

Tudor Life

The Tudor Society Magazine

THE
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SOCIETY

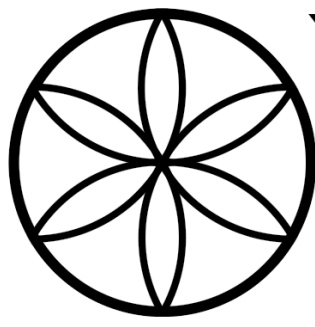
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THE TUDOR SCANDAL ISSUE

Illegitimate Births, Suspicious Deaths, Murders, Secret Affairs



PLUS - TUDOR APHRODISIACS



Tudor & Stuart Witchcraft & Medicine

in association with

THE
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18th to 23rd October 2020 - Spaces Available

The Tudor and Stuart periods were fascinating times, where medicine, science, astrology, religion and superstition were all inextricably linked. It was also a dangerous time for women on the edge of society, where an accusation of witchcraft could lead to a brutal death, and where witchfinders actively looked for such women.

If you are intrigued by the beliefs and superstitions held by people in Tudor and Stuart England and are not put off by the odd ghost story, then you will love this tour!

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SCANDALS

SCANDAL SHOT through the Tudor monarchy, shaking it frequently although never, ultimately, toppling it. When asked about what it is that attracts us to the Tudor era, many enthusiasts and experts often point to the larger-than-life episodes that continue to enthrall us. The downfall of Anne Boleyn, the pretenders against Henry VII, the love life of Henry VIII, the murder of Lord Darnley, and the death of Amy Dudley are mesmerizingly improbable events, the debates inspired by them continue to entice so many of us back, time and again, to the sixteenth century.

GARETH RUSSELL
EDITOR

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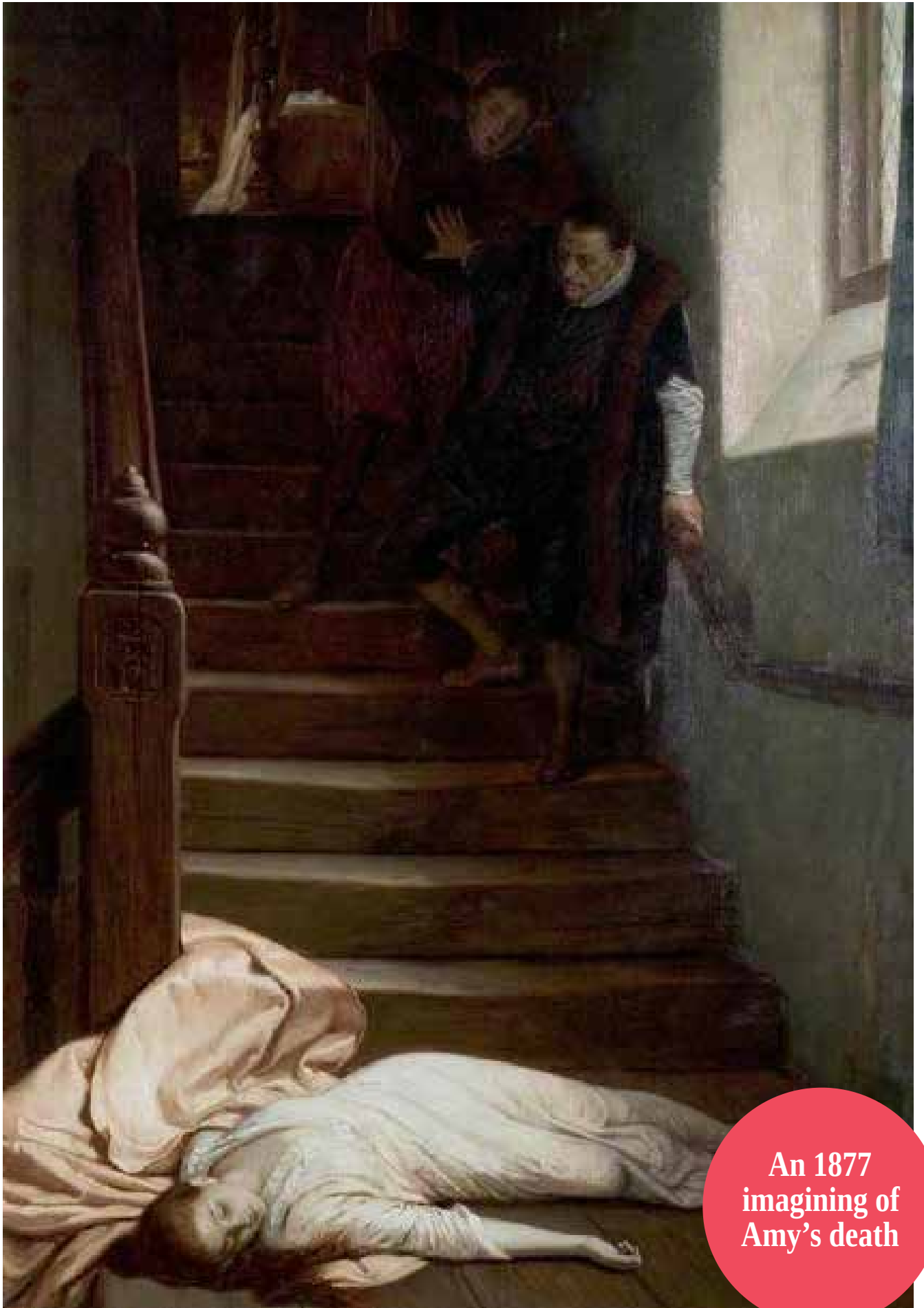
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An 1877
imagining of
Amy's death



THE DEATH OF AMY ROBSART

Amy Robsart, the wife of Robert Dudley, Queen Elizabeth I's favourite, was found dead at Cumnor Place on 8 September 1560. She had insisted that her servants and the other occupants that shared the house with her should all go out for the day to Abingdon Fair. Just one old lady Mrs Owens stayed to have dinner with her. When the others returned from the fair they found Amy dead after falling down the stairs and breaking her neck.

Rumours had surrounded Amy's marriage to Dudley and there was much debate about how much her husband actually cared for her. It was plain to all that his affections lay with his queen. Slanderous ambassador report's suggested that Dudley wanted to do away with his wife, to poison her, so he could marry Elizabeth. His relationship with the queen was too intimate. How close they became we will never know but Elizabeth made sure Dudley was in constant attendance at court and even gave him apartments next to hers. It did not help that she refused to take a husband for herself. The Spanish ambassador wrote 'it is generally stated that it is

his (Dudley's) fault that the Queen does not marry'.

When Amy died, Dudley was insistent that an inquest be held. He was anxious to know what had befallen his wife telling his man Blount he could not be 'in quiet' until he heard. He definitely thought that Amy might have been the victim of a crime. He wanted the jury convened to ascertain if it were chance or misfortune and if it appeared to be 'villiany (as God forbid so mischievous or wicked a body should live) then to find it so'. The jury would come to rule it had been an accident although many believed otherwise.

The actual coroner's report was not found until 2008 and it added more

mystery to Amy's death as for the first time it was realised that not only was her neck broken but she had two head wounds 'one of which was a quarter of an inch deep and the other two inches deep'. So what could have happened to poor Amy?

Was it an Accident

She tripped and fell – it's as simple as that.

The stairs she fell down were made of stone. She hit her head twice as she was going down and landed awkwardly breaking her neck. A short fall on stone steps can be fatal but those wounds are harder to explain. The coroner's report called them 'dyntes'

– a term more commonly used for wounds caused by violence and one of them was exceptionally deep.

In 1956 an eminent professor Ian Aird investigated how her neck could have broken from such a fall leaving her hood untouched as was reported. The Spanish ambassador had also written that she had a malady in her breast and Aird suggested that if Amy had breast cancer and cancerous deposits had built up on her spine, it could have weakened it sufficiently to break far more easily.

But – why did she want to be alone that day?

Was it Suicide?

She was of a 'strange mind' and sent her servants out for the day so she could kill herself.

Amy had been living an unsettled life. She did not have a home to call her own and no children to fill her days. Instead she lodged in a succession of houses and was visited by her husband infrequently. Dudley was always with the queen and their flirtation must have been a sore point for her.

When her maid Mrs Picto was questioned by Dudley's man Blount after Amy's death she said that her mistress 'was a good virtuous gentlewoman, and daily would pray upon her knees; and divers times she saith that she had heard (Amy) pray to God to deliver her from desperation'. Blount pressed her – did Amy have an 'evil toy' in her mind? Mrs Picto anxiously replied 'No, good Mr Blount ... do not judge so of my words; if you should so gather, I am sorry I said so much'.

