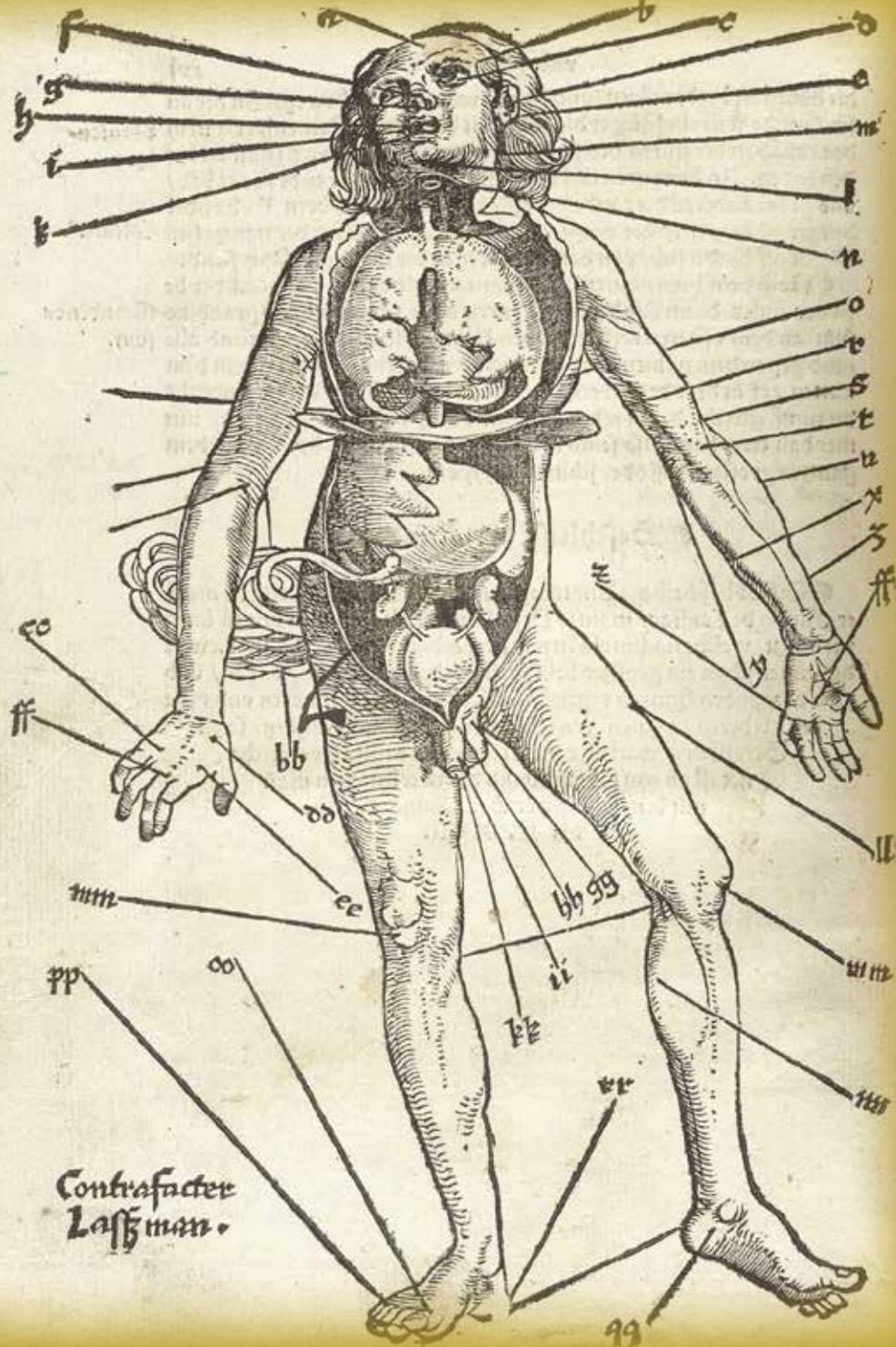
Expert History Talks

Dinner in the Castle Dining Room

Visit to Hampton Court Palace

Visit the Tower of London on the anniversary of Anne Boleyn's death

Private use of the Astor Wing of Hever Castle including our own Private Lawn next to the moat, Tennis Court, Billiards Room and Outdoor Heated Pool.



MEDICINE & HEALTH

WHEN WE pose the fun question of “What era would you like to live in?”, it’s often the grim realities of Tudor medicine that hold back even the most enthusiastic Tudor loyalist. Three Tudor queens - Elizabeth of York, Jane Seymour and Katherine Parr - endured the agony of death in childbed. And given its bloody applications, who could blame Elizabeth I for her fear of dentistry? This issue of our magazine is fascinating, but it’s not for the faint hearted!

GARETH RUSSELL
EDITOR

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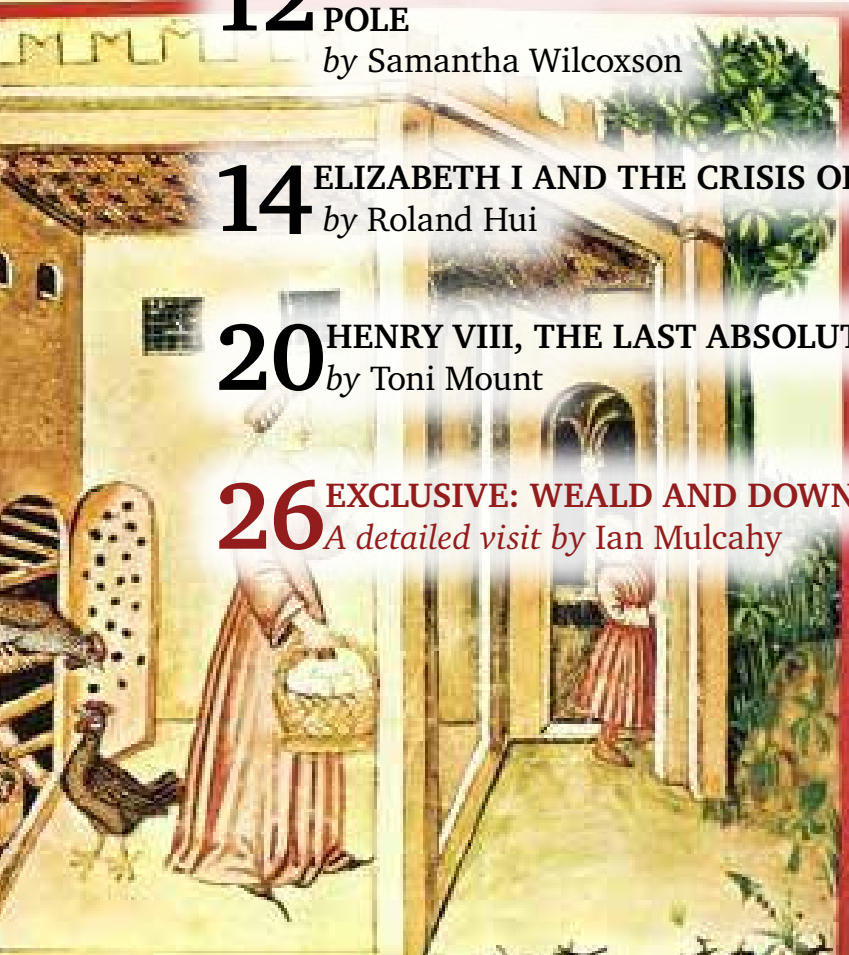
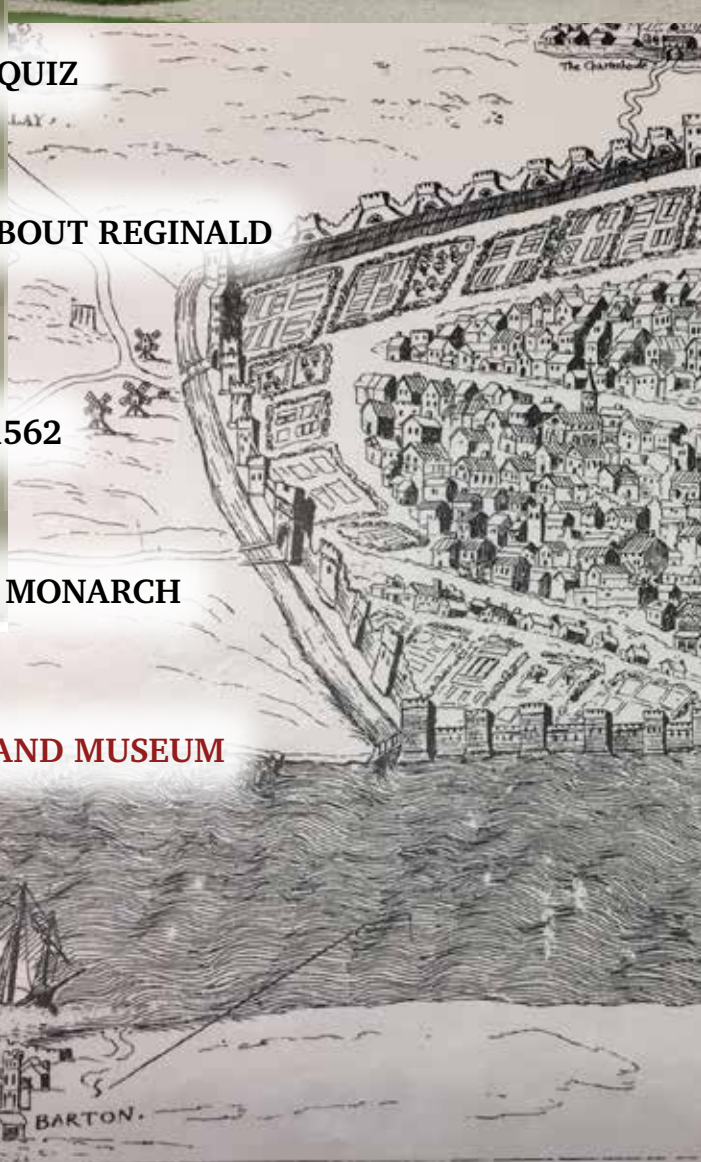
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COPY OF AN ANCIENT PLAN OF HULL.
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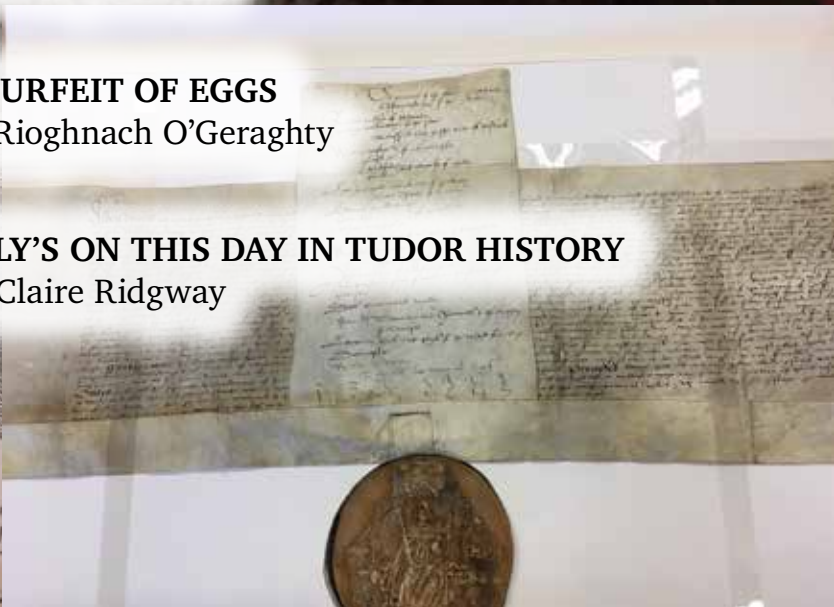
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**A WOMAN
GIVING
BIRTH**

Image from *The expert midwife* by Jacob Rueff c.1554



CHILDBIRTH IN THE TUDOR AGE

Childbirth and pregnancy can be a scary time for modern day mothers but in the Tudor age it also came with its own risks and worries including even what sex the child would be.

For Tudor women, there was no such thing as a positive pregnancy test. They had to be alert to the changes in their bodies and wait to feel the 'quickening' or first movements of the baby at around five months. Physicians could try to determine if a woman was pregnant by looking at her urine. If it was cloudy or 'scattered a needle full of red speckles' she could be pregnant. If it changed colour when mixed with wine or had living creatures in it after three days in a bottle that could be indicative of pregnancy and if

she drank rainwater at night or ate honey steeped with aniseed and it caused pain - well she could be pregnant too! Early doctors just didn't know how to detect pregnancy and it wouldn't be until a woman's belly began to expand that a true prognosis could be given. (Even then as in the case of Mary I it could be for other reasons).

In a superstitious age, many folk tales surrounded pregnant women. It was said that getting a fright, seeing disturbing pictures or hearing loud noises could cause the birth of a deformed baby. Bad smells could cause a woman to miscarry as might riding a horse. They were advised to exercise but not too much, to eat well but not too much and to sleep – you guessed it! Getting through pregnancy

could be an ordeal in itself.

When it came to childbirth we know more about the royals than ordinary women. For a Tudor lady, childbirth came with shutting themselves away from the world for the lying-in period four to six weeks before labour. Margaret Beaufort's *Ordinance as to What is to be Made Preparation Against the Deliverance of the Queen, as Also for the Christening of the Child of Whom She Shall Be Delivered* set out the procedure including a Mass being attended before a royal procession to the chamber and a formal leave-taking of the court.

The bed chamber would be darkened, the fires lit and tapestries used to block out the light to create a stuffy atmosphere. When Elizabeth of York gave birth to Margaret Tudor the hangings around her bed depicted flowers and symbols with no depictions of people or animals lest they scare the queen during labour.

This was a men-free environment (including the husband!) with only midwives and ladies in attendance. The midwife's role was to see their charge through labour supplying her with ointments, poultices and preparations

RELIGION PLAYED A
LARGE PART IN CHILDBIRTH
ESPECIALLY IN THE
**PRE-
REFORMATION**
ERA

to aid the child's birth. There would be pig fat for lubrication and perhaps a birthing stool to support an upright delivery. The midwife would be responsible for turning the baby if needed, cutting the umbilical cord and presenting the mother with her new baby.

Religion played a large part in childbirth especially in the pre-Reformation years when prayers were recited for the pregnant woman to listen to or written down for her to hold or inked on to a roll to wrap around herself during labour. A small altar was often set up in the room with a cross and other relics felt to aid childbirth and relieve pain. When Margaret Tudor was pregnant with James V she sent Luke of the Wardrobe to fetch the 'sark' or chemise of St Margaret of Scotland for her use and Henry VIII permitted the Abbot of Westminster to loan her the relic of the girdle of Our Lady which took pride of place in her bedchamber.

St Margaret of Antioch was also called upon as the patron saint of pregnant women and childbirth to ensure a safe delivery. The story that imprisoned for her beliefs, she was visited

by Satan in the guise of a dragon. When he tried to eat her, the crucifix she was carrying caused him to spit her out. She escaped the wrath of the dragon/Satan and was reborn herself. Women in labour prayed to her to see the safe delivery of their baby.

Women also used more 'pagan' items like 'eagle stones' - a hollow stone which has sand, a pebble or something within it to make a noise - to ward off evil spirits. Charms were used and often placed on the belly for an easy birth and could be made of agate, coral, jasper or amber. Herbs like mugwort, sage and oakfern could be tied to a woman's thigh to speed up labour.

After the birth, mother's caudle - a spiced wine - might be given to help restore a woman's strength and after about three days she would be allowed to sit up - 'upsitting' - and to receive visitors. She could leave her bed chamber after a week but only to rejoin her household. She would not be allowed in public until a churching ceremony was performed - a short church service thought to purify a woman.

Tudor women would be extremely grateful to have got through the whole

process. They were more than aware that childbirth often caused fatalities - for the mother and/or the child. Elizabeth I famously was afraid of childbirth and it may have been why she never married. Jane Seymour and Catherine Parr both died of complications after their labours and childbed illness was little understood. The Tudors didn't understand germs or the need for cleanliness as we do today and for many women who survived the birth, the following days would prove fatal as childbed fever set in with no cure.