Sir Nicholas Throckmorton, the English ambassador in France, wrote to Sir Thomas

Chamberlain:

My friends advise me from home that Lord Robert's wife is dead and hath by mischance broken her neck herself

He then crossed out 'herself' and inserted 'own' so it read 'hath by mischance broken her own neck'.

So there were certainly people who suspected that Amy had taken her own life. However, if she wanted to commit suicide, throwing herself down the stairs was not a fool proof way to do it and could have left her with severe injuries instead. We will never know what truly went on in her mind but suicide seems unlikely as Amy was devoutly religious and in the sixteenth century to take one's own life was not only a mortal sin but a crime as well.

Amy had even ordered a new dress to be made and she wanted it quickly. Had she planned to wear it on that fateful day?

Was it Murder?

She was secretly meeting her own assassin.

Amy had made sure she had the house to herself. It has led many to question whether she had arranged a secret meeting. Could it have been a lover's tryst gone wrong? It seems unlikely that Amy would have had any chance to meet a lover as she constantly moved from home to home nor would she have taken the risk.

If her husband had been coming on one of his rare visits she would have told the household to make preparations as she had done before. Dudley did not visit without sending ahead food and cooks and making it a grand occasion. Anyway he was at court at the time and could not have murdered his wife although he could have arranged for someone else to do it. The question is

always of motive. What did Dudley gain by his wife's death? His infatuation with the queen gave him hope that she would one day marry him but the way in which Amy died would make sure that that was never going to happen.

Who else could have wanted Amy dead? Elizabeth herself at that time may have entertained the thought of marrying her favourite. She had motive and means but again the way in which Amy died caused such a scandal it made sure that the country would have been up in arms if she had dared to marry her Master of the Horse.

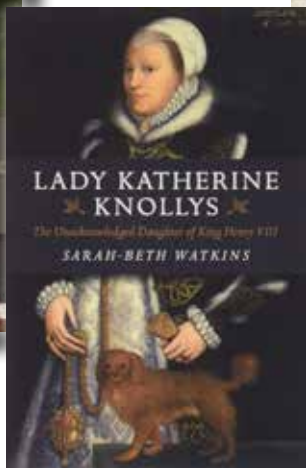
Dudley definitely had his enemies. Thomas Howard, 4th duke of Norfolk, detested him as did the earl of Arundel to name just two. These were both powerful men who hated Dudley's closeness to the queen and his rise at court. They feared what would happen should he become king consort but there was one man who feared that outcome more than anyone else.

William Cecil, Elizabeth's chief advisor, had purposely given the Spanish ambassador, de Quadra, reason to suspect Dudley of planning his wife's death when

he told him that the queen and her favourite 'were thinking of destroying Lord Robert's wife. They had given out that she was ill; but she was not ill at all, she was very well, and taking care not to be poisoned'.

Was Cecil really trying to make sure that when Amy died the scandal was so great that Dudley could never marry the queen? Cecil had strived for so long to get Elizabeth to marry for the good of the country and the succession of the monarchy. He was definitely frustrated with his mistress. He had left Elizabeth to travel north that summer to build an alliance with the Scots. The negotiations had gone well but on his return Elizabeth was dismissive of his work and he could plainly see how much more intimate she and Dudley had become. Cecil was afraid that if Dudley got his way and became the queen's consort, Elizabeth would no longer need her faithful secretary and the country would go to ruin. But now, with Amy's death, both the queen and Dudley needed him more than ever and the way in which she died would ensure Dudley would never become king.

SARAH-BETH WATKINS





THOMAS SEYMOUR AND THE YOUNG ELIZABETH I

by Claire Ridgway

Queen Elizabeth I, the Virgin Queen and Gloriana, was no stranger to scandal, rumour and intrigue, but scandal first surrounded her when she was just thirteen.

ELIZABETH'S FATHER, King Henry VIII, had married Catherine Parr, Lady Latimer, in July 1543, making her Elizabeth's fourth stepmother. Although Elizabeth was residing in her own household away from court, she visited court regularly and became close to Catherine. Unfortunately, this relationship would be tested in 1548 by a man, Catherine's fourth husband, Thomas Seymour, Baron Seymour of Sudeley.

On 28th January 1547, King Henry VIII died, leaving the throne to Elizabeth's nine-year-old half-brother. Just under a month later, on 26th February 1547, the new king's uncle, Thomas Seymour, who was about thirty-eight at the time, wrote to thirteen-year-old Elizabeth, expressing his wish to marry her:

"I have so much respect for you my Princess, that I dare not tell you of the fire which consumes me, and

the impatience with which I yearn to show you my devotion. If it is my good fortune to inspire in you feelings of kindness, and you will consent to a marriage you may assure yourself of having made the happiness of a man who will adore you till death."

Elizabeth replied the next day, but it was not the "yes" that Seymour desired, although it wasn't a definite "no" either. Elizabeth explained that she was too young to consider matrimony at that time and that she was still mourning for her father. She wanted two years to mourn her father properly and to enjoy her maiden-state. But, Seymour wasn't willing to wait. His brother, Edward Seymour, had just taken control of government as Lord Protector and Thomas wanted some power. So, he turned his attention to Elizabeth's stepmother, Catherine, a woman he'd been involved with before her marriage to the king. The couple

married in secret on 3rd March 1547, just over a month after Catherine's late husband's death. If he couldn't marry the king's sister, then the queen dowager would do.

Catherine appears to have been very much in love with Thomas Seymour. When King Henry VIII's eyes had settled on her in 1543, she'd sacrificed her relationship with Thomas, believing that God wanted her to marry the king, but now she could finally marry her true love. Her happiness was to be marred though by her husband's disturbing behaviour.

At around the same time as Thomas and Catherine got married, Elizabeth went to live with Catherine. Of course, as soon as their marriage became public knowledge, Thomas moved in with Catherine, living with her and her household, which included Elizabeth, at Chelsea and Hanworth. Now, Thomas Seymour seems to have been a dashing, good-looking, charming man who had a way with the ladies. His wife was in love with him, Elizabeth's governess and companion, Katherine Ashley, seems to have been rather taken with him, and Elizabeth would choose to dance with him and then, according to later testimony, "laugh and pale at it", going all shy and bashful. But things didn't stop at dancing and blushing, things became what we'd term as sexual abuse today, and it was certainly behaviour that caused concern among Elizabeth's servants.

What we know about Elizabeth, Seymour and Catherine Parr in 1547

and 1548 comes from the testimonies of Katherine Ashley, Thomas Parry, who served as Elizabeth's cofferer, and John Harington, a man who served Seymour. The three of them were questioned in 1549 at Thomas Seymour's fall, regarding Seymour's plans to marry Elizabeth. Harington stated that Katherine Ashley had told him how Seymour visited Elizabeth's chamber without the queen present and that when Harington had approached Seymour about this claim, Seymour had told him that it was all Ashley's "device", i.e. her idea. Thomas Parry told his interrogators that Ashley had informed him that Seymour loved Elizabeth and that Catherine Parr had been jealous of the two of them and "came suddenly upon them, where they were all alone, he having her in his arms) wherefore the Queen fell out, both with the Lord Admiral, and with her Grace also."

Katherine Ashley gave the Crown lots more details, explaining how Seymour would enter Elizabeth's chamber early in the morning before the girl was ready and sometimes while she was still in bed. Ashley described how "he would bid her good morrow, and ask how she did, and strike her upon the back or on the buttocks familiarly", how he'd pull back the bed curtains "and make as though he would come at her: And she would go further in the bed, so that he could not come at her." One morning, he also tried to kiss Elizabeth in bed, and another morning his wife came with him, and

they both tickled Elizabeth in bed. Ashley told of how, when Elizabeth heard the lock undo, that the girl would run from her bed to be with her maidens so that Seymour couldn't do anything, and that sometimes he would come to Elizabeth's chamber "in his night-gown, barelegged in his slippers" but find her up and reading. Ashley explained that she had reprimanded Seymour for his inappropriate behaviour. Ashley also gave details of a strange episode at Hanworth when in the garden, Catherine Parr held Elizabeth while Seymour "cut her gown in a hundred pieces". What was Catherine thinking? It's hard to say, perhaps she saw it as harmless horseplay, or wanted to see it that way.

After the pregnant Catherine Parr found her stepdaughter in an embrace with Seymour, in June 1548, she finally took action and the following day Elizabeth left the household and went to Cheshunt, to the home of Sir Anthony Denny and his wife, Joan, who was Katherine Ashley's sister, while Catherine Parr and her household moved to Seymour's home, Sudeley Castle in the Cotswolds. Catherine and Elizabeth never saw each other again. Catherine prepared for the birth of her first child and Elizabeth suffered an awful summer of ill-health, being afflicted with migraines, irregular menstrual periods, digestive problems, jaundice, and anxiety attacks. Of course, this summer of ill-health and Elizabeth being out of the public eye at Cheshunt, led to rumours that

she was pregnant with Seymour's baby. In January 1549, Elizabeth wrote to Thomas Seymour's brother, Edward Seymour, Lord Protector, regarding Seymour's plot to marry her and in the letter she addressed the rumours that she was pregnant with Seymour's child:

"Master Tyrwhit and others have told me there goeth rumours abroad which be greatly both against mine honour and honesty, which above all other things I esteem, which be these: That I am in the Tower and with child by my Lord Admiral. My Lord, these are shameful slanders."

She also offered to go to court and to show herself to the Lord Protector and the council.

There is no evidence at all that Elizabeth was pregnant, or that things had gone that far with Seymour, but perhaps her ill-health that summer was down to the stress of the situation and the trouble it had caused between Elizabeth and her beloved stepmother. Catherine died in September 1548, and that must have been heartbreaking for Elizabeth. They'd been so close, but Seymour's behaviour had caused a breach in their relationship and separated the two of them. At least they had been able to correspond by letter during Elizabeth's absence.

I think it's safe to say that Thomas Seymour's behaviour was that of an abuser. Although Elizabeth wasn't a child by Tudor standards and was

of marriageable age, Seymour's behaviour was predatory. This girl was his wife's stepdaughter, and he was in a position of trust and authority. Seymour took advantage of his position in the household and his access to Elizabeth, using the key to her chambers and entering at wildly inappropriate times. He visited her bedroom in a state of undress at a time when she would be in bed, and then got into bed with her, tickling her and touching her back and buttocks. It was behaviour that was clearly unwanted, and that terrified Elizabeth. It was also behaviour that caused concern amongst the household. Even with a 16th-century mindset, this behaviour was wrong.

Thomas Seymour came to a sticky end. Following his wife's death, he began a campaign to undermine his brother, Lord Protector Somerset, and to loosen his hold on their nephew, Edward VI. On 16th January 1549, it was reported that Seymour had broken into Edward VI's apartments

at Hampton Court Palace in an attempt to kidnap the king, shooting his dog in the process. Seymour was arrested, taken to the Tower and accused of trying to kidnap the king, plotting to marry Elizabeth, and attempting to put her on the throne. He was accused of thirty-three separate accounts of treason. On 25th February 1549, a bill of attainder was introduced into Parliament, and lawyers argued that Seymour's offences "were in the compass of High Treason". The bill was passed on 5th March 1549 and Seymour was executed on Tower Hill on 20th March 1549. His good friend and servant, John Harington, wrote that "His blood was spilt, guiltless, without just cause". Perhaps he was innocent of some of the charges against him, but he had treated his wife and her stepdaughter abominably.

It is hard to know what effect the events of that spring and summer had on Elizabeth, but I'm sure the memories stayed with her for the rest of her life.

CLAIRE RIDGWAY

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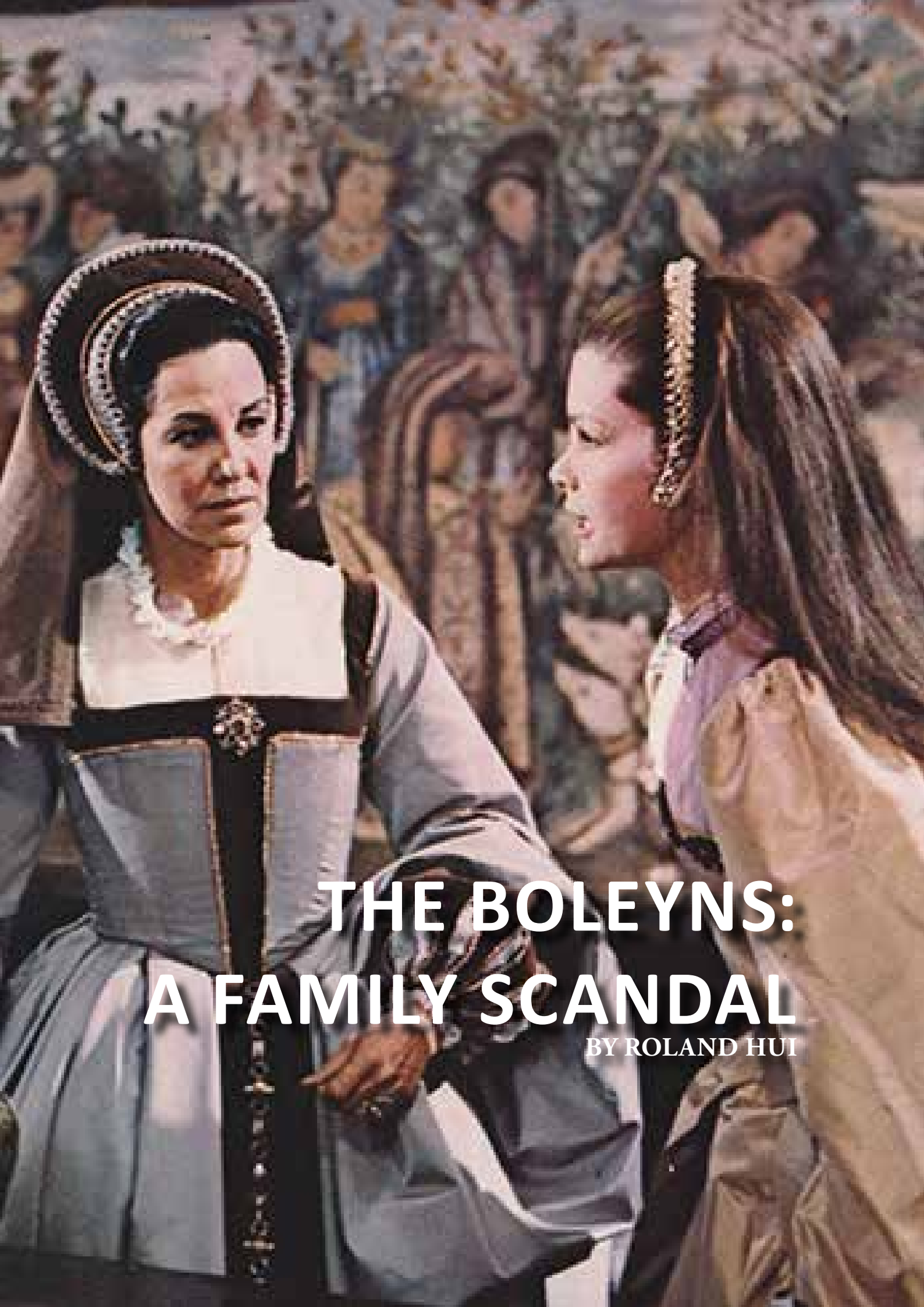


November's Guest
speaker is
Gayle Hulme

on

The Places of Mary,
Queen of Scots





THE BOLEYNs: A FAMILY SCANDAL

BY ROLAND HUI

SHE WAS CALLED 'THE SCANDAL OF CHRISTENDOM'.¹

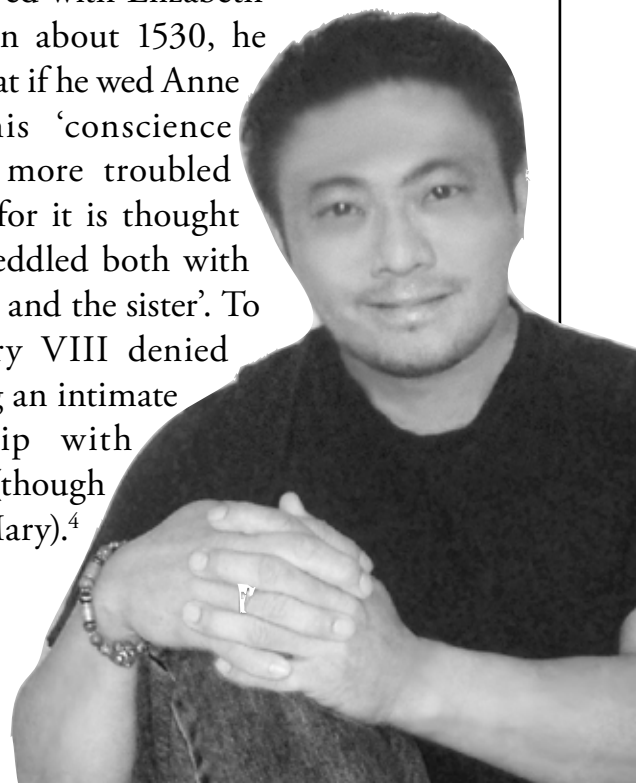
For breaking up the marriage of King Henry VIII to his beloved wife Katherine of Aragon, and for tearing the Church of England from that of Rome - as her enemies accused her of - Anne Boleyn has been vilified to the extreme. Centuries after her death, she still remains a controversial figure. Some still see her as a home-wrecker who destroyed a once happy family, as an adventuress who used religion to further her selfish means, and even as a witch-like figure who cast a malevolent shadow over the English court.²

Not only was Anne Boleyn herself libelled during her lifetime, but so was her family - her father Sir Thomas Boleyn, her mother Elizabeth Howard, and her two siblings George and Mary. As such a figure of notoriety, it was not surprising that the other Boleyns received their share of opprobrium as well.