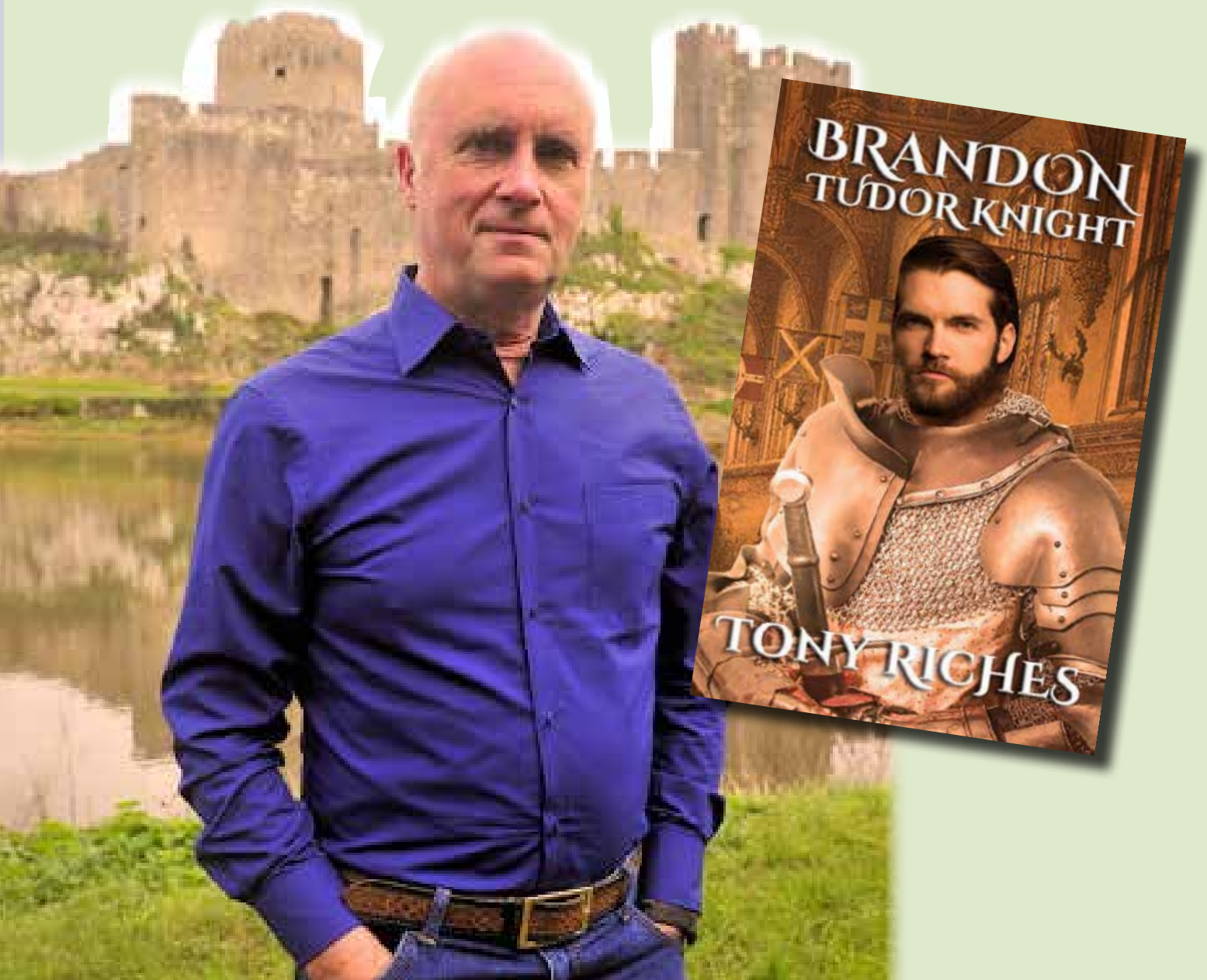
And of course whether your husband was happy after the birth of your child was another matter altogether. Whether the child was a boy or girl, it was the woman's fault and as we know from Henry VIII's treatment of his wives, for royalty the birth of an heir was all important. He famously said "if it is a girl this time, by God's grace, boys will follow" after the birth of the Princess Mary in 1516 when he was still feeling hopeful for the succession. So not only did Tudor women face a hard time giving birth, they also were responsible for not having an heir!

SARAH-BETH WATKINS

JULY'S EXPERT SPEAKER IS TONY RICHES

Tony is a full-time UK author of best-selling historical fiction. He lives in Pembrokeshire, West Wales and is a specialist in the history of the Wars of the Roses and the lives of the early Tudors.

CHARLES BRANDON, TUDOR KNIGHT





QUEEN MARY I'S ILLNESS AND A POTENTIAL DIAGNOSIS



BY SUSAN ABERNETHY

I recently came across a thought-provoking article, written by a qualified physician regarding a potential diagnosis for a medical condition relating to Queen Mary I. From reading historical accounts we can develop a litany of symptoms Mary suffered from the time she was a teenager all the way to her death at age forty-two in 1558. In addition to these repeatedly frustrating and obviously debilitating illnesses, Mary lived in a state of high stress and nervous tension due ill- treatment from the time of her father's decision to extricate himself from his marriage to her mother Catherine of Aragon.

NOTHING IN the records suggest Mary's health was a considerable problem before she entered puberty. When Mary turned fourteen, she began to suffer from pains in her head and stomach and sometimes was unable to keep down her food for up to eight or ten days. Her mother's apothecary and physician were called in to treat her. She was diagnosed with "strangulation of the womb". This covered a wide range of symptoms that included amenorrhea (the irregularity or cessation of menstrual periods),

a depressed mental state indicated by heaviness, fear and sorrowfulness, difficulty breathing and pain and swelling of the abdomen. Other signs of the illness were headache, nausea, vomiting, and lack of appetite, trembling of the heart, fainting, melancholy and fearful dreams.

Before Mary's living circumstances changed and she went to live with her half-sister Elizabeth, she engaged in regular horseback riding as part of her treatment. After her move, this was stopped as escape was a possibility. When Parliament passed the Act of Succession in 1534, everyone was required to swear an oath, including Mary. The oath compelled Mary not to call herself Princess or her mother Queen at the risk of being put in the Tower or even death.

It was about this time Mary became gravely ill. She lived in an atmosphere of severe strain, complaining of headaches and indigestion and was basically prostrate. Her guardian, Lady Anne Shelton, called in an unfamiliar apothecary who prescribed pills which had the unfortunate effect of making Mary's condition worse. This may have been an allergic reaction to the medicine or Mary could have had some kind of psychosomatic response.

Eventually the king's personal physician Dr Butts treated Mary. His ministrations had a positive effect and Mary did recover. But she had a severe relapse a few months later. She was convalescent and eating a special diet with extra meat at uncustomary times of the day. In the autumn of 1535, Mary's illness returned and doctors were called in to treat a rheum in her head.

Mary mentions symptoms in her letters including headache, toothache,

neuralgia and insomnia. Treatments prescribed would have included tooth pulling and bloodletting from her foot or other areas of the body. The bloodletting could have led to anaemia. Mary had serious illnesses again in December 1537 and January 1538 for several weeks. She could neither sit nor stand and spent time in her bed with faintness.

In March and April of 1542, she suffered from a strange fever which made her weak and caused heart palpitations. She was ill again in 1543. In the last years of her father's reign, she mentions toothache and neuralgia along with the customary melancholia and she was having intermittent bouts of fever. Under the reign of her brother King Edward VI, Mary was once again under extreme stress. Relations between brother and sister were tense, causing more illness. In a letter to Edward, she described how she had a catarrh in her head and it greatly pained her to bend her head down to write him.

When Edward died, Mary was triumphant over Jane Grey who had been declared queen by some of the nobility. She was now the first crowned Queen Regnant of England. One of the first orders of business was to marry. Mary's cousin, Holy Roman Emperor Charles V suggested she marry his son, Prince Philip of Spain. Philip and Mary were married on July 25, 1554.

Soon after the nuptials, the thirty-seven-year-old queen declared herself pregnant. Philip decided to stay in England and await the birth of the child in the spring. Curiously, Mary's health improved with this purported pregnancy. As the due date approached, Mary withdrew into her chambers to await the

birth at Hampton Court. The child never came but Mary persisted in believing she was with child, becoming more and more reclusive.

She would sit for hours wrestling with depression and anxiety, looking pale and ill to those around her. She assumed the position of sitting on cushions on the floor with her knees drawn up to her chin. Eventually, Mary accepted reality and the swelling of her belly went down and her health improved. This was her first episode of pseudocyesis, commonly known as "phantom pregnancy".

Philip left England for the Low Countries but returned to England from March until July of 1557, when Mary said goodbye to him for the last time, promptly declaring she was pregnant again. This time, she was not taken seriously. Her belly was swollen with what may have been dropsy. Eventually, talk of her pregnancy was no longer mentioned.

Toward the end of Mary's reign, England lost Calais on the continent to the French and the country was experiencing unrelenting torrential rains which ruined crops and created famine. A pernicious strain of influenza was killing people at the rate of the plague. The disease lingered for long periods before the victim died.

In the spring and summer of 1558, Mary was sick again with melancholia and insomnia. In August, she had a low fever and dropsy and was in such grave condition, she had to be moved from Hampton Court to St. James Palace. By September, Mary experienced high fever, headaches, and periods of confusion along with an almost complete loss of vision. She would sink into a fever for a few days and then revive in a chronic pattern. Waves of depression became

more frequent making her illness worse.

In October it became evident this illness would be her last and she made a codicil to her will. In early November there was some relief in her condition but the paroxysms and long periods of unconsciousness returned. She was essentially blind and could no longer read. Mary heard mass in the early hours of November 17 and between four and five in the morning, she died peacefully.

One theory regarding Mary's phantom pregnancies points to a condition known as ovarian dropsy. In this condition, a cyst forms on the ovary and gradually enlarges itself until it becomes, in some instances, a great size and fills with fluid. Cysts can be painful and produce widespread abdominal pain. In some cases, the condition can be attributed to inflammation of the ovary. The ovary can also be subject to the growth of various other tumours such as fibrous or cancerous tumours which cause deformity of the ovary, leading to infertility. Ovarian dropsy usually lasts for a few years.

Dr Milo Keynes wrote an article on this subject for the *Journal of Medical Biography* in 2000. After careful consideration of the historical evidence, Keynes believed Mary's symptoms indicated a tumour on the pituitary endocrine gland. These tumours are typically benign and can press on surrounding structures such as the optic nerve, leading to blindness and headache. The gland will also create an over-secretion and/or under-secretion of hormones. In this case, the hormone involved is prolactin. In excess, prolactin can cause infertility, amenorrhea, infrequent and irregular uterine bleeding and galactorrhea (swollen breasts that secrete milk). The tumour is also known

to cause depressive disorders.

Most significantly, patients with this type of tumour have been diagnosed with “phantom pregnancy”. A non-pregnant woman has a delusional belief that she is with child. The patient will manifest the signs of pregnancy such as weight gain, increase in abdominal girth, the sensation of fetal movement, vomiting, nausea, aberrations of appetite and galactorrhea. Enlargement of the tumour can also affect the function of the thyroid gland and create the condition of hyperthyroidism. Symptoms include a rough, deep voice, loss of hair and eyebrows, flushing of the cheeks, dryness and thickening of the skin, constipation resulting in an extended abdomen, increase in weight, chronic anaemia, headaches, depression and mental confusion. Mary was known

to have a deep voice.

Keynes discusses the portrait of Mary (above) which was painted in 1554 when Mary was thirty-eight. He notes the portrait signifies Mary had flushed cheeks and a pudgy face, pallor to her skin, the loss of her eyebrows and a receding hairline. All of this is indicative of a deficient secretion of the thyroid gland. Perhaps we should bear in mind some of these potential explanations of illness in considering Mary’s behaviour and decision-making during her reign.

SUSAN ABERNETHY

Further reading

“Bloody Mary” by Carolly Erickson

“Mary Tudor: The Spanish Queen” by H.F.M. Prescott

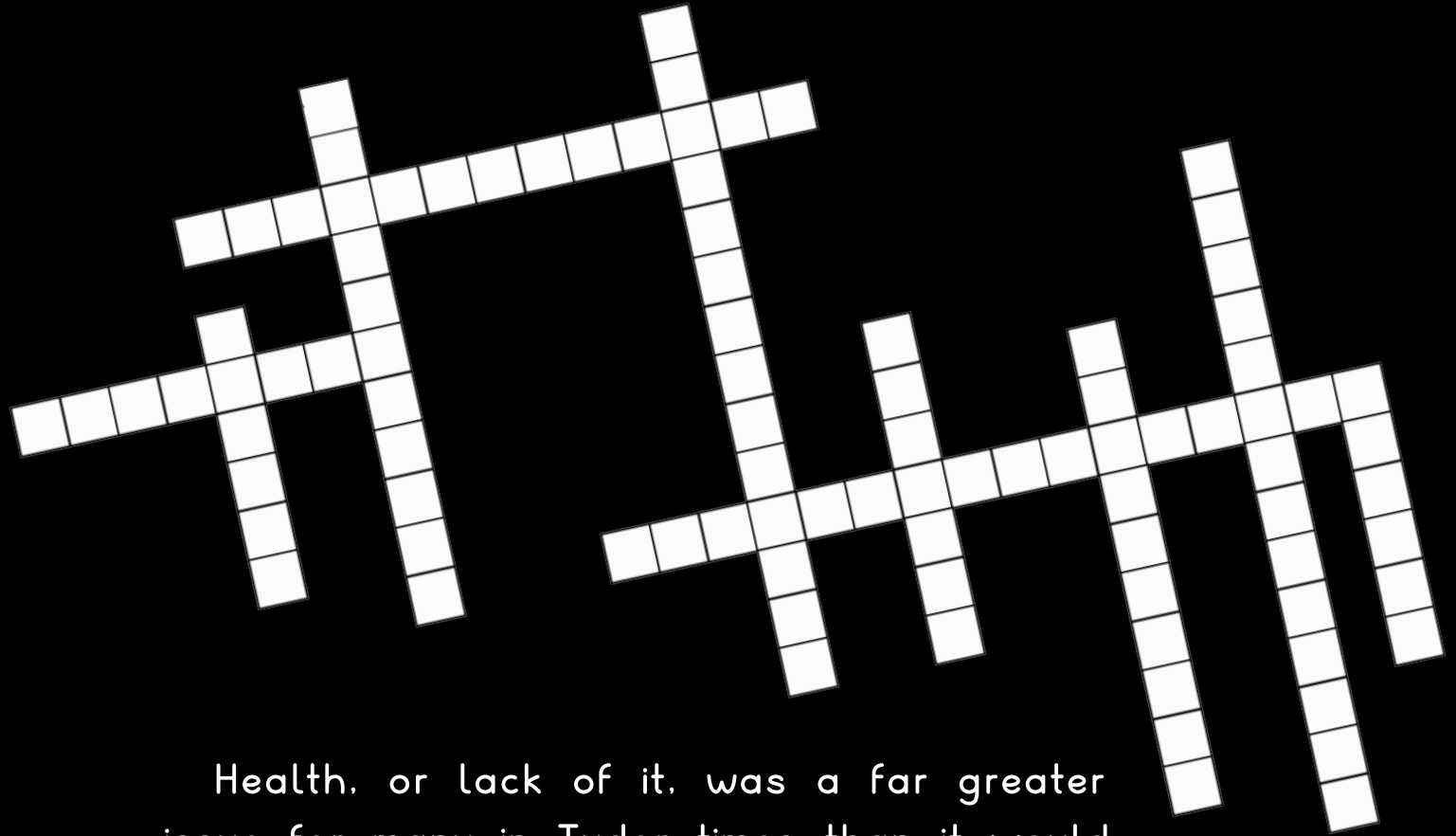
“The Myth of Bloody Mary” by Linda Porter

“The Aching Head and Increasing Blindness of Queen Mary I” by Dr. Milo Keynes
in the “Journal of Medical Biography”, 2000, Volume 8, pages 102-109

Mary I by Hans Eworth 1554



CAUSES OF DEATH



Health, or lack of it, was a far greater issue for many in Tudor times than it would be today. Simply identify the cause of death for each of these Tudors and then when you have them all, use the answers to complete the Kriss Kross above.

Jane Seymour
Robert Aske
Margaret Tudor
William Brandon. (killed by)
Thomas Cranmer
Jane Rochford
Richard Roose
The Essex Witches
William Carey
Margaret Beaufort

People generally remember two things about Reginald Pole. He was the son of Margaret Pole, who has a tragic story of her own that ends in her gruesome execution at age 67. Reginald was also a cardinal of the Catholic Church – an outspoken one who was not afraid to let Henry VIII know exactly what he thought of the monarch's divorce and break with Rome.

Deeply involved in English politics and the European Reformation, Cardinal Reginald Pole is one of the most intriguing historical figures of the Tudor era. Here are 10 fascinating facts about him that you probably don't know.

1

His brother, uncle, and grandfather were also all executed.

Before his mother's execution on the order of Henry VIII, several other members of

Reginald's family had suffered for treason (real or imagined). His brother, Henry Pole, Baron Montegue, had already been executed two years earlier for a supposed treasonous plot. This was largely in retribution for Reginald's words against the king in *De Unitate*. Reginald's maternal uncle, Edward of Warwick, had been executed by Henry VII to clear the way for the marriage of Catherine of Aragon and Prince Arthur. His grandfather, George of Clarence, was executed by his own brother, King Edward IV.

2

His young nephew was taken to the Tower and never seen again.

Sound familiar? The Princes in the Tower, the disappeared sons of Edward IV, were also related to Reginald.

Although his story isn't as popular, Henry Pole the younger, son of Baron Montegue, disappeared from the Tower of London after being imprisoned along with his father. Tower records simply stop mentioning him after 1542.

4

Catherine of Aragon wanted Reginald to wed Princess Mary.

Long before Anne Boleyn, the break from Rome, and Reginald's feud with Henry VIII, Pole was considered a top contender for Princess Mary's

hand. Catherine of Aragon was a close friend of Margaret Pole and made her Mary's governess. These two noble mothers were keen to see their children wed, but Henry squashed the idea, as he did any marriage plans for his daughter.

3

Another brother attempted suicide.

Geoffrey Pole was not made of the sterner stuff that enabled his Yorkist forefathers to confidently face battle and death. Henry VIII

must have known as much, because Geoffrey was the one arrested when the King schemed to bring down the Pole family. Geoffrey gave evidence that was used against his brother, Henry, and others in the Exeter Conspiracy. It also resulted in their mother's imprisonment. While still held in the Tower, Geoffrey attempted suicide, so powerful was his guilt. After two attempts, he was released, and he fled to Reginald in Italy.

Samantha
Wilcoxson shares...

10 *Things*
you didn't
know about
Reginald
Pole

5

He was almost elected pope.

During the Papal Conclave of 1550, Reginald Pole had the opportunity to become pope.

Reginald's open-mindedness when it came to dealing with reformers made him an enemy of some of his contemporaries, but others thought it made him an ideal candidate to lead the church through the turmoil of the Reformation. It was common to place wagers on the outcome of conclaves, and Pole's chances were set at 90-95%. However, Reginald chose to spend time in prayer while others lobbied and bribed to gain the papal tiara. It took weeks and countless votes to settle upon a selection. In some, Reginald lost by a single vote. Had he campaigned for the position, he almost certainly would have gained it, but Pole chose to leave the results in God's hands.

7

He was considered a heretic by both Protestants and Catholics.