One of the greatest scandals involving the Boleyns - one that surfaced later in the reign of Elizabeth I - concerned the very parentage of Anne. Rather than being the daughter of Sir Thomas and his wife Elizabeth - she was the result of adultery. According to the English Catholic writer Nicholas Sander who bore a great hatred towards his contemporary Queen Elizabeth, her grandfather Thomas Boleyn was *not* the father of her mother Anne. Incredibly, it was Henry VIII! As Sander believed it, 'she could not have been the daughter of Sir Thomas, for she was born during his absence of two years in France on the King's affairs'.³ As his wife Elizabeth then confessed to him, while

he was away, she had been sexually seduced, and 'the child Anne was the daughter of no other than Henry VIII'. When a distraught Thomas later learned of the King's infatuation with Anne, and revealed the terrible truth to him, Henry was so head over heels in love that he did not care that he was sleeping with his own offspring. Though this story was related decades later, even in Henry VIII's own time, there was talk that he had been involved with Elizabeth Howard. In about 1530, he was told that if he wed Anne Boleyn, his 'conscience would be more troubled at length, for it is thought ye have meddled both with the mother and the sister'. To this, Henry VIII denied ever having an intimate relationship with Elizabeth (though not with Mary).⁴

LEFT: Anne Boleyn (Genevieve Bujold) with her mother Elizabeth Howard (Katharine Blake) from the film 'Anne of the Thousand Days'.



As the child of an adulterous union, Anne Boleyn herself was equally immoral said Sander. At the age of fifteen, he claimed that 'she sinned first with her father's butler, and then with his chaplain'.⁵ For this she was sent away to France (not for her education as history tells us) but in disgrace, only to become even more unruly. There, she was called 'the English mare' and the 'royal mule' because of her 'shameless behaviour' with King Francis.⁶

But of course Anne's greatest notoriety was in her affair with Henry VIII. For this, many women especially hated Anne. If the King of England could discard his wife, who can say that their own husbands would not do the same with them? In the autumn of 1531, an incredible report was made that 'a mob of from seven to eight thousand women of London' had intended to seize and kill the King's mistress as she was dining at a house on the Thames. Luckily, Anne was warned of their coming and managed to escape by boat.⁷

Many men too were put off by Anne Boleyn. It was said that within the rabble that attempted to murder her, there 'were many men, disguised as women'.⁸ Individuals such as Eustace Chapuys, the Imperial envoy to England, were very hostile to her as well. As a champion of Katherine of Aragon and her daughter Mary, Chapuys was ever Anne's critic, and even when she later became the King's wife in 1533, he continued to denigrate her as 'the Lady' or 'the Concubine'. Needless to say, his dispatches were full of gossip and smears about Anne. One example, concerned John Fisher, the Bishop of Rochester. A firm ally of the Queen Katherine, some of his household 'were taken very ill and suffered much pain' at a dinner in 1531.⁹ The Bishop himself escaped injury as he had not tasted the soup in which 'some powders' had been added. Even though the cook confessed to the

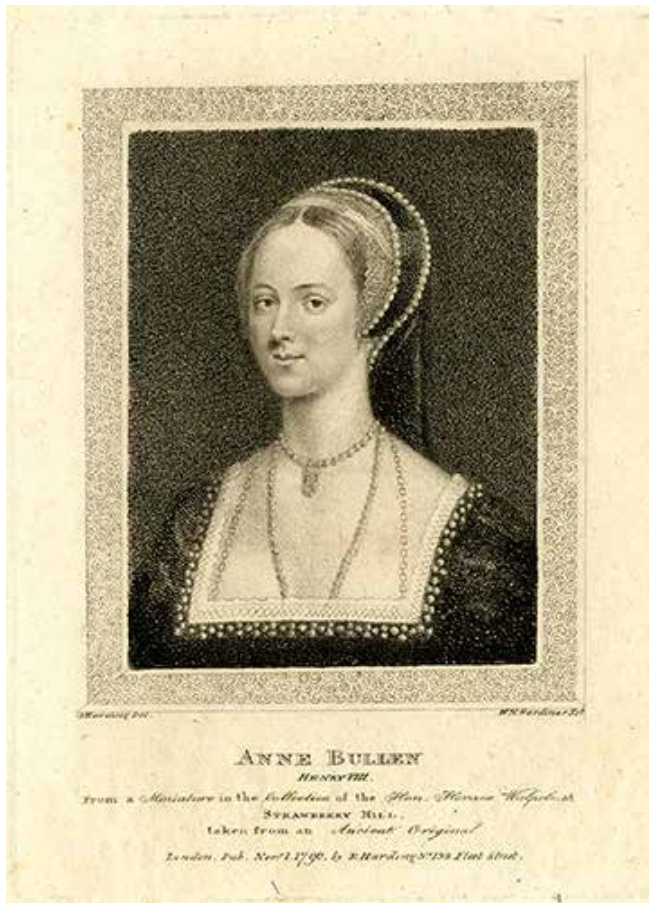


'King Henry the Eighth & Anna Bullen' (by William Hogarth)

crime, Chapuys was certain that Anne was behind it all.

The notion of Anne Boleyn as a lady who dabbled in poisons persisted. Henry VIII himself apparently came to believe it. When Anne was later arrested in 1536, a grieving Henry told his illegitimate son Henry Fitzroy 'that both he and his sister, meaning the Princess, ought to thank God for having escaped from the hands of that woman, who had planned their death by poison'.¹⁰ But according to rumour afterwards, Fitzroy was actually not so lucky. As told by the chronicler Charles Wriothesley, 'he was privily poisoned by the means of Queen Anne and her brother Lord Rochford, for he pined inwardly in his body long before he died'.¹¹

Not only was Anne accused of plotting Fisher's death, so was Thomas Boleyn, the Earl of Wiltshire. As the father of the infamous Anne, Boleyn has received his share of disdain.



Anne Boleyn (Engraving by E. Harding)

One commonly held belief is that the Earl pimped his daughters to Henry VIII to gain royal favour. This view of him has appeared in some history books and in a number of historical novels. Even on television in the popular series *The Tudors*, this negative view of Thomas Boleyn was presented. Earlier, this characterization had also been expressed in the play and film version of *Anne of the Thousand Days*. As Boleyn admits to his daughter Mary (who is pregnant with Henry VIII's bastard child), "The King has been generous to me because you were generous to him".¹² In the movie adaptation of the play released in 1969, Boleyn's wife Elizabeth and their son George are also complicit in dangling Anne in front of Henry VIII. As her mother tells her, "If you turn him away, we can say farewell to all we've work for and all we have". George is in agreement. "If our parents had not taken advantage when it came their way",

he admonishes his sister, "what would have become of us"?¹³

George Boleyn is of course most known for his dramatic fall in conjunction with his sister Anne. Both were accused of the sensational crime of incest. According to the indictments against the Queen, 'led astray by devilish instigation, not having God before her eyes and daily following her fickle and carnal appetite', Anne bedded her own brother 'with the Queen's tongue in the mouth of the said George, and George's tongue in the mouth of the Queen, with kisses with open mouth... despising all the Almighty God's precepts... and every law of human nature... violated and carnally knew... his own natural sister'.¹⁴ Unable to satisfy her lust, Anne supposedly committed adultery with four other men as well, Henry Norris, William Brereton, Francis Weston, and Mark Smeaton.

George Boleyn as a man of bad character - one capable of sleeping with his own sister - was put forth by George Cavendish writing in the reign of Queen Mary. The Earl of Rochford, he claimed, was a man of voracious sexual appetites. In a series of poems entitled *Metrical Visions*, Cavendish has Rochford describing himself:

*My life not chaste, my living bestial;
I forced widows, maidens I did deflower.
All was one to me, I spared none at all,
My appetite was all women to devour
My study was both day and hour.*¹⁵

Rochford as a Lothario - and a rapist - is a defamation that has been carried into modern times. The television series *The Tudors* portrays George as a brutal husband to his wife, and even as one who also enjoys the company of men. While there is no proof that the Earl was homosexual - this was a theory of historian Retha Warnicke¹⁶ - it has been exploited to the full nonetheless in fiction,

notably in Philippa Gregory's novel *The Other Boleyn Girl*.

George's spouse Jane Parker has also had her reputation blackened over time. In several histories and works of historical fiction, Jane, out of hatred for her husband and jealous of the closeness between him and his sister the Queen, gladly gave 'evidence' against them. For this, and her later involvement in the follies of Queen Katheryn Howard, she



Mary Boleyn(?) (Attributed to Lucas Horenbout)

has become known as the 'infamous Lady Rochford'. Popular belief has it that when she was condemned to death and stood on the scaffold in 1542, she proclaimed that her actual true crime had been to bear false witness against her late husband and Queen Anne.¹⁷

With the ruin of her family, the luckiest was Mary Boleyn. After the executions of her siblings in 1536, and the deaths of her mother (in 1538) and of her father (in 1539), Mary was the sole surviving Boleyn. But even her life had not been without its share of scandal. While abroad in France in her youth, Mary had gained a bad reputation for herself it was said. She was 'a great prostitute and infamous

above all', as the King of France ungallantly referred to her.¹⁸

Having slept with Francis I, Mary then became the lover of Henry VIII. Their affair lasted from some time in the early 1520s until Mary was eclipsed by her sister Anne who attracted the King's attention in around 1526. Whether any of Mary's children (her son Henry and her daughter Katherine) were actually fathered by Henry VIII, rather than by her husband William Carey, remains speculation.

Mary was the subject of gossip again in 1534. After being widowed in 1528, she found happiness again with one William Stafford, a man who was of a lower station in life, and who was also younger than herself. For these reasons, the match was made in secret, and Mary found herself pregnant; a condition she could not hide. She was quickly denounced by her family, especially by Anne who was now Queen. Banished from court, Mary was reduced to writing to the King's minister Thomas Cromwell for help. Explaining herself, Mary said how 'love overcame reason... for well I might have had a greater man of birth and a higher, but I ensure you I could never have had one that should have loved me so well, nor a more honest man'. She also added that 'I had rather beg my bread with him, than to be the greatest queen in Christendom'.¹⁹ Mary's last remark may be interpreted as a jab against her royal sister. Whether they reconciled before Anne's fall is unknown. What we do know is that Mary and her husband William lived in obscurity - hopefully in happiness - until her death in 1543.

Much was - and still is - said against Anne Boleyn and her family. But modern historical research has proved that Anne was the victim of slander in many aspects of her life. As a key player in the English

Reformation, Anne functioned as ‘an honorary man’ as historian David Starkey remarked;²⁰ a position that outraged many of her contemporaries by her bold assumption of influence and power. That said, Anne was often ill spoken of. And she was certainly not the ‘naughty paikie’ (prostitute) or ‘English Messalina or Agrippina’ as her enemies called her.²¹ Even though more than four hundred and eighty years separate us from the events of 1536, most historians are of the consensus that Anne was not guilty of infidelity and high treason that condemned her to death.

If Anne was innocent of unfaithfulness, so was Lord Rochford of course. His fall was equally the work of conspiracy against the Queen. As one tied to her cause, if Anne had to go, so did George. There is no proof either that he was a sexual predator as George Cavendish made him out to be. On the contrary, Rochford was an accomplished courtier and diplomat, and one with a keen interest in literature and in religious reform.

Even Lady Rochford has been seen in a better light as of late. Historians such as Julia Fox have argued that she has been unfairly maligned.²² That Jane was the one who provided proof of her husband’s incest is actually questionable. In fact, after Lord Rochford was arrested, she actually wrote to him promising to speak well of him to the authorities. Nonetheless, Jane Parker as a villainess has persisted in a great many fictionalised accounts of her.

The same could be said of the rest of the Boleyns. As a powerful family at the dog-eat-dog court of Henry VIII, they were invariably subjected to criticism. Historically, the real Thomas Boleyn, like his son George, was a great asset to the King’s court. He was ‘most chiefest’ of the Privy Council, and in Henry VIII’s own words, ‘knew more of



**Sir Thomas Boleyn (Monumental
brass St Peter’s Church, Hever)**

his secret intentions than any other man in the kingdom’.²³ As for his pandering of his daughters, there is no evidence of that. In fact, Boleyn seemed to have had reservations about his daughter Anne being the King’s

wife.²⁴ Furthermore, there is no reason to believe that he was estranged from his wife Elizabeth after she allegedly slept with the King. Though nothing is known of the nature of their relationship, their marriage lasted until the Countess' death. Although they were buried separately, this is not necessarily an indication of a strain between them. As a Howard, Elizabeth may have expressed a desire to be interred with the members of her own kin in the family chapel at St. Mary's Church, Lambeth, as opposed to Hever where Thomas Boleyn was later laid to rest.

That leaves Mary Boleyn. Perhaps with her it was a case of being 'more sinned against than sinning' as the expression goes. That

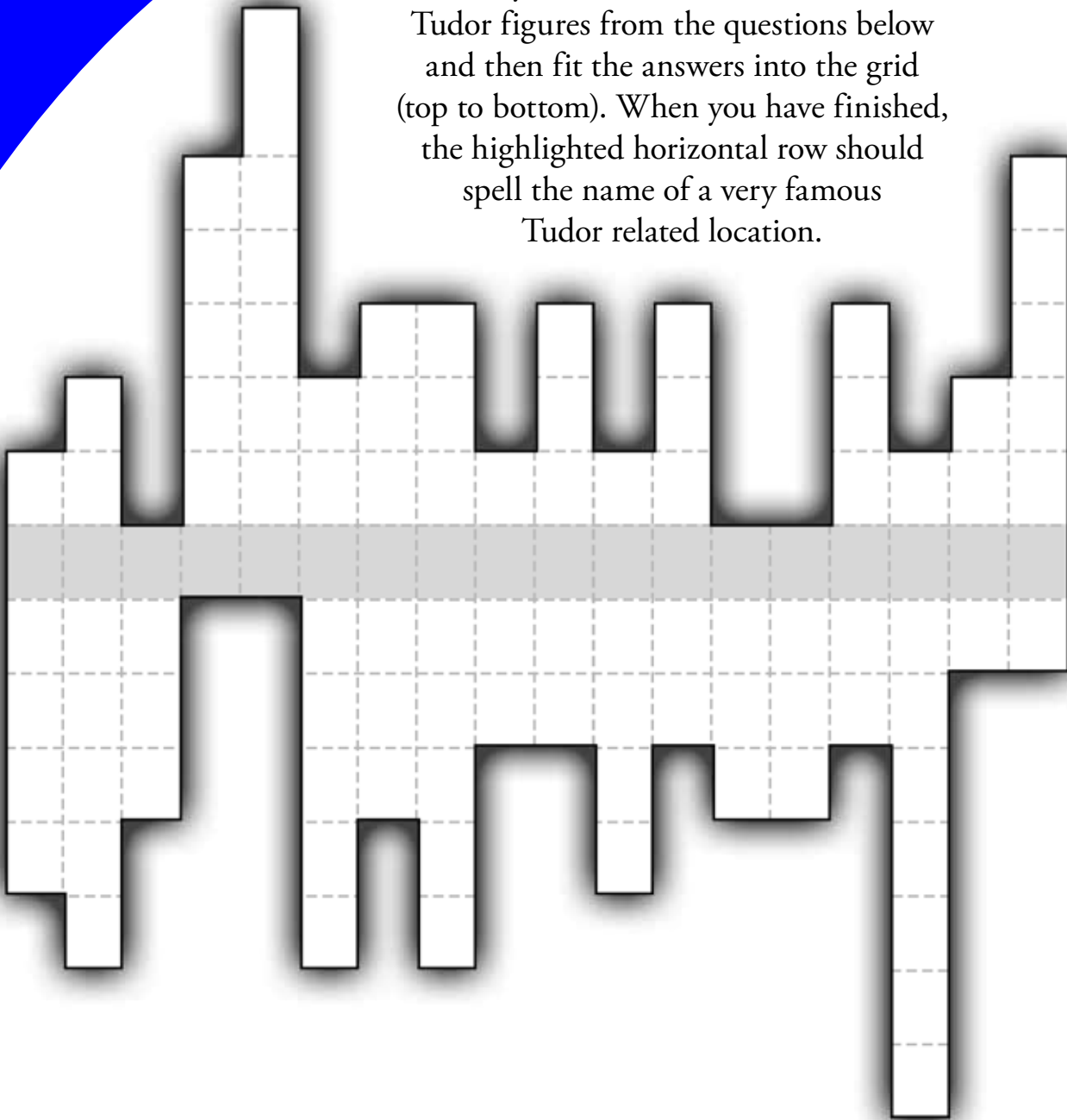
she was a great whore was the opinion of the French King, and what actually went on between them is unknown. As for her secret marriage to William Stafford, Mary could hardly be blamed for seeking some happiness for herself after what was evidently a sad and lonely life after the death of her first husband.