Reginald Pole was a Catholic cardinal during one of the most tumultuous times in church history. Due to his position, he was automatically distrusted by

Protestants, though those who got to know him learned that he was very open to religious discussions and believed in reform. Some in the Catholic Church saw his tolerance as rebellious heresy and lobbied for him to be recalled. Reginald was under investigation by the Inquisition during the reign of Queen Mary, but she refused to send him to Rome for a hearing. One who knew him said of Reginald, "He has been very unfortunate . . . being considered a Lutheran in Rome, in Germany a papist."

10

Michelangelo was his friend. Yes, that Michelangelo. It is astounding to think that one of the greatest artists in history was creating his religious works at a time when the church was being torn asunder.

Reginald Pole and Michelangelo were known to discuss the artist's reformist leanings and the nature of God. Reginald likely saw the Sistine Chapel ceiling and the Pauline Chapel murals as they were being created.

6

Thomas Wyatt attempted to assassinate him.

The same poet who wooed Anne Boleyn was sent by her husband to assassinate the cardinal who had become a thorn in his side. Wyatt was a diplomat to Charles V in Spain, but his secret mission was to kill Reginald Pole. He wasn't the first and wouldn't be the last sent for this purpose. Pope Paul III provided Pole with papal guards when he traveled due to the English king's lust for vengeance. In 1539, Pole was informed that Wyatt was openly "swaggering about telling everyone how rich he was and how he, personally, was going to murder Cardinal Pole." Wyatt's failure to capture or kill Pole was interpreted as conspiring with him by the suspicious king the poet served. In January 1541, Wyatt was arrested and sent to the Tower.

8

A chapel in Rome is named after him.

After one failed assassination attempt (not Wyatt's), Pole felt he should demonstrate his thankfulness for God's protection. He did so by contracting the construction of a chapel just outside of Rome where the attack had occurred on the road. Cappella di Reginald Pole is a small circular structure that is now within city limits.

9

He was the last Catholic Archbishop of Canterbury.

During the persecution under Henry VIII and the extreme reforms of Edward VI, Reginald Pole probably thought it unlikely that he would ever return to England, but everything changed with the accession of Queen Mary I. Her attempt at counter-Reformation brought Reginald home, where he was made Archbishop of Canterbury. He died on the same day as Queen Mary (let's call that fun fact #11) and was replaced with a Protestant by the young Queen Elizabeth.

ELIZABETH I AND THE CRISIS OF 1562

BY ROLAND HUI



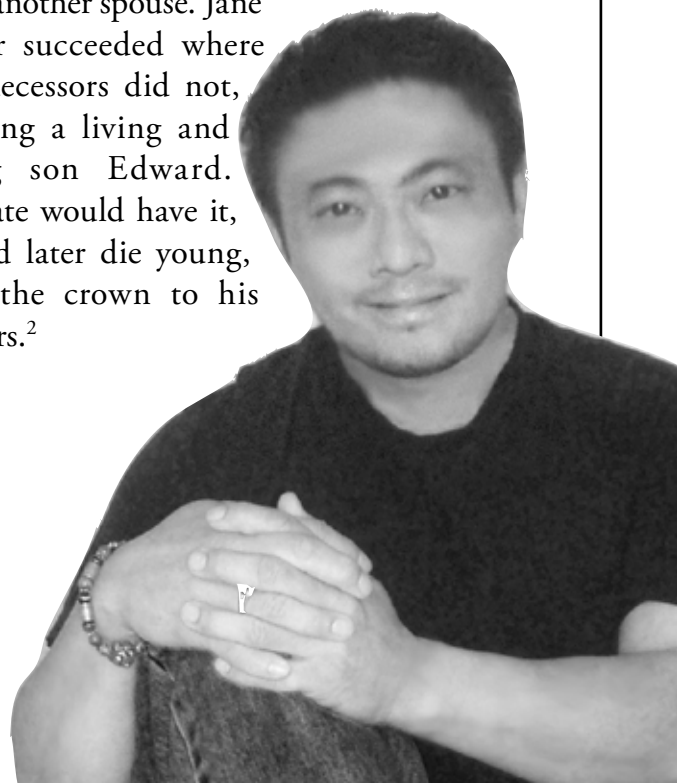
Elizabeth I (by an Unknown Artist)

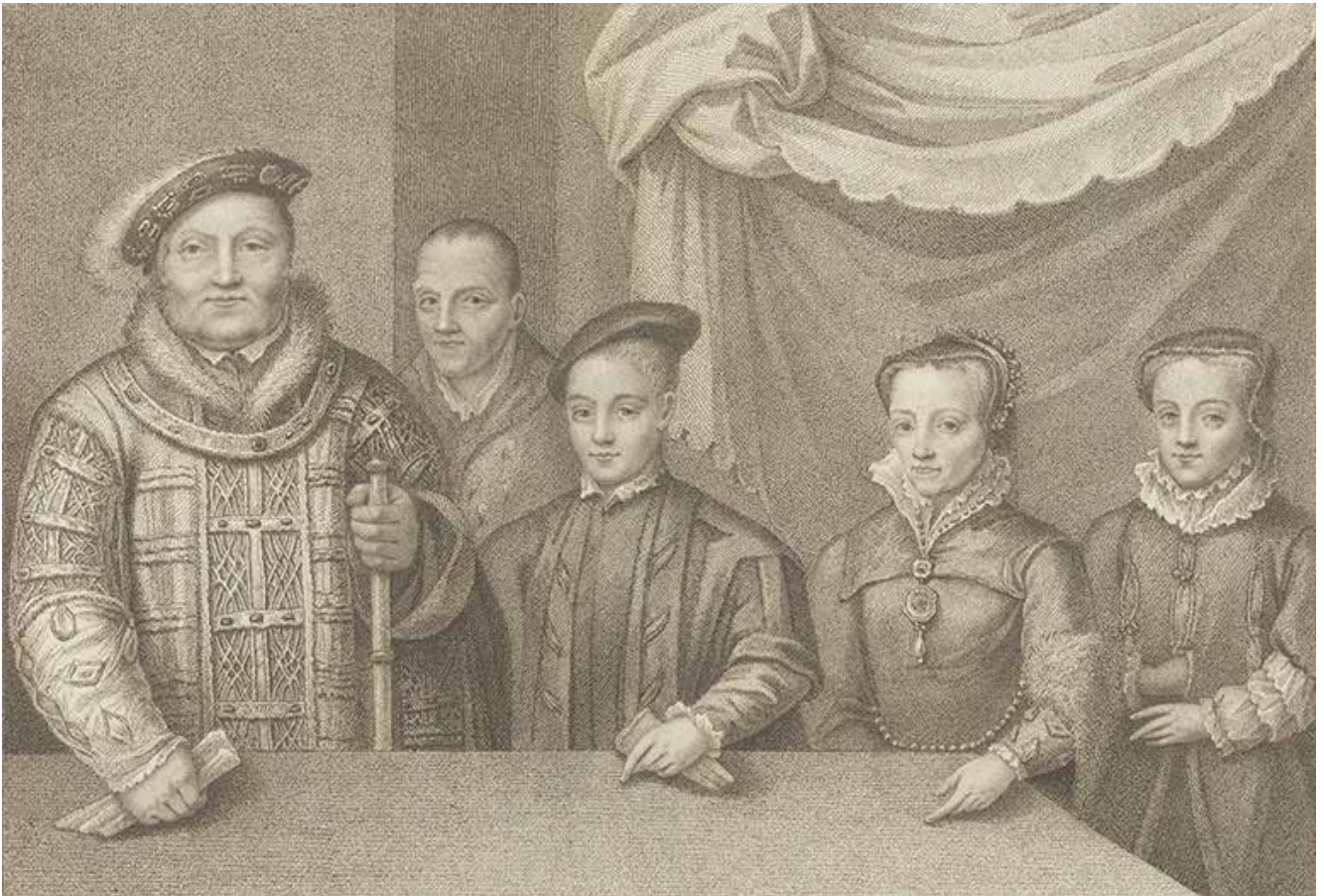
In the recent film *Mary Queen of Scots* (2018), Queen Elizabeth of England, the cousin of Mary Stuart Queen of Scotland, is stricken by smallpox. The disease is horrific. Elizabeth's face is reduced to a mass of blisters and weeping lesions, and she must cover herself with a veil. When she does eventually recover, the infection has left Elizabeth physically and emotionally scarred. Her face has been ravaged, and the loss of her good looks has made her feel inferior to her attractive cousin Mary. Consequently, when Elizabeth must meet with the Scottish Queen after she flees to England, she cannot confront her rival without the aid of elaborate cosmetics and a wig. The artifice would continue and more so. By the time of Mary's death by execution years later, Elizabeth is but a shadow of her former self. She appears no longer human. She has concealed herself entirely behind an inert mask of white lead. The effect is both awesome and grotesque.

While the movie is a combination of fact and fiction, Elizabeth's contraction of the pox *was* based on reality. She had caught the disease in the autumn of 1562, and fortunately survived. But it was a tense week, a veritable crisis in fact, as the Queen had no clear successor. There were claimants of course to Elizabeth's crown, but each was backed by an opposing faction. Should the Queen not have survived, England may well have been plunged into civil war.

That a monarch could die without an heir was a dreaded possibility that had been faced by Elizabeth's father Henry VIII. Although he had a daughter, Elizabeth's elder half-sister the Princess Mary, by his first wife Katherine of Aragon, the King did not think that a woman should rule. After all, in the 12th century, the Empress Maud (also called Matilda), the daughter and heir of King Henry I, had the country in turmoil in trying to assert her claim to the throne.¹ With

that in mind, Henry VIII had his marriage annulled in the hope that his new wife Anne Boleyn would give him a son. But when Anne failed - she had only one surviving child, a girl, the Princess Elizabeth - Henry took on another spouse. Jane Seymour succeeded where her predecessors did not, by bearing a living and thriving son Edward. But as fate would have it, he would later die young, leaving the crown to his two sisters.²





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

With such a family history, it should have been essential for Elizabeth - crowned Queen in January 1559 - to secure the succession. But she had done nothing of the sort. Since coming to the throne, she had resisted all attempts and persuasions to be married. It was not that she disliked men. In her youth, Elizabeth had succumbed to the charms, against her better judgment, of her guardian the rakish Thomas Seymour, and at present, she was bestowing her favours upon the dashing Robert Dudley. She had known Dudley since they were children, and their shared adversities under Queen Mary had made them even closer. Naturally, her intimacy with Dudley invited gossip, but this Elizabeth ignored. Even when he was accused of murdering his wife Amy Robsart - she was found dead at the foot of a staircase in 1560 - the Queen remained loyal to him. Although there were times when it seemed that Elizabeth was close to marrying Dudley, she would draw back. Perhaps the Scottish

ambassador Sir James Melville summed it up the best. Later in 1564, he would meet with the English Queen and comment on her reluctance to take a husband. "You think if you were married, you would be *but* Queen of England," Melville would tell her. "And now you are King and Queen *both*. You may not suffer a commander".³

The Queen's great illness in October 1562 was completely unexpected. At age 29, Elizabeth was generally of good health. She ate and drank modestly, and she liked to exercise regularly. But on October 10, while at Hampton Court, she was uncharacteristically not feeling well, and she took a bath. However, as the Spanish ambassador Bishop Álvaro de la Quadra described it, upon leaving her bath too soon, the Queen caught a bad chill which resulted in a violent fever. As the days passed, things only got worse as Elizabeth grew progressively weaker, and she fell in and out of a delirium.⁴



Mary Queen of Scots (by an Unknown Artist)

The Queen's condition threw her Council into a panic. Its members were forced to debate over who should succeed if their mistress were to die. As expected, there was no clear consensus as the Council argued the merits of each of the claimants. The only thing that they could agree on was that Mary Queen of Scots, a Catholic, was totally unsuitable. The councillors were then split on two options, Lady Katherine Grey and Lord Huntingdon.

Katherine Grey, a sister of the tragic Lady Jane who was made Queen by a dying Edward VI, and who was then deposed and executed by Mary Tudor, was heiress according to the succession as laid out by the late Henry VIII. Katherine's claim was that her grandmother, Mary Duchess of Suffolk, was a sister of the King. Although Henry VIII had another sister Margaret Tudor, her descendents, which included the Queen of Scots, were excluded in his will. While Katherine Grey should have been Elizabeth's own favoured choice, this was not the case. Elizabeth never took to her cousin whom she thought overly proud and conceited. To make matters worse, Katherine, as

a likely heiress to the crown, had wed without royal permission in 1560. For this, the young lady and her husband were both thrown into prison in the Tower of London. To Elizabeth's added annoyance, her wayward cousin then gave birth to a baby boy while incarcerated. Not only had Katherine defied her by marrying in secret, she had also proved herself the mother of a potential King of England, which Elizabeth, still unwed, had not accomplished.

But those who found flaws in Henry VIII's will, reported Bishop de la Quadra to the court in Spain, were in favour of Lord Huntingdon instead. Henry Hastings, the third Earl of Huntingdon, was a descendent of King Edward III through the Yorkist branch of the family. His mother Katharine Pole was the granddaughter of Lady Margaret Pole, Countess of Salisbury, famously executed by Henry VIII in her old age. Perhaps Huntingdon as Elizabeth's heir might have settled some old wrongs done to his family,⁵ but the Queen herself had never considered the possibility, and the Earl himself had never pressed his claim. But now with Elizabeth so sick, Huntingdon was pushed to the forefront. According to the Bishop, some senior noblemen, including Robert Dudley (though he was not a member of the Council), were insisting on the Earl's nomination. Dudley

Lady Katherine Grey (attributed to Levina Teerlinc)





Henry Hastings, Earl of Huntingdon
(by an Unknown Artist)

in fact was even assembling an army to support him. His preference for the Earl may be explained by the fact that he was his brother-in-law; his sister Katherine Dudley was Huntingdon's wife.⁶

During a period when the Queen slightly improved - she had been unconscious and speechless for a time - she was consulted as to who should follow her. As she had always done, she refused to name her heir. Instead, from her sickbed, Elizabeth made an odd request. She asked the Council to make Robert Dudley Lord Protector of England and a peer of the Realm with an income of £20,000. Stranger yet, she asked that his servant, a man named Tamworth, be given the vast sum of £500 a year. Aware of her Council's dislike for Dudley, whom many thought was arrogant and still tainted by his wife's mysterious death, Elizabeth swore that 'although she loved and always loved Lord Robert dearly, as God was her witness, nothing improper had ever passed between them'.⁷ To mollify the Queen, the Council promised all that she asked, but as Bishop de la Quadra believed, it 'will not be fulfilled'.



Robert Dudley (by Jacobus Houbraken)

By the sixth day of her ordeal, a rash had appeared on Elizabeth's hands and upon her face. 'The malady has now turned into smallpox', the Bishop wrote. 'The eruption cannot come out and she is in great danger... If the Queen die, it will be very soon'. In addition to Elizabeth's own doctors, an émigré physician from Germany, Doctor Burcot was consulted.⁸ After examining the royal patient, he told her bluntly it was the pox. Calling him a 'knave', Elizabeth angrily ordered him out of her sight.

In the Tudor era and in medieval times prior, it was thought that there were four humours which regulated the human body - sanguine (blood), melancholic (black bile), choleric (yellow bile), and phlegmatic (phlegm). When one or more was out of balance, this was detrimental to an individual's health. In the case of the pox, 'the cause of the disease... is when nature expels towards the surface of the body, the excess of sanguine humour', as described by the 14th century English physician John of Gaddesden

in his medical treatise *Rosa Anglica*.⁹ Smallpox, actually caused by a virus, was a terrible affliction. Besides the eruption of pustules over the body and then the possible scarring of a patient for life, there was also the risk of death. Until its eradication in the late 20th century, some 30% of those stricken did not survive.¹⁰

As the Queen only worsened - 'the palace people were all mourning for her as if she were already dead', Bishop de la Quadra observed - Burcot was again sent for by the Council. But with his pride wounded by the Queen, the doctor refused to budge. "By God's pestilence", he exclaimed, "if she be sick, there let her die! Call me a 'knave' for my good will"! To this, the royal officials threatened violence if Burcot resisted. Fearing for his life, but confident that he can save the Queen, he returned to Hampton Court. There, Burcot found Elizabeth awake and weeping over the red spots she saw on her hands. Burcot asked her gruffly, "Which is better? To have the pox in the hands or in the face, *or* in the heart and kill the whole body"? He ordered the Queen's ladies to lift up their mistress and to wrap her in a red sheet. This was a curative, derived from the East, and adopted by John of Gaddesden. He had written how he had treated

a son of King Edward I by using this method 'without leaving a trace of the smallpox pustules on him'.¹¹ Burcot then had Elizabeth set in front of a roaring fire. Not long after, the red spots began opening up releasing the noxious pus - a good sign. Once the eruptions were gone, the scars would eventually heal. Elizabeth was then given a potion of Burcot's own concocting and put to rest. He may well have saved her life.

By the next day, October 17, the Queen was reported as feeling better. Eight days later, she was out of bed, but in seclusion, Bishop de la Quadra noted. She was 'attending to the marks on her face to avoid disfigurement'.

In short time, Elizabeth would fully recover, and it appears that she was left unscarred or virtually so. Sadly, it was not the case with Mary Sidney, Robert Dudley's sister. She had faithfully attended upon her mistress the Queen, only to catch the disease herself. Her husband Henry Sidney, who had gone abroad at the time, lamented afterwards how 'I left her a full fair lady in mine eye, at least the fairest, and when I returned, I found her as foul a lady as the smallpox could make her'. Understandably, Lady Sidney subsequently retired from all court life.