We leave the last word to Anne Boleyn herself. On May 19, 1536, in her last moments before submitting herself to the swordsman, she had asked the crowd - in the matter of her guilt and her reputation - to 'judge the best'.²⁵ While that has not always been the case, hopefully, ongoing and future assessments of Anne's life and career, and that of the other Boleyns, will be fair and as unbiased as can be.

ROLAND HUI

1. *Letters and Papers, Foreign and Domestic, of the Reign of Henry VIII (L&P)*, V, no. 1377.
2. Anne Boleyn as religiously insincerity - a misconception - is addressed by Maria Dowling, 'Anne Boleyn as Patron', in *Henry VIII - A European Court in England*, edited by David Starkey, New York: Cross River Press, 1991, pp. 107-111. Negative portrayals of Anne Boleyn are plentiful, especially in historical fiction, for example: Philippa Gregory, *The Other Boleyn Girl*, London: HarperCollins, 2001, and Margaret George, *The Autobiography of Henry VIII, with Notes by His Fool, Will Somers*, New York: St Martin's Griffin, 1986.
3. Nicholas Sander, *Rise and Growth of the Anglican Schism*, translated by David Lewis, London: Burns and Oates, 1877, p. 23-24.
4. *L&P*, X(ii), no. 952. Thomas Cromwell who was standing by, then interjected saying that the King had never slept with Mary Boleyn either, which was actually untrue.
5. Nicholas Sander, *Rise and Growth of the Anglican Schism*, p. 25.
6. Evidently, Sander confused Anne with her sister Mary who was vilified with these same insults for her alleged promiscuity while in France.
7. *Calendar of State Papers and Manuscripts Relating to English Affairs Existing in the Archives and Collections of Venice (CSP Ven.)*, IV, no. 701.
8. *ibid.*
9. *Calendar of Letters, Despatches, and State Papers Relating to the Negotiations between England and Spain Preserved in the Archives at Simancas and Elsewhere (CSP Span.)*, IV (ii), no. 646.
10. *CSP Span.*, V (ii), no. 55.
11. Charles Wriothesley, *A Chronicle of England During the Reigns of the Tudors, From A.D. 1485 to 1559*, London: printed for The Camden Society, 1875-77, I, p. 53. Henry Fitzroy died in July, 1536. George Boleyn was accused of being an accessory to his poisoning.
12. Maxwell Anderson, *Anne of the Thousand Days* (1948), Act One, Scene One.
13. *Anne of the Thousand Days* (1969), screenplay by John Hale and Bridget Boland; adaptation by Richard Sokolove.
14. Transcribed in Marie Louise Bruce, *Anne Boleyn*, New York: Coward, McCann & Geoghegan, Inc., 1972, pp. 319-320.
15. George Cavendish, *The Life of Cardinal Wolsey*, Chiswick for Harding, Triphook, and Lepard, London, 1825, p. 23.
16. Retha Warnicke, *The Rise and Fall of Anne Boleyn*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989.
17. Gregorio Leti, *La Vie d'Elizabeth Reine D'Angleterre*, Amsterdam: Henry Desbordes, 1714, p. 145. Lady Rochford's scaffold confession, as told by Leti, is not substantiated by actual reports of her execution.
18. *L&P*, X, no. 450.
19. Mary Anne Everett Wood, (editor), *Letters of Royal and Illustrious Ladies of Great Britain*, London: Henry Colburn, 1842, II. pp. 193-197.
20. David Starkey, *The Reign of Henry VIII - Personalities and Politics*, London: George Philip, 1985, p. 92.
21. *L&P*, VIII, no. 196, and *L&P*, X, no. 909.
22. Julia Fox, *Jane Boleyn: The True Story of the Infamous Lady Rochford*, New York: Ballantine Books, 2007.
23. George Cavendish: *The Life of Cardinal Wolsey*, S.W. Singer (ed.), London, 1827, p. 119 and p. 399.
24. *CSP Span.*, IV(ii), no. 1077.
25. Edward Hall, *The Triumphant Reigne of Kyng Henry the VIII*, London: T.C. & E.C. Jack, 1904. II, p. 268.

Identify the names of the well-known Tudor figures from the questions below and then fit the answers into the grid (top to bottom). When you have finished, the highlighted horizontal row should spell the name of a very famous Tudor related location.



1. Christian name of Henry VIII's Almoner
2. Family name of Margaret, mother of Henry Tudor
3. Surname of the High Chancellor of England from October 1529 – May 1532
4. Christian name of the husband of Mary I
5. Elder sister of Henry VIII who became Queen of Scots
6. Surname of the English Lawyer and Chief Minister to Henry VIII from 1532-1540
7. Surname of the Archbishop of Canterbury, beheaded by Mary I in 1556
8. Lord who was the favourite of Elizabeth I
9. Surname of John, author of 'Book of Martyrs'
10. Surname of Elizabeth, mother of Henry Fitzroy
11. Christian name of the first son of Henry VII and Elizabeth of York
12. Christian name of the man appointed as Captain of the Queen's Guard by Elizabeth I in 1587
13. Surname of the last Catholic Archbishop of Canterbury during the Counter-Reformation
14. Surname of the leader of the Pilgrimage of Grace protest in 1536
15. Family name of the husband of Queen Jane/Lady Jane Grey
16. Christian name of the queen associated with Thomas Culpeper
17. Surname of the man who became Speaker of The House of Commons in 1536, also associated with the torture of Anne Askew
18. First name of the Holy Roman Emperor, nephew of Catherine of Aragon

See page 25 for answers

BY
GARETH RUSSELL

HENRY VII: SKELETONS IN THE CUPBOARD

Henry VII's twenty-four years on the throne produced far fewer scandals than his son's thirty-eight. Certainly, when it came to sex and romance, Henry VII's court looked positively puritanical in comparison to that of Henry VIII or, for that matter, his own father-in-law, the late Edward IV. The majority of the scandals for the first Tudor monarch centred on his wife's side of the family. Two pretenders arose,

THE SCANDALS OF THE TUDOR REIGN BY

both backed by foreign governments and local rebels, who sought to take the throne from the Tudors. The first, Lambert Simnel, claimed to be Elizabeth of York's cousin, the Earl of Warwick, who had, in reality, lived as a

James Maxwell as Henry VII in council from
"The Shadow of the Tower" (BBC)



DALS OF DORS Y REIGN

proved less forgiving with Perkin Warbeck, a mysterious and foolhardy gentleman who claimed to be Richard, Duke of York, the Queen's presumed-dead younger brother. He had vanished with his brother King Edward V during the reign of their uncle, Richard III, but Warbeck claimed to be the long-lost prince who, if he was telling the truth, was the rightful king as Richard IV over Henry VII. He was defeated, confessed to fraud and executed, but it has not stopped centuries of speculation about his claims.

HENRY VIII: CHOP AND CHANGE

prisoner in the Tower since the Tudors seized power in 1485. He was defeated and, as a child who had been used as a pawn by others, he was pardoned by the King, who also gave him a job in the royal household. Henry VII

No novelist would invent Henry VIII if he had not existed. Only a few weeks after succeeding to the throne in 1509, the handsome young King married his brother's widow, Katherine of Aragon, to whom he was



James Maxwell as Henry VIII in council from
"The Shadow of the Tower" (BBC)

frequently unfaithful. He fathered a bastard son with one of his mistresses and a daughter, Princess Mary, with his queen – all their other children died in the womb or shortly after birth. After nearly twenty years of marriage, Henry initiated annulment proceedings, which Queen Katherine fiercely protested. The royal dispute spiralled into a religious schism when Henry, in frustration at the Pope's hesitation on the issue, split with the Roman Catholic Church, declared himself head of the newly independent Church of England and married the bright and brilliant Anne Boleyn, daughter of the Earl of Ormond, a talented diplomat. After at least two miscarriages, the tenacious Queen was attacked by her courtly enemies who manufactured charges to destroy her – these included adultery with the King's closest friend, a handsome courtier and playboy, a palace musician, and an influential landowner. They also included treason and incest with her brother, Lord

Rochford. Protesting her innocence to the end, the unfortunate Queen was executed two days after her equally innocent "lovers" in 1536.

Eleven days later, Henry married his late wife's lady in waiting, Jane Seymour, who eighteen months later died in consequence of the childbirth that had given Henry the legitimate son he had always wanted. Coups and counter-coups dominated court life, as the government haemorrhaged stability. As weight piled on and foreign allies evaporated, Henry was briefly married to the German princess, Anne of Cleves, but annulled the marriage six months later on grounds of non-consummation, executing the chief minister he regarded as mainly responsible for the match. Within two weeks, he had married his teenage mistress, Catherine Howard, the Duke of Norfolk's orphaned niece. The young Queen was vivacious and beautiful, neither of which saved her when she was suspected of adultery in

Jean Simmons as Elizabeth I and Stewart Granger as Thomas Seymour in "Young Bess" (TCM)



1541. She paid for that with her life in February 1542. Katherine Parr, an elegant and intelligent widow, married the morbidly obese Henry in July of the following year, narrowly avoiding ruin for her evangelical beliefs – even as the female pastor who had sold her Protestant books was burned to death on the government's orders. Parr survived her husband and eloped with the Lord High Admiral, bringing to an end the fantastically unlikely and hideously unfair scandals that had shaped Henry VIII's tortuous rule.

EDWARD VI: LITTLE LORDS

Edward VI's short life prevented the possibility of his reign degenerating into the kind of romance-addled horror that defined his father's. However, the King's youth presented its own problems, chiefly over who would control the child-sovereign's person and, through him, the government of the realm. This boiled over

into a memorably dangerous scandal that ended the life of the child's maternal uncle, Thomas. Having married the Dowager Queen Katherine Parr, Thomas Seymour chafed at his elder brother's control of their royal nephew. After Katherine's death in 1548, Seymour tried to press his attentions on the King's teenage sister, Elizabeth, whom he had already harassed during her stepmother's lifetime. There were also rumours that he had expressed an interest in the Princess Mary, as heiress-apparent, and the wealthy Anne of Cleves. Either way, it seemed Seymour was determined to elbow his brother out of office by placing himself even closer to the heart of the Royal Family. He also began sending secret gifts to young Edward and may have attempted to kidnap him, a bungled attempt that saw him apprehended and arrested. The tawdry details of his attempted seduction of the Princess Elizabeth spilled out in the interrogations, putting the young lady on



Mary I (centre) enters London with Princess Elizabeth (right) and frees the Duke of Norfolk and Bishop Stephen Gardiner from prison. The royal sisters appeared close when Mary took the throne from the Greys in 1553, but their relationship rapidly deteriorated after that.

the edge of a nervous breakdown in a mixture of mortification and terror. Elizabeth survived, but Thomas Seymour did not. A year after he lost his head, his elder brother finally fell and followed him to the scaffold. Another protector came to power, clinging to it as best he could even as young Edward VI succumbed to a terminal illness, aged 15, in 1553.

MARY I: QUEEN INTERRUPTED

It could, of course, be argued that Mary I's earliest days as sovereign were defined by the political scandal of the coup that aimed to put her kinswoman, Lady Jane Grey, on the throne in her place. This was defeated by a combination of Mary Tudor's tenacity and her widespread popularity. As a pious queen and devoted wife to her Spanish husband,

King Philip II, Mary I's court experienced few romantic scandals. An old legend has it that the Queen was so innocent that she did not fully comprehend what the word "whore" meant. Once again, it was the Princess Elizabeth who featured in the main scandal of the reign – the question of whether or not the heiress had been party to Thomas Wyatt's plans to raise a rebellion against Queen Mary in 1554? Elizabeth, who was even more popular than the Queen, endured imprisonment in the Tower of London where she steadfastly denied her guilt and from which she was eventually released only to spend the rest of her sister's reign under effective house arrest in the Oxfordshire countryside. Mary died from cancer, with her husband absent and overseas, in 1558, bringing Elizabeth to the throne after scandals that had nearly killed her in the reigns of her siblings.



Joseph Fiennes as Robert Dudley and Cate Blanchett's Oscar-nominated performance as Elizabeth I in "Elizabeth". The pair's devotion has inspired centuries of speculation. (Channel 4)

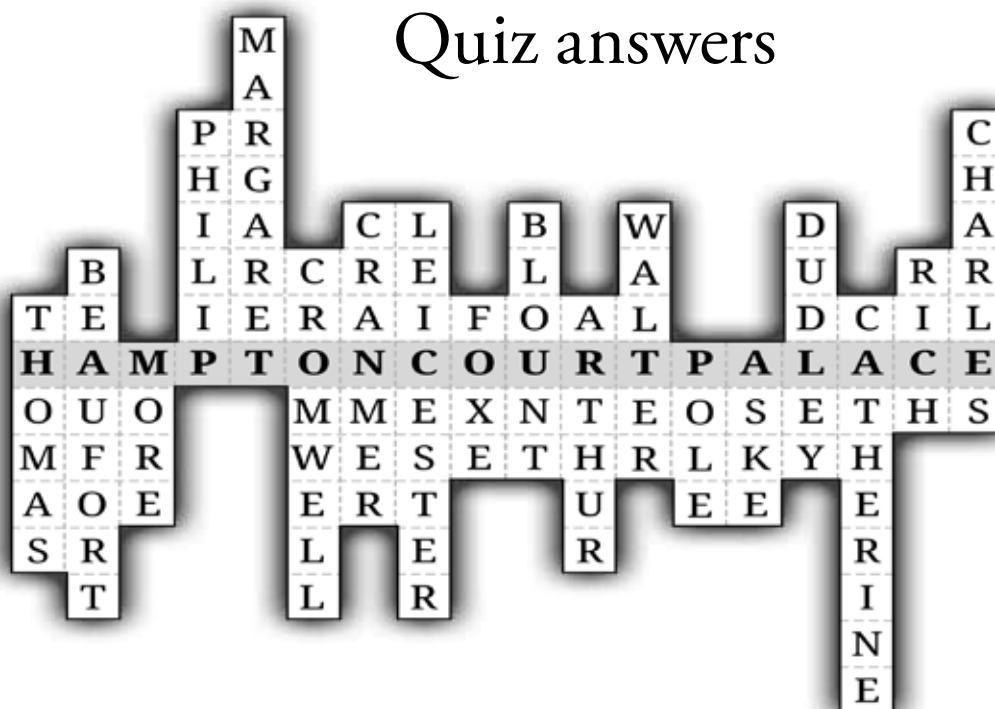
ELIZABETH I: DEATH AND THE VIRGIN

Of course, few can resist speculating on whether or not Elizabeth I's self-proclaimed virginity was true or simply propaganda. Given what had happened to her mother and third stepmother, the humiliations her fourth and her sister had endured at the hands of their husbands, it is hard not to feel that Elizabeth's apprehensions about sex and matrimony might very well have been genuine. Certainly, however, there were frequent negotiations to marry her to a foreign prince some of which, particularly plans for a match with a member of the French royal family, produced their fair share of political contretemps in England. However, it was her undisguised adoration of her childhood friend Robert Dudley, Earl of Leicester, that caused the greatest drama when his wife, Amy, was found dead at the bottom of a stairwell. Speculation ran riot that Leicester, or one of his adherents, had pushed Amy down the

stairs to leave the Earl free to marry the Queen. Elizabeth recoiled and ordered an inquest, which returned a verdict of suicide. Whether that was true or not is still the subject of debate. Elizabeth remained devoted to Leicester for the rest of his life, yet she never again allowed her name to be so closely linked to his that he was considered a potential bridegroom. Similar scandals swept Elizabeth's kinswoman and rival Mary, Queen of Scots, off her throne north of the border, forcing the radiant Scottish queen to refugee south. She became the focus of frequent Catholic-led plots against Elizabeth, one of which culminated in Mary's execution in 1587, a scandal that rocked Europe and caused Elizabeth, who had reluctantly signed the death warrant, to have a nervous breakdown. Elizabeth died in 1603, after forty-five years on the throne – her towering intellect, her remarkable survival against so many odds, and the mysteries of her private life had already rendered her a legend. And it is as a figure larger-than-life that Gloriana the Faerie Queen has remained.