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1. The crown went to Maud's cousin Stephen instead. After his death in 1154, Maud had to be content to see her son Henry Plantagenet assume the throne instead of herself.
2. By Henry VIII's will, Edward VI's successors, should he not have any children, were to be his two half-sisters Mary and Elizabeth. However, the young King bypassed their claims, and nominated their mutual cousin Lady Jane Grey instead. The proper order was restored when Mary overthrew Jane and her government, and had herself proclaimed Queen.
3. James Melville, *Memoirs of His Own Life*, Edinburgh: Bannatyne Club Publications, 1827, p. 122.
4. Elizabeth's illness is described in *Calendar of State Papers, Foreign Series, of the Reign of Elizabeth, 1558-1567*, no. 187, 188, 189, and 190.
5. Along with his great grandmother the Countess of Salisbury, Lord Huntingdon's grandfather (the Countess' son) Henry Pole was also executed by Henry VIII. Earlier, the Countess' brother Edward Earl of Warwick had been put to death as well by Henry VII.
6. Katherine Grey was also related to Robert Dudley by marriage. Her late sister Jane was married to Robert's brother Guilford (also executed by Queen Mary).
7. Some historians have suggested that Elizabeth and Dudley's relationship was more than the Queen said it was. The payment to Tamworth might have been a bribe to ensure his silence. See: Anna Whitelock, *Elizabeth's Bedfellows: An Intimate History of the Queen's Court*, London: Bloomsbury, 2014, p. 67.
8. For Doctor Burcot's attendance upon the Queen, see: F. E. Halliday, 'Queen Elizabeth I and Dr Burcot,' *History Today*, vol. 5, no. 8, Aug. 1955, pp. 542-545.
9. John of Gaddesden, *Rosa Anglica (Sev Rosa Medicinae): An Early Modern Irish Translation of a Section of the Medieval Medical Text-Book by John of Gaddesden*, Edited by Winifred Wulff, London: Irish Texts Society, (1923) 1929, p. 302 and p. 303.
10. 'What is Smallpox?' at the *Centers for Disease Control and Prevention* website: <https://www.cdc.gov/smallpox/about/index.html>
11. John of Gaddesden, *Rosa Anglica (Sev Rosa Medicinae)*, p. 314 and p. 315. Surrounding the patient in the colour red was believed to prevent him or her from scarring. See: Anna Whitelock, *Elizabeth's Bedfellows*, p. 68.



HENRY VIII

THE LAST ABSOLUTE MONARCH

A couple of weeks ago, I gave a talk to Horsmonden Historical Society in Kent. The subject was *Henry VIII – Hero or Villain?* It was a great group and they asked some good questions at the end. During the talk, I'd said that Henry 'ruled with absolute power; the last English monarch to do so' and I was asked to justify this statement, especially the reasons why I thought no subsequent monarch was able to exercise power to that extent. This is the bit I enjoy most when giving a talk: having to answer questions 'off the cuff'. It's a real challenge and forces the little grey cells to work overtime. You can't check on Google or refer to a book; the answer has to be dragged out of your memory and I'm often surprised to find what's squirrelled away in there, unused for ages. I think I did OK but, in this article, I'm hoping to justify my statement in full, having now had time to check all my facts and expand my arguments as couldn't be done in the few minutes I had to give my answer.

Firstly, did Henry really have absolute power as king?

As soon as he became king in 1509, Henry VIII ordered the arrests of Sir Richard Empson and Edmund Dudley on trumped up charges of high treason – in other words, crimes against the Crown. This was absurd because the pair had been Henry VII's most ingenious and efficient financial acquirers. They were the reason young Henry ascended the throne with the royal coffers full – the only English monarch to be financially secure at the beginning of their reign. But as tax gatherers, Empson and Dudley were unpopular with the king's subjects of both high and lesser status and their executions gained approval for Henry from every quarter. As a result, the royal coffers were soon depleted and only later replenished by the dissolution of the monasteries. Also, Henry's subjects should have taken warning, that no one was exempt from the king's disfavour, even those who had served the Crown assiduously.

BY THE END OF HIS
REIGN, HENRY HAD
EXECUTED
72,000
PEOPLE

A contemporary noted 'the king is of a powerful but unoriginal mind and lets himself be influenced by his advisors from whom he is never apart, by night or day'. These advisors were vital to Henry: they thought up ways and means to achieve objectives – not the king's strong point – they dealt with day to day administration the king had no interest in; they made convenient scapegoats to blame when things didn't go as the king wished – as Cardinal Wolsey and Thomas Cromwell discovered – and, ultimately, their influence could be terminated at the king's whim. So, although it seemed that Henry listened to his advisors avidly, their power was an illusion and their counsel would be ignored if it wasn't to the king's liking.

In 1533, Thomas Cromwell engineered the Act in Restraint of Appeals (to the Pope) through Parliament as part of England's breakaway from papal authority but the wording of the act was carefully crafted to achieve a secondary purpose in further raising King Henry's status:

This realm of England is an Empire, and so hath been accepted in the world, governed by one Supreme Head and King having the dignity and royal estate of the Imperial Crown of the same...



England did not have an empire and Calais was her only foreign possession at the time*. The reason for ‘upgrading’ a kingdom to an empire was simple: it made Henry an emperor and, therefore, the equal of the Holy Roman Emperor who was Henry’s nemesis, having caused the pope to refuse his request for the annulment of his marriage to Katherine of Aragon. As far as I know, Henry never used the title of ‘emperor’ but the implication was there in the wording of the act.

Kings before Henry had had absolute power over temporal matters but he was the first English monarch to claim the same over spiritual matters, usurping the authority of the pope and calling himself Supreme Head in Earth of the Church of England [1534]. To deny his new title was made an act of high treason, punishable by death, as Thomas More, Bishop Fisher of Rochester and others found out to their great cost.

According to the contemporary chronicler, Ralph Holinshed, by the end of his reign, Henry had executed 72,000 people, including two queens, twenty peers of the realm, among them an elderly countess, four leading public servants, six of the king’s close attendants and friends, a bishop, numerous abbots, priors and lesser monks, as well as countless ‘great thieves, petty thieves and rogues’. Cardinal Wolsey avoided joining this list by the expedient of dying before his trial. No one was safe; death was the price paid for displeasing this megalomaniac monarch and if that isn’t a definition of ‘absolute power’, I don’t know what is.

Secondly, why didn’t any later monarchs have the same degree of power?

Henry was succeeded by his son, Edward VI [1547-53] who, being too young to rule in his own right, was under the authority of the Lord Protector and the regency council. Although he was king in name and Supreme Head of the Church, his exercise of power was restricted by his minority. Had he lived to adulthood, he may have proved as autocratic as his father. Succeeded by his half-sister, the staunchly Roman Catholic Mary [1553-58], she reverted to the Old Faith, as it was termed at the time. Bringing England back under papal authority, Mary relinquished much of a monarch’s royal power over religion and spiritual matters. She also married Philip II, King of Spain. Although various parliamentary acts made certain Philip could never be King of England, he certainly influenced his wife and her court. Mary was England’s first ever Queen Regnant – a female monarch in her own right, rather than a king’s consort – and the government of the country wasn’t arranged to deal with this novel situation. Obviously, to the sixteenth-century way of thinking, a woman wasn’t capable of ruling alone. How could she lead troops in time of war? How could she make the momentous decisions required of a king? And Mary’s husband was a foreign monarch, so he couldn’t lead an English army and was unlikely to make policy decisions which favoured England over Spain. As a result, the Privy Council and Parliament usurped some of the Crown’s authority.

When Mary’s half-sister became Queen Regnant, the country reverted to

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Protestantism yet Elizabeth [1558-1603] was not allowed to take the title Supreme Head of the Church of England. Being a woman, it was not thought proper for her to be able to overrule archbishops and churchmen; she must be content with the lesser dignity of Supreme Governor of the Church. The same prejudice against women applied to her as to Mary: she couldn't rule without male assistance. At the beginning of her reign, her Privy Council had more authority than Henry VIII would ever have allowed but this may have been regarded as a temporary situation, depending on the man Elizabeth would eventually marry and his suitability as her 'assistant'. Of course, since the queen never took a husband, a considerable degree of power remained with the Privy Council, backed up by Parliament, throughout her reign.

When Elizabeth died without a direct heir, she was succeeded by her cousin, James VI, King of Scots, who as James I [1603-25], became the first Stuart King of England. James was a Protestant, an adult reigning monarch with heirs. As a male, there were no qualms about naming him as Supreme Head of the Church of England and James made good use of the title, instigating the creation of the King James Bible in English soon after his accession. Absolute power over state matters could have been his but there was a problem. In Scotland, the king's authority was rather limited. He was 'King of Scots', not Scotland. He ruled the people but various dukes, earls, lairds and clan chieftains owned the land. This meant there was no income from Crown estates to keep the king solvent and his subjects –

being wealthier than he was – could raise rebellions at will, and frequently did so, with little fear of effective royal retaliation. Scottish government was always chaotic. In coming to England, James regarded his new kingdom as both rich and peaceable but had little idea how it was governed so, like Mary and Elizabeth before him, had to rely on the Privy Council for guidance, advice and direction, his authority somewhat diminished.

James's son, Charles I [1625-49] had other ideas. He had been in England since childhood and thus had been educated in the ways of English government, despite not being his father's heir until 1612, when his elder brother, Henry, Prince of Wales, had died suddenly. History was going to repeat itself in other ways too. Charles was determined to rule with absolute power, as Henry VIII had done. When Parliament thwarted his authority in 1629, he dismissed it. So long as he avoided involvement in war – for which Parliament had to approve taxation to fund it – he could rule without them. This resulted in what was known as the Eleven Year Tyranny when the king's authority was entirely his own, unless there was war or rebellion and he needed to raise an army. In 1640, Scotland rose in revolt over being compelled to use the English Book of Common Prayer and to reinstate bishops, insisted upon by Charles as Supreme Head of the Church of England. The prayer book was unintelligible to many Scots, their Presbyterian Church had long ago abolished bishops and did the title of Supreme Head even apply to Scotland? So Charles summoned Parliament because he needed an

army to put down the Scots; Parliament had its own agenda after over a decade in abeyance and refused to oblige him, so he dismissed it again. Eventually, Charles found himself at war with his own Parliament. The English Civil War lasted from 1642-49 when the king paid the ultimate price for attempting to rule with absolute power and was executed outside his own Palace of Whitehall.

After a decade of rule by Oliver Cromwell and his Parliamentary regime, Charles's son was invited back to rule as Charles II [1660-85]. Relieved to return to a monarchy after the 'experiment' of republican rule, no attempt was made to limit the new king's powers which were, in theory, still absolute. But Charles had experienced the chaos of civil war and its culmination in his father's execution. He was wise enough to keep his authority within acceptable boundaries and his reign was relatively peaceful. Not so that of his brother, James II [1685-88]. James was as ardent a Roman Catholic as Mary Tudor had been and, like her, he resolved to return England to the Old Faith under papal authority. The English were having none of it. James was forced to abdicate and his Protestant daughter Mary was invited to take his place on the throne. But a Queen Regnant could not lead an army and a military show of strength was required to remove James. So it was Mary's Dutch husband, William of Orange, who sailed from Holland, invited to do so by a number of influential peers of the realm, to make good his wife's claim. Having succeeded, Mary insisted William should rule with her as joint monarch.

Parliament wasn't impressed by her

insistence on this because William was embroiled in wars on the Continent and England couldn't afford to become too involved. On the other hand, they were desperate for a Protestant monarchy. A compromise was reached: the country would have its king and queen ultimately answerable to Parliament: a 'constitutional monarchy'. Gone was the possibility of absolute power for any future kings and no subsequent ruler attempted to change that.

Mary's sister Anne ruled from 1702-14 – another Queen Regnant, this time with a well-meaning but ineffectual drunken husband, so her Privy Council took on greater authority. Anne, the last of the Stuart line, was succeeded by the Hanoverian Georges. George I, like James I, had no idea how his new kingdom was governed, didn't like the place or people and never bothered to learn the language. By the time he died in 1727, a constitutional monarchy was the accepted thing and no one contested it.

These are my arguments as to why I feel justified in stating the Henry VIII was the last – the only – King of England to be an Absolute Monarch.

You may disagree but, as they say in exams: Discuss.

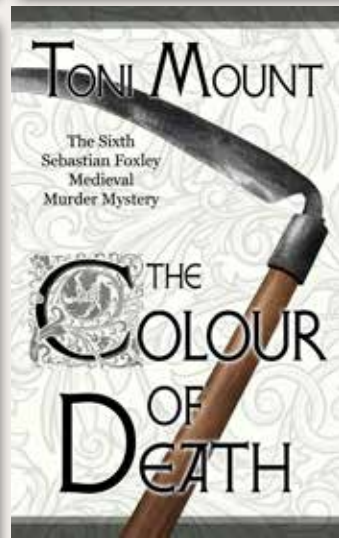
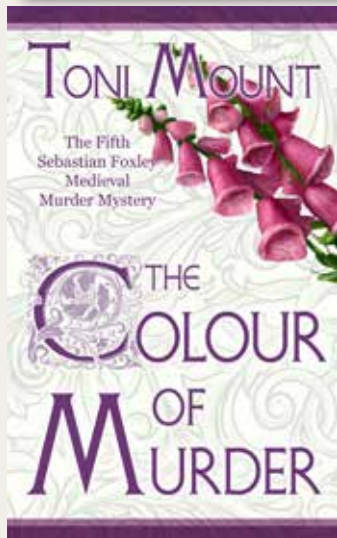
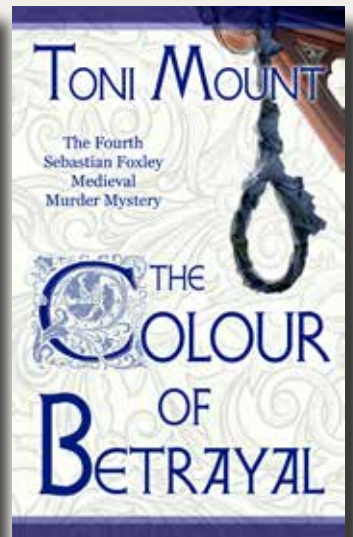
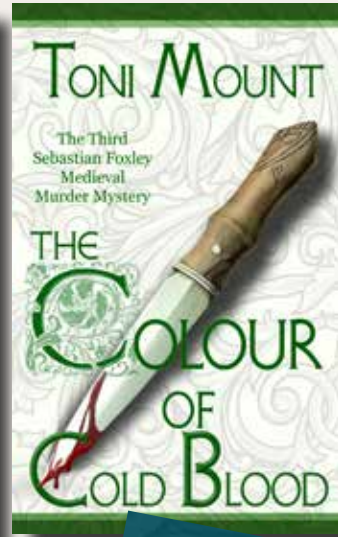
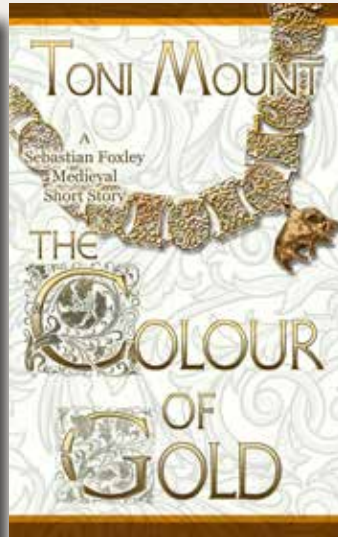
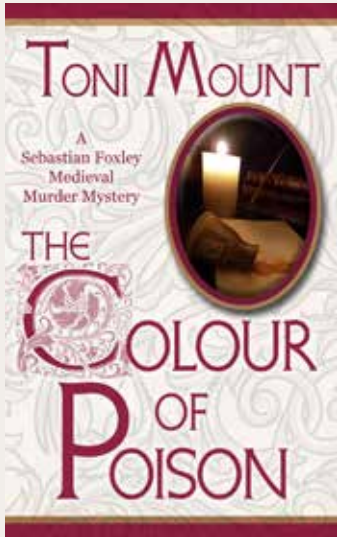
*I discovered recently, whilst researching the international trade concerns of medieval and Tudor England, that in 1518 Henry VIII had the opportunity of creating a fledgling empire when King Christian I of Denmark had offered Iceland as collateral for a sizeable loan. He asked Henry to lend him 100,000 florins in exchange for Iceland, reducing the sum to 50,000 in desperation. Henry

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could not oblige him because, by that date, England's coffers were also empty, so Iceland remained a Danish possession

until it gained independence in the early twentieth century. King Christian continued insolvent.

TONI MOUNT



Toni Mount's Sebastian Foxley Medieval Murder Mystery books are set in the stinking streets of medieval London and feature the talented yet humble artist, Sebastian Foxley.



WEALD AND DOWNLAND MUSEUM

Take a unique look at this fascinating
collection of Tudor buildings from the
South East of England
with **Ian Mulcahy**

I first visited the Weald & Downland Museum on a school trip when I was 7 year old back in the early 1980s and have returned several times since, my latest excursion being on an unfortunately changeable (weather wise and, therefore, photograph wise) day in August 2018 with my wife and children in tow. Set in 40 acres of the South Downs National park in Singleton, 5 miles north of the Roman City of Chichester in West Sussex, the museum was established in 1967 by a group of enthusiasts and opened its doors to the public for the first time in September 1970. Perhaps that school trip was the seed of my appreciation of old buildings?

The original aim of the museum was to rescue and preserve historic buildings that were under threat of destruction and at the time of writing there are over 50 historic buildings on the site, ranging from an Anglo-Saxon hall house reconstruction to an Edwardian tin church! For this tour, I will be concentrating

on buildings that were built, or would have been used and lived in, during Tudor times, but it is strongly recommended that anyone who subsequently visits the museum obtains full value for money by spending time at the exhibits from all eras.

On first entering the museum, you will find yourself immediately drawn towards the Market Square area and the first building that you will reach is the **Medieval House from North Cray**, in Kent, with its vivid red timbers which are painted as such on the basis of evidence that this was the colour scheme when the house was originally built in the 15th century. The building is a typical 4 bay Wealden hall house of the time, that is it has a 2 bay central open hall between two storey, single bay, ends.

Originally, heat for warmth and cooking would have been derived from a hearth sited in the middle of the hall, with the smoke simply escaping through a vent in the roof. Sometime



Medieval House from North Cray



in the 16th century it is likely that a partition frame would have been inserted to create a smoke bay, before a brick chimney stack was constructed within the smoke bay during the 17th century. The soot blackened internal timbers of the central halls roof provide evidence of the buildings original ventilation system and it is displayed in its original format. This house was originally dismantled in the



Upper Hall from Crawley

late 1960s in order to proceed with a road widening project and the timbers were stored by the local council with a plan to reassemble them locally, but 10 years later, with no progress having been made, they were donated to Weald & Downland who completed the rebuild in 1984.

Moving along the Market Square, the next building is the **Upper Hall, from Crawley** in West Sussex. Constructed during the 15th century, this building was originally a 'moot' (meeting) hall and stood at the northern end of the High Street behind the extant Tree House, the original Manor House of Crawley and now the local museum. When first built, the hall was five bays long, but by the time it was rescued from demolition it had been reduced to three. These three bays have been restored and the missing bays at either end have been



House extension from Reigate



Medieval Shop from Horsham

reconstructed using modern materials.

The whole building was very nearly lost, along with many other medieval properties in Crawley High Street which were demolished to make way for the shopping precinct of Crawley New Town, because re-fronting had hidden their true age which only became apparent once demolition had commenced. Upper Hall survived because of the lessons previously learned and was subjected to detailed examination once the Commission for the New Towns had decided it was to go. It was dismantled in 1972 and rebuilt at the museum in 1978.

Attached to the rear of Upper Hall is a **House Extension from Reigate**, in Surrey. This dates from the early 17th century and was originally an addition to a medieval house, which the extension outlived, in Reigate High



Street. It was dismantled and brought to the museum in 1981, where it was added to Upper Hall in 1987.

Next to Upper Hall is a **Medieval Shop from Horsham** in West Sussex. Built in the late 1400s, this three storey, double jettied structure originally housed a pair of shops in Butchers Row (now Middle Street). This



Market hall from Titchfield



presents as a typical pair of Tudor shops insofar as not only is there a door for entry, but also a very large window. At night, the window would be protected by a pair of horizontal shutters which, when opened for daytime trading, would provide both a counter



(the lower shutter) and a shelter (the upper shutter). Both shops have a smoke bay at the rear running all the way to the roof where the timbers display heavy sooting, suggesting that open fires were part of daily life in these shops. With the building coming from 'Butchers

Row' this points to the smoking of meats and the baking of pies. Whereas the ground floor is divided into two, the first and second floors are not and access to the upper floors was from within the shop on the right hand side meaning that the left side shop was probably rented out as a single unit or run as a separate entity by another member of the family. Museum volunteers can often be seen in period costume retailing from the windows of the shop, which was dismantled in 1968 and was re-erected in the Market Square in 1985.

Standing in front of the Medieval Shop and Upper Hall is the **Market Hall from Titchfield**, in Hampshire. Although it is thought to have originally been built around 1619, slightly after the end of the Tudor period, I have elected to include it because it completes the street scene of the era and secondly, it is typical of those that were in use during Tudor times.

Markets were operated under a charter

granted by the King and this led to the rise of the market town which would have consisted of a market square surrounded by a cluster of small permanent shops, such as that from Horsham. Within the market square, the local Lord of the Manor would often pay for the erection of a market hall and this, as seen here, would generally consist of an open ground floor 'arcade' where traders could lay out their goods for customers to inspect within a sheltered environment. Above the arcade would be a meeting room where the town governors would meet; effectively the Tudor equivalent of the modern day town hall. The upper chamber was often used as the manorial court too. This particular example also includes an open gallery on the upper floor, from where public notices could be read aloud to market goers and an outside door leading into the stair cavity which would have served as a lock up. It doesn't take too much imagination to picture a market pickpocket or



A house from Walderton

drunkard being locked in here before being led upstairs to the manorial court to learn his fate, which may well have been a few hours in the stocks, conveniently located outside.

The Titchfield Market Hall was originally located in the town's wide medieval High Street, where it saw almost 200 years of service, but its relevance to daily life had decreased by the early years of the 19th century and when the Turnpike Trust wished to repair the highway the building was moved to a site behind what is now The Queens Head Public House, on the western side of the High Street, where it gradually fell into disrepair. By the 1960s it was completely derelict and despite the best efforts of locals to raise money for repairs the local council condemned the building. It was dismantled in 1971 and re-erected at the museum in 1974.

As you leave the Market Square and follow the trail west you will come to the thatched **House from Walderton**, in West Sussex. The exterior of the building is made from flint and brick and was built in the 17th century, but hidden inside is the structure of a 15th century medieval hall house which has undergone many changes during its existence. At the time that the walls were rebuilt, a new upper floor was added along with a large chimney in the centre of the house. In the late 18th century a second chimney was added, adjacent to the existing stack, most likely to facilitate the division of the property into two individual cottages. In the latter part of the 19th century, the eastern half became the village Post Office. By 1930 the western half was uninhabited and by the time the house was dismantled for removal to the museum



Sole Street Medieval House



Bayleaf Farmstead



in 1980, had become derelict with holes rather than windows and corrugated iron instead of thatch, though the eastern half remained maintained as a private residence. The house was reconstructed in 1982 and is said to be quite unique amongst exhibits at the museum in that it is able to demonstrate two phases of building; the 17th century exterior and the 15th century, soot stained interior. Unfortunately I was unable to view this for myself at the time of my most recent visit due a private event taking place inside.

Shortly after passing the early 18th century School House, you will reach **Sole Street Medieval House**. Sole Street is a tiny village some 6 miles south west of Canterbury, in Kent and the house was rescued in 1970 having been deemed to be unfit for human habitation, but it was a further 21 years before it was reassembled in Singleton. This building is historically significant because it had a surviving aisled hall, that is a hall with roof supporting posts rather than one that is completely open. This sort of design is more commonly found in older houses dating back beyond the 13th century, but it is believed that this particular example is from the 15th century, with the cross wing being added in the 16th.

A short way along the trail we come to the farmstead exhibit area, which includes your author's favourite building at the museum, the **Bayleaf Farmstead from Chiddingstone**, a small village some five miles to the east of Tonbridge in Kent. Another typical Wealden Hall House, the hall and service end date back to the early part of the 15th century whilst the solar end was added around 100 years later, most likely as a replacement for an earlier structure which stood in its place. The house is presented as it would have appeared in the middle of the 16th century and has a large

hall, open to the sooted roof timbers, with an open hearth in the middle. The hall was floored over in the late 16th century and a brick chimney stack was added in 1636, but neither of these features have been included in the reconstruction.

Both end bays have upstairs bedrooms and, what we would refer to in modern times as the master bedroom, has a small privy – the en-suite of its time. This consists of a small closet which is built proud of the outside wall and contains a bench with a hole in the middle, on to which the farmer would sit to attend to his night time needs! The waste would simply drop into a cesspit dug out below. On the ground floor, below the master bedroom, is another bedroom and the ground floor of the other end bay contains the buttery and the pantry, essentially the larders of the house. Cooking would have been performed on the open fire in the centre of the hall if the house did not have a detached kitchen. Bayleaf Farmhouse was dismantled in 1968 when the land on which it stood was requisitioned by the East Surrey Water Company to create Bough Beech Reservoir. The building was reconstructed at the museum in 1972.

Behind the farmhouse is the thatched **Barn from Cowfold**, in West Sussex which dates from the late 1530s and was erected in 1988, having been dismantled in 1980.

Often, in 16th century Kent, a house would have a detached kitchen and this has been represented on the Bayleaf Farmstead by the inclusion of **Winkhurst Tudor Kitchen from Sundridge**. Originally sited just half a mile from Bayleaf, this building was also rescued from the creation of Bough Beech Reservoir in 1968 and was erected in 1969 as the museums first exhibit building, though it has subsequently been moved to create the farmstead scene.



A barn from Cowfold



Winkhurst Kitchen



Built in the late 15th or early 16th century this two bay interpretation of a Tudor kitchen would have originally been attached to a much larger house. One bay is open to the roof, where the open hearth is sited, and the 2nd bay has an upper room which would have possibly been used for storing provisions. The kitchen is worked, with Tudor food being prepared on the open hearth and served to visitors by a period attired cook.

Having left the kitchen and passed **Pendean Farmhouse from Midhurst**, an interesting and revolutionary post Tudor



timber framed house from 1609 that was built with a chimney, rather than having it inserted at a later date, we reach the medieval **Hall from Boarhunt**, near Fareham in Hampshire. Seemingly the oldest original building within the museum, this small house dates back to the mid to late 14th century and would have been inhabited by peasant farmers. The house, which was built shortly after the 'Black Death', is single floored throughout with a small central hall containing an open hearth in the centre. There is a screened storage area at one end and a fully enclosed inner room



Pendean Farmhouse



Hall from Boarhunt

at the other, which would have served as the private quarters of the residents. At some point in the buildings history a second floor had been inserted above the hall, which must have been very cramped, and the inner room had been replaced by a much larger, and higher, extension. Because of this, the room in this reconstruction is a recreation based on expert knowledge of what it *would* have looked like. A chimney was also added to the main hall.

The medieval origins of the cottage were not recognised until 1970 by which time it had been derelict for a number of years to the point that only 30% or so of the original timbers were in a useable condition which means much modern material has been used in the reconstruction. The hall was dismantled soon after its significance was discovered and was reassembled in 1981.

As we follow the winding path into the woods, the thatched **Medieval Building from Hangleton**, a lost medieval village nestled just south of Devils Dyke in what is now the City of Brighton & Hove, comes into sight. The decline of Hangleton is thought to have begun when the increase in

population during the latter part of the 13th century became unsustainable due to the poor agricultural quality of the chalky land and this was exacerbated by a succession of poor harvests across the south east of England in the years 1315-1322. When the plague arrived in 1348, up to 60% of the remaining population of the village was wiped out and by 1428 only two households remained. The village was effectively wiped out and all traces of the village are now buried under a modern housing estate, though the church of St Helen's survives.

The house that we are viewing is not an original building, but a reconstruction built in 1971 based on the remains of two similar cottages discovered during an archaeological excavation undertaken between 1952 and 1954, one of which had walls surviving up to a height of three feet. It is thought that the cottages date back to the 13th century, possibly even earlier, and were constructed of flint rubble and mortar in common with many small abodes across the Downs, where flint was easily obtainable. The roof has been straw thatched, but this is based on conjecture brought about



Hangleton Cottage



An Anglo Saxon Hall



Longport Farmhouse

by the lack of any roofing remains on the site of the two cottages on which the reconstruction is based; tiles, either of clay or Horsham stone slates (which were discovered in some of the other remains at Hangleton) would have left their archaeological footprint.

Whilst Hangleton Cottages were abandoned before the start of the Tudor period, I have included the reconstruction as it is inconceivable that similar Downland properties wouldn't have been in use well into the 1600s.

After visiting the **Anglo-Saxon Hall House**, a reconstruction based on evidence from a site in Steyning, West Sussex which dates back to 950, we can gaze down the hill to the Market Square as we make our way along the final part of the trail to **Longport Farmhouse from Newington**, near Folkestone in Kent, tucked away in the far south eastern corner of the site. The farmhouse has been added to over several centuries with the oldest part dating back to 1554; a surviving cross

wing of a large medieval hall house which was demolished in the 18th century. The cross wing walls are constructed of stone at ground floor level, with a timber framed and jettied first floor.

In the early 17th century a new hall was added to the other side of the surviving cross wing, using old medieval timbers, and what was the upper outer wall became an internal dividing wall, complete with jetty! During the 18th and 19th centuries the outside of the house was refaced in brick, hiding all external evidence of the timber framing and jetties. Longport Farmhouse was dismantled by the Canterbury Archaeological Trust in 1992 when Eurotunnel decided that the land it stood on would make a good location for the terminals police station. It was rebuilt at the museum in 1995.

For more information on the Weald & Downland museum, please visit their website <https://www.wealddown.co.uk/>

IAN MULCAHY

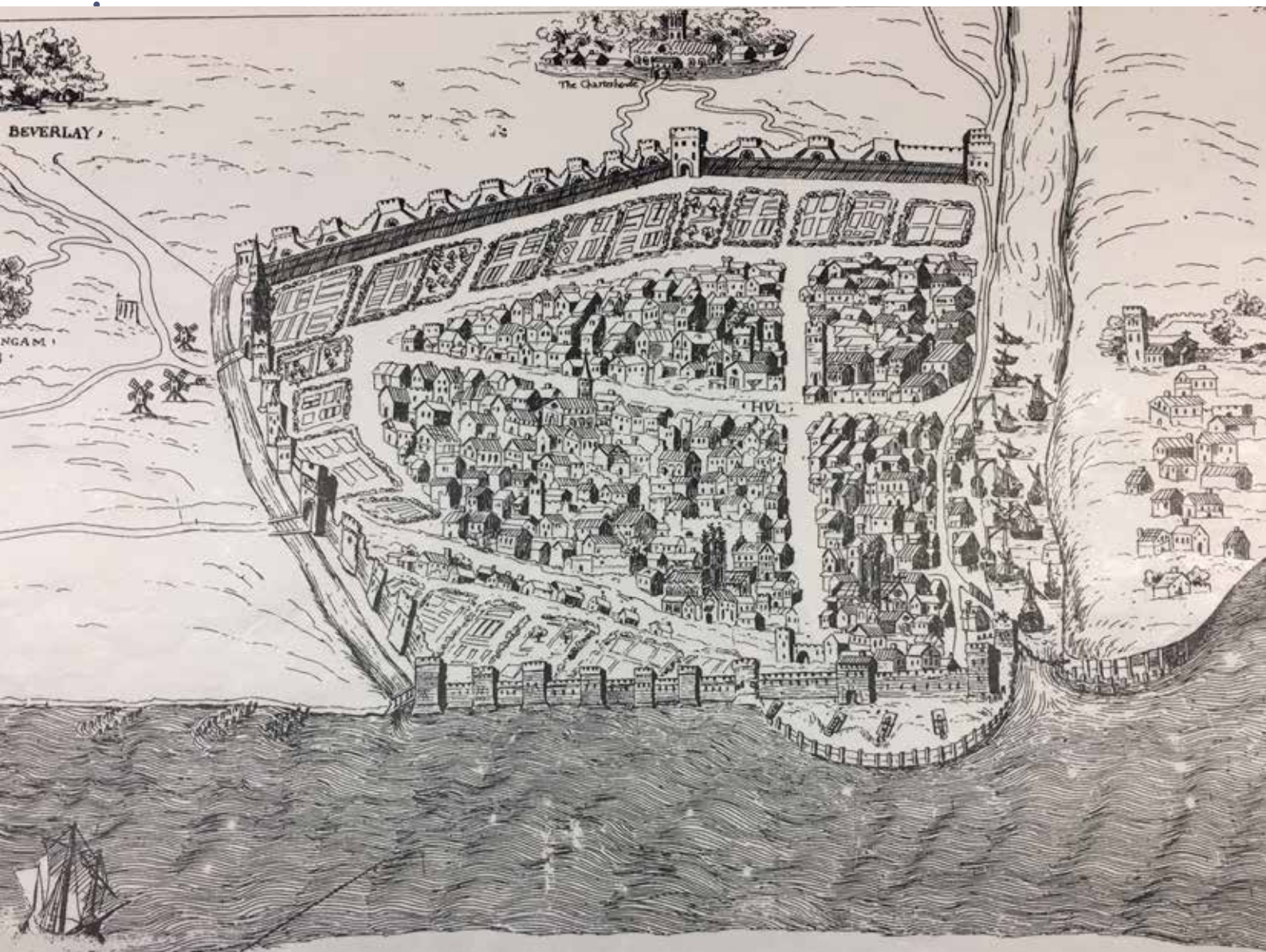


Member Spotlight

A GATE TO TUDOR TIMES

Member Laura Pearson's interest in historical writing is driven by her enthusiasm for Tudor history, which began whilst researching Anne Boleyn. She also has a passion for local history within her home county of Yorkshire; a region of England rich in historic narratives. Here she tells us about Beverley Gate in Kingston-Upon-Hull.

A map of Hull from 1530s; Beverley Gate is the gate near where the windmills are. I think these windmills were burnt down by Stapleton's men when they seized the town. They wanted to burn parts of the town I believe, but Stapleton refused so instead they set fire to the windmills.



Beverley Gate in Kingston-Upon-Hull, East Yorkshire, once the main entrance to the city and famous for being the point at which Charles I was refused entry in 1642, sparked the start of the Civil War. However, this historic landmark has torturous tales to tell from Tudor times.

At 8 o'clock on the morning of Friday 8th July 1537, a 60-year-old man, belonging to the Tudor gentry, was tied to a hurdle and drawn through the streets of Hull. His name was Sir Robert Constable (1478-1537) and he was to be hanged in chains from Beverley Gate; *"I think his boones woll hang there this hundrethe yere."*

Nine months previously Sir Robert's name carried influence throughout the country, particularly in the North of England, as the third leader of the Pilgrimage of Grace, after Robert Aske and Lord Darcy. The Constable's of Flamborough were very much a Catholic family and Sir Robert's belief in the old faith, and the decisions he made in 1536-37, consequently led to his destruction.

When Henry VIII declared himself 'Supreme Head' of the English Church and ordered the suppression of the smaller monasteries, there was uproar and unrest throughout England. The uprising, which started in Lincolnshire and moved into Yorkshire, became known as The Pilgrimage of Grace.

Hull's involvement in this rebellion began in October 1536 when William Stapleton, a Barrister and friend of Robert Aske and Captain of the Beverley Insurgents, was instructed by Aske to take siege on Hull. Hull, at this time, was the most formidable

fortress in the North of England, with some 4300 inhabitants, and the rebels feared that Henry VIII would use Hull's port to move his artillery into the county quickly.

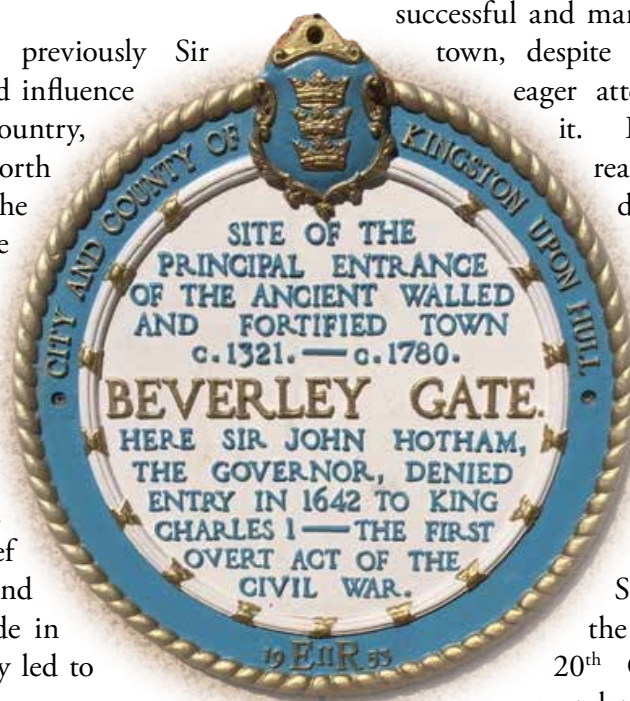
Stapleton's first attempt to besiege the town failed when Sir Ralph Ellerker and Sir John Constable, of Burton Constable (no relation to Sir Robert) would not surrender the town, despite many of the inhabitants being in favour of the insurgents. On his second attempt, Stapleton was successful and managed to infiltrate the

town, despite Sir John Constable's eager attempt to hold on to it. Ellerker meanwhile, realising the town's defences were beaten, surrendered Hull on the condition the King's friends, himself included, could leave the town and county without having to swear to the common oath.

Stapleton agreed to the terms and on Friday 20th October 1536, Hull

was under the possession of the insurgent army. Interestingly, on the same date at Pontefract Castle, Sir Robert Constable, Lord Darcy and other Noblemen were all taking the rebel oath after the castle was surrendered to Robert Aske.

In late October the Duke of Norfolk met with the three leaders at Doncaster and listened to the demands and grievances of the rebels. Promising to present these to the King he, along with delegates of the Pilgrimage of Grace, made their way to London, after securing a truce; thus leaving the insurgents in the North to disband and head back to their homes.





Member Spotlight

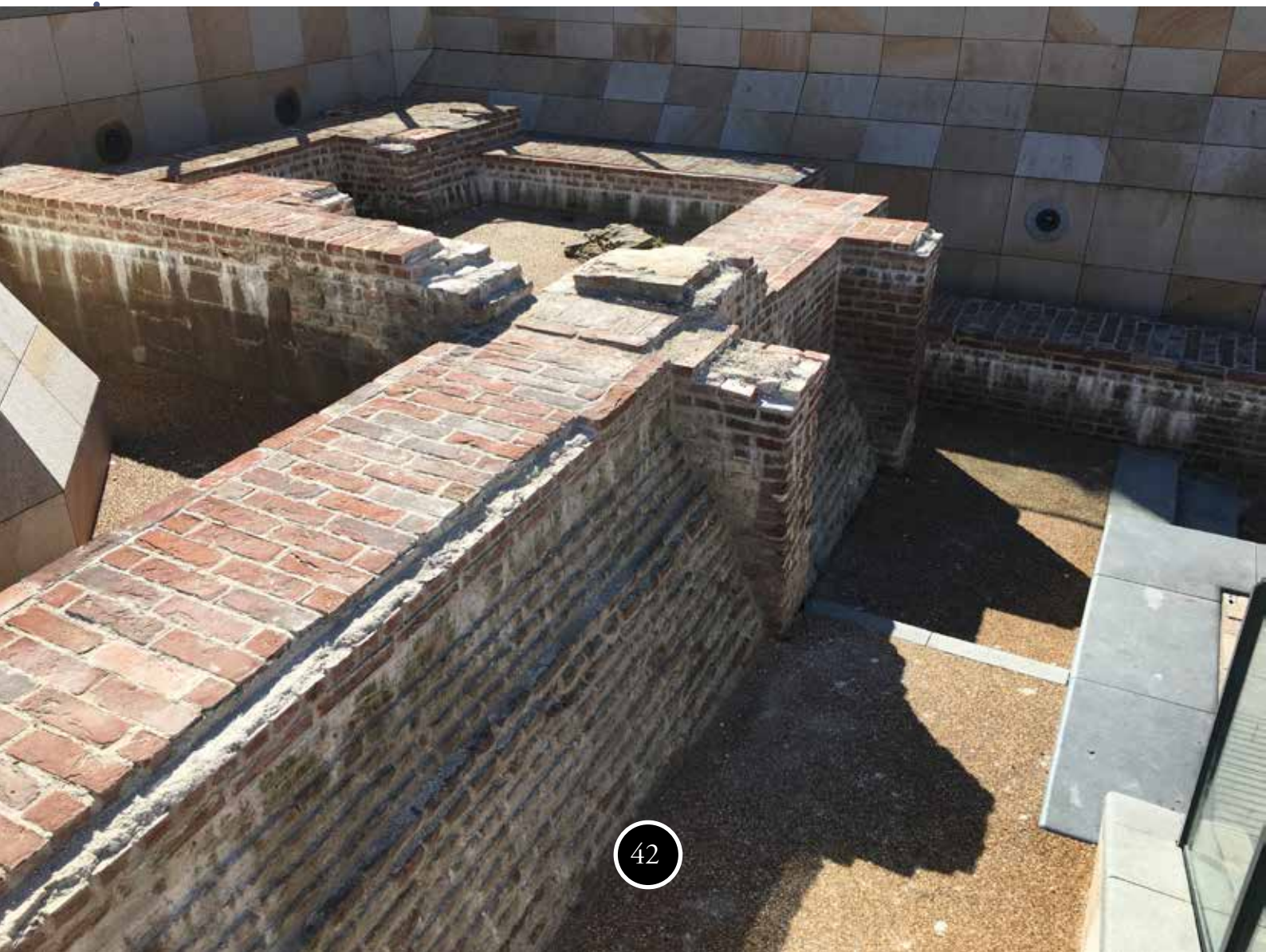
In Hull, Mayor William Rogers regained some of his confidence, along with Mr Alderman Eland and others of the town and seized the Governor John Hallam, who had been placed by Stapleton; turning him and his men out of Hull.

However, this was to be short lived, for in early November Hull was under the insurgents control once more, led this time by Sir Robert Constable (after being made Governor of the town by Robert Aske). With a garrison of 200 soldiers, Constable ordered the harbour to be guarded for fear of ships arriving from Portsmouth and attacking the town.

By early December, due to a deal being agreed and 'promises' from Henry VIII, Hull was back in possession of the monarch once more and the Pilgrims disbanded. The King wasted no time in securing the town and strengthening the fortifications, recognising

the weaknesses on the East side of the river.

Unconvinced by the King's promise of a pardon a second uprising began under the banner of Sir Francis Bigod of Settrington in January 1537. To the people of the commons Bigod spoke: "*Ye are deceived by a colour of a pardon, for it is called a pardon that ye have and it is none but a proclamation.*" Bigod convinced John Hallam and others to besiege Hull and Beverley. Sir Robert Constable, grieved by this, wrote a letter warning his neighbours and friends against joining Bigod's movement. In the letter, dated 16th January 1537, he explains how the King had informed Robert Aske '*that he intendeth we shall have our Parliament at York, frankly and freely,*' and goes on to define his expectations regarding the behaviour of '*good and loving neighbours, let us stay ourselves, and by no means, follow the wilfulness of such as are disposed to spoil and to undo themselves and you both, but to resist them in all that ye may.*'





Member Spotlight



Nevertheless, Hallam attempted a siege on Hull, believing he would have the support of the town. He soon discovered that he was mistaken. Hastily, so as not to be imprisoned, he left through Beverley Gate leaving behind some of his men. Realising his error, he proceeded back to the gate and requested his friends be let out. At this point Hallam was asked his name and upon answering truthfully he was set upon, taken prisoner and later hanged from the gallows outside of Beverley Gate.

Despite Aske, Lord Darcy and Sir Robert's condemnation of Bigod and Hallam's actions, the plot gave Henry VIII an excuse to reverse the promises made at Doncaster; the general pardon granted only a few weeks earlier now acquired a great many exceptions.

Around 200 people were put to death for their part in the rebellion across the North, the three rebel leaders included among them.

The death of Sir Robert Constable is highlighted in a letter from the Duke of

Norfolk to Cromwell, dated July 8th, 1537.

"On Frydaye, being market daye at Hull, Sir Robert Constable suffred, and dothe hang above the highest gate of the towne, so trimmed in cheynes, as this berer can shewe you, and I think his boones woll hang there this hundrethe yere."

The townspeople of Hull however, were granted their pardon in December 1536 followed by a second in July 1537, after the death of Sir Robert Constable. Hull's role in the Pilgrimage of Grace was significant and made Henry VIII recognise the weaknesses in the town's defences leading to the commission of the Blockhouses in 1541. A plaque is placed at the remains of Beverley Gate commemorating its historical importance; but sadly there is no mention of Sir Robert Constable and his harrowing end, nor of The Pilgrimage of Grace.

LAURA PEARSON

Sources:

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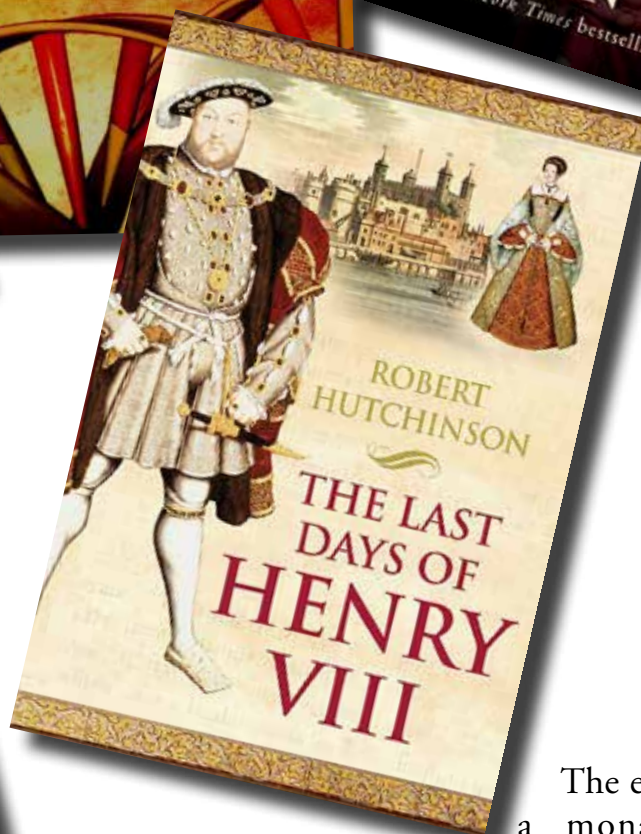
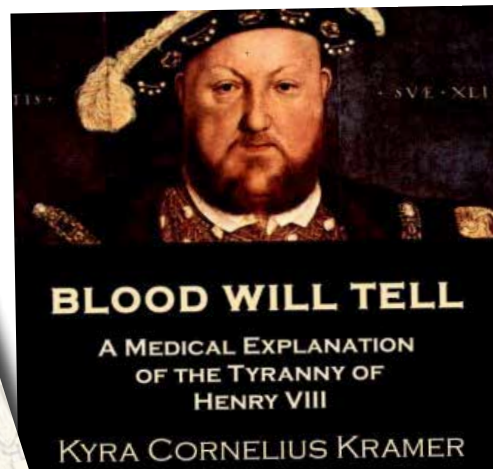
Further Reading:

Hirst, Joseph, (1913, A. Browns and Sons LTD, Hull and London) The Blockhouses of Hull and who went there.

Prescott, H.F.M. (1952, Eyre & Spottiswoode, London) The man on a Donkey, Part 1 and 2

Tudor Life

EDITOR'S PICKS



The extent to which a monarch's health could impact on politics is discussed in detail in Anne Somerset's magisterial biography of Elizabeth I. Theories about Henry VIII's possible ailments come to life in Kyra Kramer's lively "Blood Will Tell" and form the narrative backbone to Robert Hutchinson's "The Last Days of Henry VIII".

For the everyday reality of Tudor health, I would point readers in the direction of Toni Mount's books and articles. She's an expert on Tudor remedies, as she shows in "Medieval Medicine".

In terms of fiction, C. J. Sansom's "Dark Fire" shows the horrific state of mental asylums in Henry VIII's London, while Alison Weir's novel on Jane Seymour dramatises new theories on the poor Queen's final moments.

THE TUDOR SOCIETY



MEMBERS' BULLETIN

Now that summer is here (at least in the northern hemisphere), I'm sure that you'll be taking some time out to indulge yourself in something Tudor. We all love to see things or read things that are related to our favourite historical period. Can we encourage you to share what you're been doing with the rest of the members? We'd love to see your photos of artefacts and items, to read a book review of something you've read, share a visit to a Tudor site or Renaissance fair, hear all about the exhibition you've been to, and to have a review of the museum that you loved.

Remember that the Tudor Society is all about YOU and other members love to read about what other Tudor fans have been up to - you'll make their day!

I'd also like to take a few column inches to thank Debra Bayani for her long service writing for Tudor Life magazine. She has decided that at least for now she will not be able to write more articles. We wish her every success with her work and hope that at some time she'll be back to share more of her knowledge.

Thanks also to Ian Mulcahy for the wonderful article in this magazine - your photos and writing are captivating! Well done!

Tim Ridgway

CATHERINE CAREY AND ALL THINGS TUDOR

This month's 'Interview with...' has Catherine Brooks interviewing her friend, Tudor author, Adrienne Dillard...

We have completed several journeys together, travelling from Tudor locations such as The Tower of London, right though to Disneyworld in Florida! Adrienne particularly has a passion for rehabilitating historical figures that history has not been kind to.

Hello Adrienne! Thank you so much for joining us here at the Tudor Society.

Thank you so much for having me!

Can you start by giving us a bit of background on yourself and how you became interested in Tudor History?

Well, I am a married mom and have one son, Logan, who is nine years old. I live in the beautiful, lush, verdant Willamette Valley in Oregon. We are about an hour from the Pacific Coast, which I absolutely love, because I can go to the beach



pretty much whenever I want! By day, I work as an administrative assistant in a growing financial firm. I've actually taken all the tests to qualify as a financial advisor, but I much prefer working behind the scenes. I have always been interested in history from a very young age. During the early years, I loved reading about the American Revolution (shockingly, I always sided with the Red Coats, LOL), and then I moved on to a fascination with the Titanic. As part of my graduation requirements, I wrote an in-depth Capstone paper on the inconsistencies of her passenger lists. I came to the Tudors quite late in comparison. I always knew about Henry VIII and his wives, but I never gave them much thought. After my step-father died, I was taking my mom to the movies often to get her out of the house, and we decided to see *The Other Boleyn Girl* when it was in the theatre. I kept thinking to myself that it just seemed wrong somehow, but I kind of moved on and didn't think much more about it. A few weeks later, I went to a hypnotherapist to address some health issues I was having and, while I was under, ended up spouting out a story about a woman who was a cousin to Queen Elizabeth I, but kept insisting

An Interview

that she was really her sister. Of course I had to go on the hunt after that! I ended up discovering Catherine Carey and falling in love with the period.

What made you want to start researching and writing?

Well, once I discovered Catherine, I realized that there wasn't much out there about her. She's basically a footnote in most books. I had to dig deep to uncover her story, but I found a wealth of knowledge out there. After a few year's work, my husband told me I should put that knowledge to work by writing a book. I laughed at him at first, but then I started typing...and soon *Cor Rotto* began to take shape.

Why did you choose the figures that you have to write on?

What drew you to them?

Well, as I said earlier, my focus on Catherine happened quite by accident. Once I started reading more about her, I grew to admire her loyalty and strength. More than that, I was fascinated by her marriage to Francis Knollys. His letters to her are raw, heart-rending, and often incredibly sad. It was clear that she was beloved of her family. Jane Boleyn was a different matter. In the course of writing *Cor Rotto*, I stumbled across Julia Fox's wonderful biography on her. At first, I didn't know how I felt about her. I definitely believed she didn't deserve the reputation that has grown up around her, but I wasn't sure of how innocent I thought she might be. I wrote a very small role for her in *Cor Rotto* that was certainly much more sympathetic than she is usually treated, but I don't feel like I was fair to her. That feeling nagged at me until I could bear it no more. I just kept picturing poor Jane in the Tower and it haunted me. While I was recovering from my hysterectomy, I picked up Fox's book again and started to see Jane through a different perspective. I was older and, perhaps, wiser. I had experienced my own bout of PTSD and could no longer have children. I identified with her in many ways, yet I also saw a lot of my mother in her. Obviously, their choices weren't the same, but they both made them in the midst of deep and abiding grief. I knew I owed it to Jane to give her a second chance.

Of course, all historical writers have their own ideas and theories based on what they have researched. What are the general misconceptions you have found when writing about Catherine Carey and Jane Rochford?

To be honest, there aren't many misconceptions out there about Catherine. I don't think she has had enough attention to draw them. Obviously, there is a lot of debate over who her father was, but I think we can, fairly, be in either camp. The evidence is circumstantial and supports either theory, depending upon how

An Interview

you interpret it. Jane is far more beleaguered. I think the root of the issue is her relationship with Anne. The crimes she has been charged with stem from the idea that she acted because of how much she hated Anne; however, the evidence from the primary sources just doesn't support that. If anything, Jane was probably closer to Anne than any of the other women at court. Additionally, Jane seems to always take the blame for Katherine Howard's behaviour. Not only does that assign entirely too much power to Jane, it also strips Katherine of her agency. I don't deny that Jane made mistakes, she made plenty of them. I just believe that many of her actions can be explained by both the power structure of the Tudor court and the mental anguish of stress and trauma.

What's the most important thing for you when you're writing?

It's really important to me that I stick as closely to the truth as possible. Obviously, there will be things that I have to make up...we have no idea of the private thoughts and motivations of most of the Tudor characters (unless they wrote them down of course!), and we don't have word for word conversations... but those flights of fancy should be plausible and true to character. For example, George Boleyn was known to have translated books for both his sister and the king, he was known to have theological debates with the Imperial Ambassador and he was chosen to speak to Convocation. He was an acclaimed poet and musician who clearly valued learning. We don't know for certain what George was doing in those years before he went to court, but I think we can safely assume he was devouring the top-notch education his father was providing.

Opinions on historical novels vary. Most people love them as they can find non-fiction a little dry, but criticism has been levelled at them for presenting themselves as factual and not differentiating between what is known, what is theorised, and what is the author's own feeling or opinion. What are your experiences with this?

Well, let's just say that I often shudder when I read fictional portrayals of Jane Boleyn. I've almost come to the point that I avoid them unless absolutely necessary. I mean, we ARE novelists...we are going to have to make stuff up. That's not always a bad thing. Novels are an excellent platform for humanizing people in a way that straight, factual biographies cannot.

My only caveats:

- ♣ If you make something up, tell the reader. Don't proclaim historical fidelity when you know darn well what you are writing isn't true.
- ♣ Don't accuse people of crimes they did not commit.
- ♣ For the love of God, stop making all the men of the Tudor court rapists.

An Interview

Popular fiction, especially in TV and film, is what attracts a great many people to fiction. Is that more important than complete historical accuracy?

To a degree, it can be. The new Mary Queen of Scots movie is not historically accurate, but I've seen droves of people posting in online Tudor groups that they're now reading the biography it's based on, which is great! I think what sets it apart is the fact that the director of the movie has never claimed that it's accurate. In fact, she's emphatically stated that it's her take on Mary's life and relationship with Elizabeth. So what if she has the two queens meeting? In the realm of artistic license, it's a benign assertion. No one's reputation is injured for no good reason. Personally, I think historical accuracy is preferable, because there will be just as many people out there who don't seek out the truth and take what they see/read as the gospel, but those people are not the creators' responsibility...as long as it's been made clear to them what's true and what's not.

What other authors/historians have you taken inspiration from?

Oh, lots! I grew up reading Amy Tan, an author who is amazing at creating incredible, heart-breaking stories about love and loss, joy and pain. I am also inspired by George R. R. Martin and Suzanne Collins because they have created richly detailed, colourful worlds. Obviously, Julia Fox's take on Jane inspired *The Raven's Widow*! I deeply admire her bravery in challenging the deeply entrenched myths about Jane. More recently, I've been drawn to Nicola Tallis' work on Lettice Knollys. She's definitely challenged my own perspective and I love it! I envy the gorgeous storytelling of Gareth Russell and the unflinching rawness of Mary Beth Keane and I seek to emulate both.

What are the biggest challenges that face history authors when researching?

Location! Location! Location! I want to just hop into my car and spend a few days deep in the archives at Kew, but it's just not possible when you live so far away!

You have made two trips to London now, and we took some great trips! What have been your highlights on each trip? Where would you like to visit when you next come back?

Hever Castle was to die for! Wolf Hall was incredible! I can't even begin to describe my emotions at finally seeing Grey's Court! And, obviously, doing most of those things with you! Next time, I want to go to the Kew Archives, visit Peterborough Cathedral, and stay overnight at Hampton Court Palace.

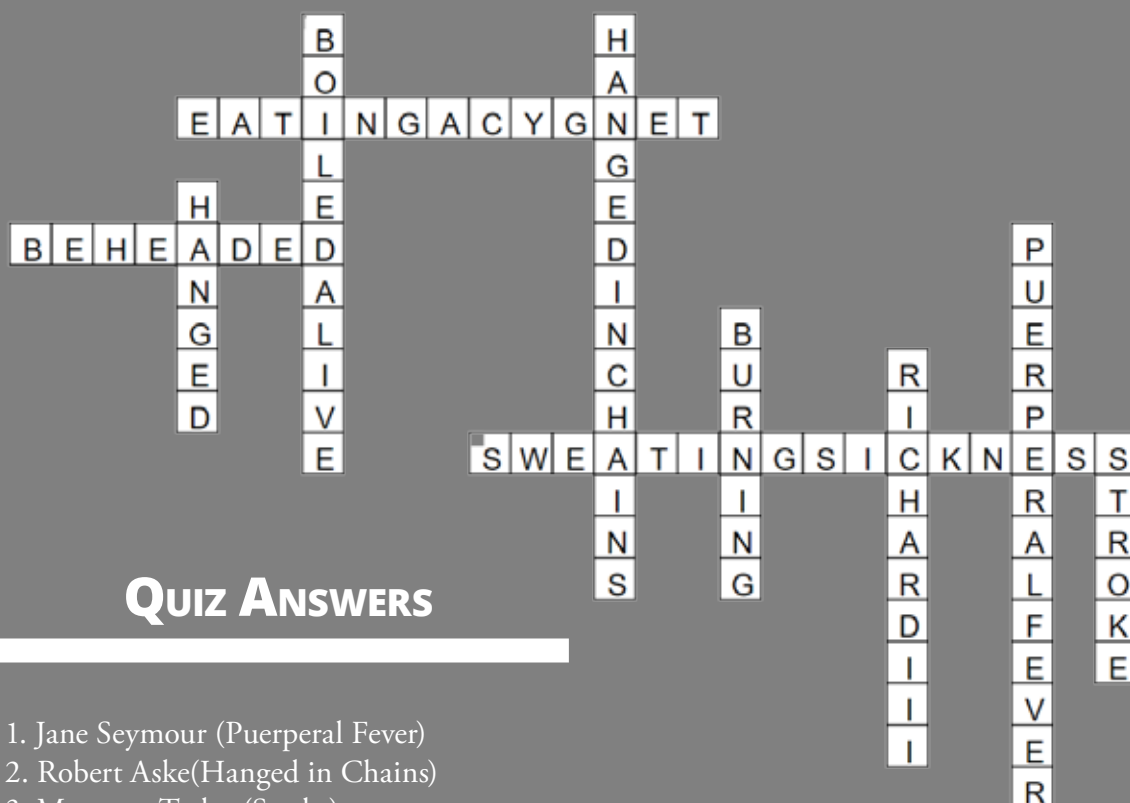
Author Interview

And finally, the question I ask everyone - can you recommend your top three history books?

(These can be fiction or non-fiction, and any era)

- ♣ Jane Boleyn: The True Story of the Infamous Lady Rochford by Julia Fox
- ♣ Fever by Mary Beth Keane (It's a novel about Typhoid Mary)
- ♣ A Night to Remember by Walter Lord

You can find more information on Adrienne by visiting her website www.adrienne-dillard.com, following her on Facebook AdrienneDillard – Author, or on Twitter @ajdillard81



QUIZ ANSWERS

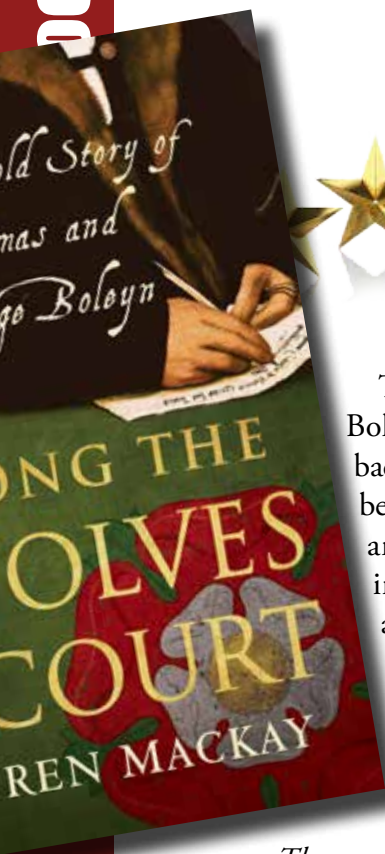
1. Jane Seymour (Puerperal Fever)
2. Robert Aske (Hanged in Chains)
3. Margaret Tudor (Stroke)
4. Sir William Brandon, killed by (Richard III)
5. Thomas Cranmer (Burning)
6. Jane Rochford (Beheaded)
7. Richard Roose (Boiled Alive)
8. The Essex Witches (Hanged)
9. William Carey (Sweating Sickness)
10. Margaret Beaufort (Eating a Cygnet)

Charlie

AMONG THE WOLVES OF COURT

Lauren Mackay

on Books



The male members of the Boleyn family have received some bad press over the years, with them being portrayed in fiction as overly ambitious, abusive (especially in regards to George Boleyn and his wife) and deserving of their downfall. However, this is a myth and one that Lauren Mackay addresses in her new book *Among the Wolves of Court: The Untold Story of Thomas and George Boleyn*.

Mackay's dual biography looks at the lives of the father and brother of Henry VIII's second wife, Anne Boleyn, and shows the two in a new light, as hard-working, family-oriented men.

Mackay starts by looking at the family history, mainly that of Geoffrey Boleyn, Thomas Boleyn's grandfather who became Lord Mayor of London. Thankfully this is only brief, as too many books dwell on information that is only partly relevant to their main subject. There is more information on Thomas in this book than there is on George, as the author admits, because there is more information on Thomas. George's career was only really just starting out before he was executed and Thomas obviously lived longer.

The author does her best to dispel the idea of George and his wife, Jane Parker, having an unhappy relationship. She clearly states that there

is no evidence of that and that they certainly would not have gone into it dreading the marriage, as *'arranged marriages were the norm, and every Boleyn match thus far had been successful, and seemingly emotionally fulfilling'*.

Mackay includes a touching insight into the father and daughter relationship of Thomas and Anne Boleyn:

'What is perhaps most touching, however, is that her first letter - discussed in the first chapter - from a young daughter to her father, has passed down through the centuries, perfectly preserved. He must have kept it safe throughout his life and, considering how few personal letters have withstood the centuries, Thomas cherished the letters from his daughter. He was proud of her accomplishments and proud of her.'

This is a side of Thomas you do not often see, as most either believe the myths of him not caring about his daughters or focus on Anne and ignore him entirely. This letter is well known but this connection has not been made before and seeing it as a treasured letter from a daughter to her father puts a new perspective on their relationship. Once another myth is dispelled, that of Thomas' rise at court being down to his daughters, the real Thomas Boleyn is shown as radically different to his portrayals in fiction.

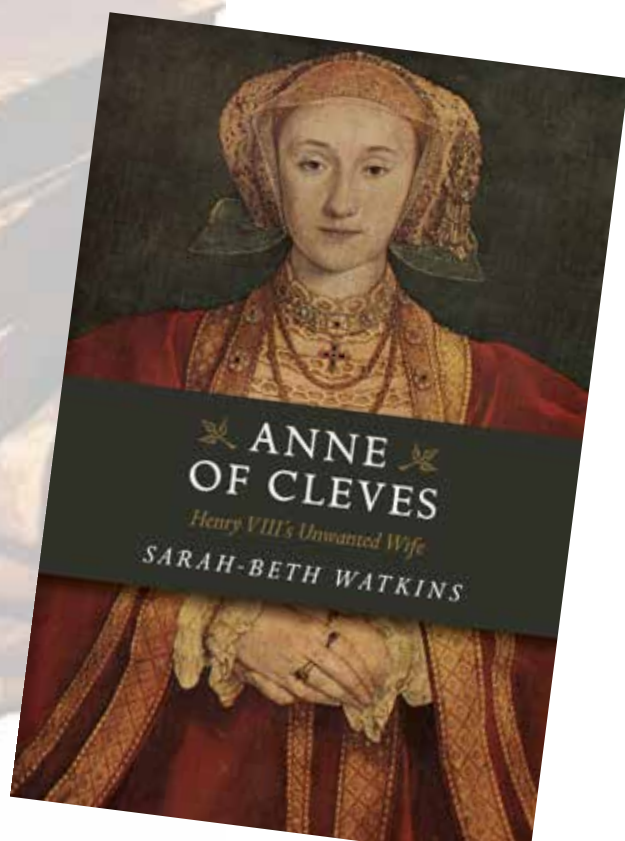
Among the Wolves of Court is the first biography on Thomas Boleyn and one of only a couple on George, making this a must-have for anyone interested in the Boleyn family and the workings of Henry VIII's court. It sets the record straight on the father and son and still manages to be an engaging and enjoyable read.

ANNE OF CLEVES: HENRY VIII'S UNWANTED WIFE

Sarah-Beth Watkins



Out of all of Henry VIII's six wives, Anne of Cleves is probably the most neglected. She was only married to the king for six months and, after that, she lived a fairly quiet life away from court, yet she deserves more attention than she has been given and historians are slowly realising this. One such historian is Sarah-Beth Watkins, who recently released *Anne of Cleves: Henry VIII's Unwanted Wife*. Watkins manages to release a readable biography on Henry VIII's fourth wife, which continues to keep the reader engaged even after she became 'the king's sister' and lived through the reigns of Edward VI and Mary I.



The author addresses one of the most debated issues around the Anne of Cleves match, that being of the Holbein portrait. Many are not sure as to how reliable it was, but Watkins stands by the accuracy of the painting:

'Henry had seen Anne's portrait so seeing his bride in reality should have been no shock. Holbein was known for his lifelike paintings. Even if he had embellished her attributes the painting must have shown a relatively good resemblance. Given what was to follow, Holbein would have been the first to feel Henry's wrath if the picture had been misleading. Admittedly Anne looked different in her German dress and spoke differently in her native tongue but what really irked Henry is that she had embarrassed him in front of his nobles.'

We know that Anne embarrassed Henry after he had met her in disguise, as he liked doing, and that he probably wanted to save face after and so criticised her appearance. As the author points out, Holbein was a reliable artist and he did not suffer from this commission, so the painting must have been fairly accurate.

This book is fairly short, however, all of the author's books are around this length and I think that is the appeal of them. They are short and to the point; not full of padding, information only sort of related to the subject or speculation.

Unfortunately, this book still has the same problem as with all of the author's other books and that is the references. She has clearly researched the subject and her references reflect that, but they are pointless being in the book due to the lack of volume or page numbers.

Despite the problem with the references, *Anne of Cleves: Henry VIII's Unwanted Wife* is still a very good book and one that I would recommend to people wanting to learn more about Henry's fourth wife. It would be the perfect book for beginners, due to its short length and it not straying from the subject too much. This book asserts that Anne wasn't the boring wife and that she still did have a life after Henry VIII left her.

REVIEWS BY CHARLIE FENTON



WENDY J. DUNN
ON WRITING

PERSEVERANCE FURTHERS

My dear Reader-Writer,

Not too long ago, a tweet from another writer at twitter left me more than simply thoughtful. She had been desolated by someone close to her saying her writing was a waste of time and energy. "Why write? No one will ever read your book."

Why write?

I am shaking my head because I can think of so many reasons why I write, and will write until I take my last breath. And if you are passionate about writing – then do it. I say to you, it is true, perseverance furthers. So I tell to you this story.

I really believe we can only seize our authentic lives by embracing our passions and letting them steer our lives. I promise you, doors will open if you keep persevering. They may not be the doors you planned for, but they will be vital doors for the attainment of happiness.

If I had not braved that challenge in my early twenties, I suspect I would be a bitter, and dark soul by now. Rather – walking this road has 'grown' me into the person I am today. A person who is still growing – and will continue to grow whilst I walk this road. until

When I look back on my journey, I am just so grateful I was brave enough to follow my heart.

I did not come from a background which encouraged me to write. As a child of working class parents who were both working at fourteen, my early narrative forced me out of home just after my seventeenth birthday, and before I finished High School. I had

wanted to write since I was eight. I had won my first poetry contest at ten, which gave me tickets to go to my first adult theatre performance. I still remember the thrill of that night, and how excited I was to have a late evening out with my mother.

But it was my early life which set me on this road. My father looked like Henry VIII. He was tall, broad and possessed a Renaissance king's appetite for food. He also had a ferocious temper and a strange, bewildering style of raising children. Dad came from the slums of London. Growing up for him was a constant struggle against adversity. It did not help that he grew up in World War Two. I remember my father telling us how he and his brothers fought over a spare, evening meal when their youngest brother was run over by a bus. Grief wasn't any excuse to waste food.

My father was also a working class snob. While he held the upper class in contempt, my father also believed we could never change the status quo. I suspect his belief was arrived at by a lifetime of knock back after knock back. The tragedy of my father's life was similar to many of his generation. He received few opportunities to fulfil his potential and this left him a damaged and tormented man.

During my growing up years, I learnt the truth of Graham Green's words: An unhappy childhood is a writer's goldmine" (Cited by Goldman, 2000). Believe me, I would wish no one an unhappy childhood, but it does teach you powerful lessons about empathy.

Like many Cockneys, my father was a storyteller; his occasional bedtime story was one of the best

times of my childhood. Until I was nine and he told me I was too old for his stories, his vivid retelling of history and folklore fed my imagination and built the first stones of my writerly self. Through writing and using it to make sense of life, I finally started to understand my father. With all my heart, I believe now my poor, damaged dad, who created a battlefield for a home, wanted his children tough enough to survive the harshness of life.

My father was also a devouring of books, books he brought home from his work as a merchant seaman, which saw him away from home for months. He read these books and then threw them into our spare broom cupboard. The cupboard was my treasure-trove. I grew up reading history, philosophy, the complete works of Shakespeare, politics, classic novels and a few rather naughty books too. Smile – I still have the limerick book on my bookshelf which was part of my sex education as a girl. My love of reading increased my daydreams of a future as a writer.

On my tenth birthday, a friend gave me a child's book of English history. I read the story of Elizabeth I, another unwanted and seemingly unloved daughter. Not long after that, I watched my bearded, scowling father behead one of our chooks for the Sunday roast. That moment, I saw his resemblance to Henry VIII, also good at using an axe to rid himself of people he no longer wanted in his life. It was the moment which would change my life. It was the moment I thought about Elizabeth, and she triumphed over her dark times. If she could do that, then why couldn't I?

The years since has taught me, "The imagination is a fundamental way of thinking, essential means of becoming and remaining human. It is a tool of the mind" (Le Guin, p. 207)

My father "showed me the door" (as he would say) when I was seventeen, and wanted to complete High School and go to university like my older sister. But my sister had showed herself to be a gifted Mathematics student, while I was only good at writing stories.

Seventeen was not a good year for me. My Year Eleven English teacher told me bluntly I would never be a published author. That, and everything going on at home, stopped me aspiring to train as a journalist. When I left home, I found employment as shop assistant. A few months later, I met my husband. I

was eighteen when we married, nineteen when I had our first child. Pregnant with my second, I could not understand the reason for my daily battle with depression. I was so young then I thought I had to give my dreams of writing because I was a wife and mother. What awoke me this half-life was the traumatic birth of my second son. I realized then I had to return to writing to seize hold of my identity.

I applied to a university's early learning scheme and was accepted into their Bachelor of Arts course. That took me to a career in teaching. Wanting to be a Visual Arts Teacher, I decided to add a Graduate Diploma in Visual and Performance Arts to my qualifications. That two-year course plunged me deep into subjects all about the creative process. For my final project, I wrote the first draft of my historical novel, *Dear Heart, How Like You This?*, a novel I had wanted to write since my twenties.

It took another ten-years – years when I learnt about rejection of a work I believed so much in – before an American small press publisher published it in 2002.

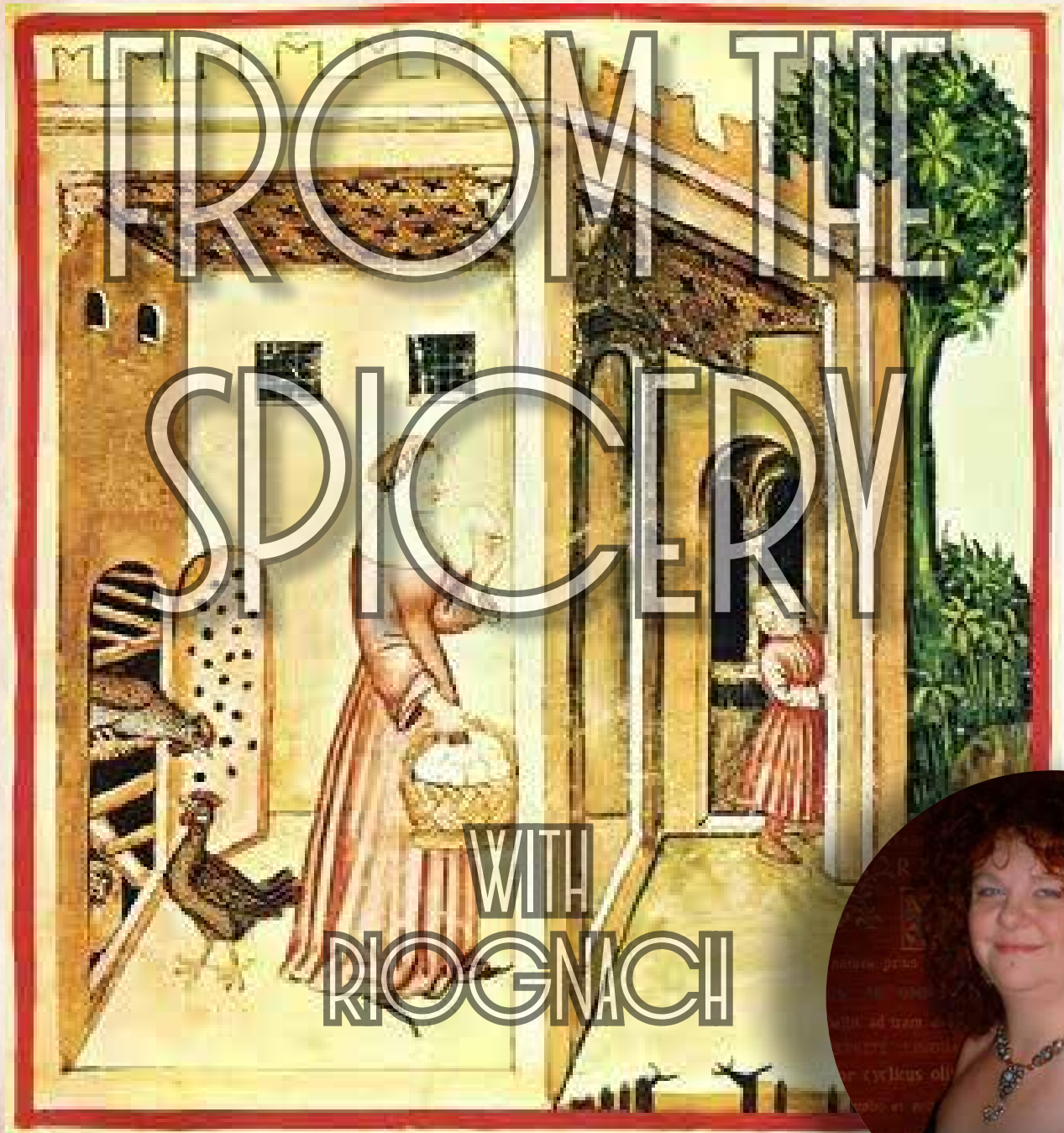
Writing that work led me to completing my Masters in Writing, and then my PhD – which saw me write *The Light in the Labyrinth* (2014), my young adult novel, as my creative artefact. In 2016, I had my third Tudor novel published: *Falling Pomegranate Seeds: The Duty of Daughters*.

In the years since the publication of my first novel to now, there has been set backs. There have been also terrible days when I questioned why I continue walking this road. But I know the best thing to do on those days is to pick myself up, dust myself off and keep on moving forward again. And I do move forward. Sometimes, I am amazed how far how I have come over the years of trials and tribulations. I look down at the view of the years behind me and feel proud I never gave up.

I am not a perfect writer and will never be a perfect writer, but I am committed to the writing craft, and keep growing as a writer. My writerly self is the part of me that's for ever growing. It lights the path to self knowledge and a deepening sense of humility.

My writerly self is my creative core, the agony and ecstasy of my existence - it's what makes me a writer. And I will keep persevering no matter what.

WENDY J DUNN



A SURFEIT OF EGGS

REGARDLESS OF WHICH came first, where would cooks from across the ages be, without the humble egg? Rich or poor, gentry or serf, the modest and unassuming egg was something that all classes of people within Tudor, and indeed all branches of medieval society would have eaten.

There still seems to be a little confusion between what the nobility and commoners ate. While researching this article, I came across a website that categorically states “poor people ate a herb-flavoured soup called *pottage* ... it was made with peas, milk egg yolks, bread crumbs and parsley, and flavoured with ginger and saffron.”¹ If you were so poor that pottage was your daily meal, I hardly think you’d be serving it with saffron and ginger. What do you think?

Many of the surviving medieval recipes for eggs and egg-based dishes include the use of excruciatingly expensive spices such as ginger and saffron, pepper and cinnamon. From the inclusion of these spices, it’s pretty obvious that the majority of these recipes were intended for the kitchens (and thus the tables) of the wealthy. Although I suppose it is not entirely impossible for a peasant to have found some saffron and ginger that ‘fell off the back of a cart’ and found its way into someone’s pottage.

One of the best-known books on medieval cookery is Cindy Renfrow’s *Take A Thousand Eggs or More*.² This book is a treasure trove of medieval recipes from an array of sources, including the Harleian and Ashmole manuscripts. The title of the book is very apt, given the vast number of egg-based recipes that can be found in its pages. In fact, if one wished to, one could eat nothing but eggs, cooked in one way or another, for breakfast, lunch and dinner, if one so chose.

Eggs were a prime source of protein; particularly during Lent and other liturgical days. Such religious days must have been particularly trying times for people used to a diet high in animal-based protein. Let’s face it, there are only so many ways one can prepare fish, so the unassuming egg would have been a welcomed at any table. However, there is continuing debate surrounding eggs on a Lenten menu. Devout Catholics argue that as a product of a chicken, eggs should not be permitted. This leaves the unassuming

1 Barrow, M. *The Tudors-Tudor Food*
<http://primaryhomeworkhelp.co.uk/tudors/food.html>

2 Renfrow, C. *Take A Thousand Eggs or More*, 2003, Royal Fireworks Printing Company.
<https://www.amazon.com/Take-Thousand-Eggs-Cindy-Renfrow/dp/0898249503>

egg in something of an ecclesiastic quandary. However, I'm confident that the rules of Lent could be bent (if not broken) for the right class of person.

There appear to be almost as many recipes for eggs and egg-based dishes as there are existing medieval cookbooks. Some of the recipes I've selected have very poetic and lyrical names, while some appear to bare no resemblance to the dish they represent.

The romantically named *Egges in Moneshyne*³ (aka *Eggs in Moonlight*) involves poaching some eggs in a sweet and scented syrup, so that they look like a dish of full moons. This is a simple dish to make and would be perfect for a medieval-themed Saint Valentine's Day dinner. However, a word of warning: go easy with the rose water as too much will turn the dish sickly.

Water, rose water, and caster sugar are gently heated in a frying pan until the sugar dissolves. The heat is then increased and the eggs are then cracked into the gently simmering syrup. Ideally, the eggs should not touch while poaching, but sometime not everything runs to plan in a kitchen. The eggs are cooked until the whites are firm but not rubbery), and the yolks remain runny. Once cooked, the eggs are carefully transferred onto pretty serving plates, and some of the sweet poaching syrup is spooned over the top. To make the dish look particularly lovely, add one or two candied violets.

The not so attractively named dish, *Pochee*⁴, is an older recipe of poached eggs.

Take Ayrenn and breke hem in scaldyng hoot water. and whan þei bene sode ynowh. take hem up and take zolkes of ayren and rawe mylke and swyng hem togydre, and do þerto powdour gyngur saffroun and salt, set it ouere the fire, and lat it not boile, and take ayrenn isode & cast þe sew onoward. & serue it forth.

Start by taking 12 eggs; 8 for poaching and 4 for sauce. Separate the 4 eggs for the sauce, combining the yolks, milk, ginger and saffron. Place this in a pot over gently simmering water and whisk the sauce until it resembles a thin creme anglais. Once the mixture coats the back of a spoon, remove the pan from the heat and set it aside. In another pan, bring some water and a little vinegar to a gentle boil. Crack each of the poaching eggs into the water and cook until the whites are firm (but not rubbery). Once all the eggs are poached, removed them to a serving dish and smother with the ginger sauce.

The intriguingly named 16th Century dish, *Ghecloven Nonnen*⁵ (or *Split Nuns*) is the ancestor of the 1970s favourite *hors d'oeuvres*, stuffed eggs, although why they're called *Split Nuns*, I have no idea.

3 Anon. *A Proper New Booke of Cookery*, 1575, Publishers W. Howe and A. Veale, London

4 The Forme of Curye, 1390, Recipe XX.III.X
<http://www.gutenberg.org/cache/epub/8102/pg8102-images.html>

5 Muusers, C. March 2002, <https://coquinaria.nl/en/split-nuns/>

This particular recipe comes from the oldest surviving Dutch cookbook, *Een Notabel Boecxken Van Cokeryen* (A Noble Cookery Book), dating from 1514.⁶ I know that this isn't an English cookbook, but who knows, maybe a copy came to England with Holbein the Younger while he was the official court painter of Henry VIII?

To make *Split Nuns*, first boil some eggs; note that the yolks must be hard for this recipe. When cool enough to handle, shell the eggs, and cut each in half lengthways. Remove the yolks, and set the white aside. Mash the yolks together with cinnamon, saffron (first soaked for an hour or so in hot vinegar to give the best colour), ground ginger, finely shredded sage leaves, some chopped fresh parsley, and 1/2 a sour apple that has been grated. Once the filling is well combined, spoon it back into the egg white shells. Next, separate another egg, placing the egg white in a bowl, and whisk it until it becomes frothy. Now for the tricky bit; dredge the stuffed eggs in the frothy egg white, without losing the stuffing. Heat a pan and melt a goodly quantity of butter, and carefully being to cook the eggs, starting with the stuffing-filled side down. Cook until each side is just beginning to colour, remove from

the pan and serve with a sprinkle of cinnamon sugar.

The final egg recipe I have chosen is very simple and comes from *The Forme of Cury*; *Tart in Ymber Day*.⁷

Bring a pot of water to the boil. Peel and quarter some onions (the recipe doesn't stipulate white or brown onions), and boil them for a couple of minutes, before allowing them to drain. Finely chop the cooled boiled onions and combine with chopped fresh parsley, some fresh bread crumbs, several large eggs to bind the mixture, some fresh butter, currants, sugar, salt, some saffron, and some Poudre Douce. Place the mix into a pre-prepared coffin (pie crust) and bake for long enough that both the pastry and the eggs are cooked. When cooked, allow the pie to stand before serving.

The resulting dish tastes like a sweet version of a savoury quiche. If you're used to your quiches being savoury, then your first bite or two of this tart might confuse your tastebuds. Unfortunately, the recipe doesn't specify if the saffron should be soaked before it is used. Poudre Douce is a blend of sweet spices, including cinnamon and mace, blended with fine sugar.

6 Muusers, *ibid*

Rioghnach O'Geraghty

7 The Forme of Cury, 1390, Recipe XX.VIII.V
<http://www.gutenberg.org/cache/epub/8102/pg8102-images.html>

JULY'S "ON THIS"

1 July
1536

Parliament declared that Henry VIII's two daughters, Mary and Elizabeth, were illegitimate. This meant that the King had no legitimate children, just three bastards, so the pressure was now on the King's new wife, Jane Seymour, to provide a legitimate heir, and preferably a male one.

2 July
1536

Thomas Cromwell formally appointed Lord Privy Seal in Thomas Boleyn's place.

3 July
1495

The pretender Perkin Warbeck landed at Deal in Kent with men and ships. Around 150 of his men were killed.

4 July
1550

Appointment of Dr Robert Huick (Hewicke) as Physician Extraordinary to Edward VI by letters patent.

8 July
1553

At Kenninghall, Norfolk, Mary Tudor declared herself Queen.



9 July
1575

Elizabeth I was entertained at Kenilworth Castle by Robert Dudley, Earl of Leicester.

10 July
1559

Accession of Francis II and Mary, Queen of Scots as King and Queen of France.



11 July
1564

The plague hit Stratford-upon-Avon in Warwickshire. The epidemic lasted six months and killed over 200 people, around a fifth of the population. William Shakespeare was born in April of that year, and his family were fortunate in escaping the plague.

15 July
1553

The royal ships guarding the Eastern coast for 'Queen Jane' swapped their allegiance to 'Queen Mary'.

16 July
1546

Anne Askew, John Lascelles, John Adams and Nicholas Belenian were burned at the stake at Smithfield for heresy.

23 July
1563

Death of Cuthbert Vaughan, soldier at Newhaven (actually Le Havre), from the plague.

24 July
1567

Mary, Queen of Scots was forced to abdicate. Her one year old-son, James, became King James VI of Scotland.



17 July
1537

Burning of Janet Douglas, Lady Glamis, on the castle hill at Edinburgh on two counts of treason.

25 July
1577

Death of Nicholas Barham, a victim of the Black Assize (gaol fever), a fever which killed around 300 people.

28 July
1540

Thomas Cromwell, Earl of Essex, was executed by being beheaded on Tower Hill.

29 July
1565

Marriage of Mary, Queen of Scots, and Henry Stuart, Lord Darnley, at Holyrood Palace, Edinburgh.

30 July
1553

Princess Elizabeth left her new home, Somerset House, to ride to Wanstead and greet her half-sister, Mary, England's new queen. Somerset House was built by Edward Seymour between 1547-1550.

31 July
1544

Elizabeth wrote her earliest surviving letter, ending "Your most obedient daughter, and most faithful servant, Elizabeth"

DAY IN TUDOR HISTORY

Philip II of Spain by Titian c 1549



5 July
1589

Hanging of Joan Cunny (Cony), one of the 'Essex Witches', at Chelmsford.

6 July
1535

Execution of Sir Thomas More, Henry VIII's former friend and Lord Chancellor, for high treason.

7 July
1553

Goldsmith Robert Reynolds informed Mary (future Mary I) of Edward VI's death.

12 July
1543

King Henry VIII married his sixth and final wife, Catherine Parr, in the Queen's Closet at Hampton Court Palace.

13 July
1551

Death of Sir John Wallop, soldier and diplomat, at Guînes from sweating sickness.

14 July
1544

Henry VIII landed at Calais in preparation for the Siege of Boulogne, which began five days later.

18 July
1565

Death of Katherine Ashley, known as Kat. She served as Elizabeth I's governess.

19 July
1553

Thirteen days after the death of her half-brother, Edward VI, Mary was proclaimed Queen in place of Queen Jane. 

20 July
1554

Philip of Spain arrived in England, at Southampton, in readiness for his marriage to Mary I.

21 July
1553

Arrest of John Dudley, Duke of Northumberland for placing his daughter-in-law, Lady Jane Grey, on the throne.

22 July
1536

Henry Fitzroy, Duke of Richmond and Somerset, died at St James's Palace.

26 July
1588

4,000 men assembled at Tilbury Fort, the fort built on the Thames estuary in Essex by Elizabeth's father, Henry VIII. Robert Dudley, Earl of Leicester, who had been appointed Lieutenant and Captain General of the Queen's Armies and Companies, was gathering troops at Tilbury Fort in anticipation of a Spanish attack.

27 July
1534

Murder of John Alen, Archbishop of Dublin, in Artane. He was buried in a pauper's grave.

TUDOR FEAST DAYS

2 July - Visitation of the Virgin

15 July - St Swithin's Day

20 July - St Margaret's Day

22 July St Mary Magdelene's Day

25 July - Feast of St Christopher

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The final approach to the
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The Scottish Invasion of 1514

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