GARETH RUSSELL

Quiz answers





Westminster Hall, shown in the early 19th century,
where Gates was tried on 19 August 1553



SIR JOHN GATES, TUDOR COURTIER

BY SUSAN ABERNETHY

Sir John Gates was one of those Tudor courtiers who, during three reigns, reached the height of wealth and power only to come to a bad end. He appears to have been a competent and dependable administrator and executive in his indefatigable pursuit of career and profit. He was very effective in aligning himself with the right people but he also managed to antagonize one of the Tudor monarchs.

JOHN WAS born c. 1504 to a family of Essex gentry. He trained as a lawyer and in 1533 was made a groom of the privy chamber to Henry VIII. The Gates were distant relatives of the Dennys and John may have gained his position due to the endorsement of Sir Anthony Denny. Sometime in 1534, John married Denny's sister Mary. John was a great supporter of the reformed religion and was assigned to keep the peace in Essex during the Pilgrimage of

Grace. Soon after, he became a part of the intimate circle surrounding the king.

John was effective in removing altars and plundering many churches during the Dissolution of the Monasteries. He came into possession of some of the dissolved monasteries as well as other extensive estates in Essex and Suffolk. In late 1537, John was awarded the post of Page of the Wardrobe making him part of an elite cadre of royal servants. As Page of the Wardrobe, he

inspected the king's personal weapons, and noted the receipt of frocks, coats and gowns from the Great Wardrobe in the Tower of London.

He paid the bills for personal items of the king and was put in charge of the king's coffers, overseeing the king's liquid cash, golden spoons and jewels. In 1542, he first sat for Parliament and he served in the household of Queen Katherine Parr from 1543-5. For the French expedition of 1544, John supplied sixty soldiers and commanded over three thousand men who remained with the king at Boulogne.

In the years before his death, Henry VIII came to rely on Anthony Denny. Denny, in turn, relied on John Gates to carry out unpleasant tasks. Denny and Gates both used their exclusive access to the king to grant favours to those who petitioned them. Henry's eyesight began failing as early as 1544. This and Henry's impatience with the demands of signing countless documents required an alternative to his genuine signature.

Beginning in September 1545, a "dry stamp" was used. A carved wooden block was hand-pressed on a piece of paper, leaving an impression of the king's signature. This would then be inked in by one of the clerks of the Privy Seal serving under Denny and Gates of the Privy Chamber. One or the other of these men would witness the inking in of the signature and then record the transaction in a record book. This record was supposed to be viewed

regularly by the king because of the possibility of misuse or abuse of the stamp.

At first, the stamp was kept in a small, locked black leather casket and remained on the king's person. But Henry eventually gave up custody of the stamp to Gates, effectively surrendering the reins of power to those who closely surrounded him. These men now had enormous influence, access to the exchequer, and the ability to exact revenge on their political enemies. In the presence of Gates and Denny, the dry stamp was used on eighty-six documents during January 1547.

King Henry VIII died on January 28, 1547, and John rode beside the corpse of the king during the funeral procession to Windsor. Gates was a witness to the king's will where he was named as a beneficiary. The will was not signed by Henry but the dry-stamp was used, a source of controversy to this day.

John rose to great heights at court during the reign of King Edward VI. He became a Knight of the Bath at the coronation of the king and in 1549 he was made sheriff of Essex. Edward Seymour, Duke of Somerset served as Lord Protector during the king's minority. Sir John did not participate in the plot to bring Somerset down but he carried out the orders of his superiors and confiscated Somerset's property.

Sir John began to align himself with the new power behind the throne, John Dudley, Duke of Northumberland,

becoming his “special friend”. He was appointed to the Privy Chamber of the king in 1550 and held the dry stamp of Edward’s signature. He attended the king and reported everything to Dudley and transmitted Dudley’s wishes to the king.

The king’s council heard news of his sister Mary’s attempt to escape England on July 13, 1550. As sheriff of Essex, Sir John was sent with some cavalry to stop Mary from going to Antwerp as reported in King Edward’s diary. After this aborted attempt, the council was more uncompromising with Mary about allowing her to practice her Catholicism. Mary would never forget Sir John’s role in this incident.

In 1551, Sir John was made Vice-Chamberlain of the Household and Captain of the King’s Guard, given a seat on the Privy Council and granted lands worth £120 per annum. Sir John was conscientious in attending the council meetings and participated in various commissions for financial reforms. On July 7, 1552, he was made Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster.

In January of 1553, the signs of King Edward’s last fatal illness were apparent. He was very concerned about the succession because he didn’t want his Catholic sister Mary to become Queen as the laws required. It is unclear who originated the idea of the ‘devise’ which Edward created, casting aside his sisters and naming Lady Jane Grey as his successor. Dudley and Lady Jane Grey hinted that Sir John was the

mastermind of the ‘devise’.

Whether Sir John was involved or not, he was loyal to the king, supported the ‘devise’ and carried out the orders of his superiors. He was Dudley’s agent in the Commons of Parliament in an effort to engineer the passage of a bill altering the succession as laid down by King Henry VIII’s Act of 1544. The king issued letters patent changing the succession and Sir John was one of the twenty-one councillors and three lawyers who signed the ‘devise’. King Edward died on July 6, 1553, before the letters patent were approved by Parliament, creating a succession crisis.

The day after the king died, Sir John reportedly had to remind Dudley to send men to capture Mary. Sir John took possession of the Tower of London and Dudley had his daughter-in-law Lady Jane Grey proclaimed Queen on July 10. But the council had underestimated Mary and she consolidated her power in East Anglia and gathered an army to defend her right to the throne.

On July 14, the council sent Dudley with troops to combat Mary’s army and secure her person. That same afternoon, Sir John left with five hundred men. On the way to Cambridge, support for Jane Grey melted away and Mary was victorious with no bloodshed. Gates, Dudley and others were arrested in Cambridge and escorted back to London, entering the Tower on July 25 as prisoners of Queen Mary.

Mary arrived in London on August 3. She had already decided who had committed treason and would die for

supporting Jane Grey. She never forgave Sir John for his role in preventing her attempt to escape and his fate was sealed. On August 19, Sir John, his brother Henry, Andrew Dudley and Sir Thomas Palmer went to trial and were found guilty of treason. His punishment of a traditional traitor's death was commuted to beheading.

Dudley had been brought to trial the day before and found guilty and condemned to death. He decided to accept the Catholic faith, fully recanted and observed mass in the chapel of St. Peter ad Vincula on August 21st. Sir John followed his lead on the next day and also heard mass. He confessed he had been away from the true church and asked God's forgiveness. As Dudley and Gates were led from the Tower to the scaffold on Tower Hill, there was an exchange at the garden gate which was witnessed by the anonymous historian of the "Chronicle of Queen Jane".

"Sir John", said the Duke, 'God have mercy upon us, for this day shall end both our lives. And I pray you forgive me whatsoever I have offended; and I forgive you with all my heart, although you and your counsel was a great occasion hereof.' 'Well, my lord' said John Gates, 'I forgive you as I would be forgiven; and yet you and your authority was the only original cause of all together; but the Lord pardon you, and I pray you forgive me.' They bowed to each other and proceeded.

An estimated crowd of ten thousand gathered to watch the executions. Dudley was executed first. Sir John came forward and acknowledged his offences and asked the people to pray for him and distributed alms. He refused a kerchief for his eyes and laid his head on the block. It took three blows to strike his head off. He was laid to rest in the chapel of St. Peter ad Vincula.

SUSAN ABERNETHY

"The Last Days of Henry VIII: Conspiracies, Treason and Heresy at the Court of the Dying King" by Robert Hutchinson

"Mary I: England's Catholic Queen" by John Edwards, "Edward VI: The Lost King of England" by Chris Skidmore

"John Dudley: The Life of Lady Jane Grey's Father-in-Law" by Christine Hartweg
entry on Sir John Gates in the Oxford Dictionary of National Biography written by Narasingha P. Sil

"The Rise and Fall of Sir John Gates" article written by Narasingha P. Sil in Historical Journal, 24 (1981), pgs. 929-43

"Chronicle of Queen Jane" by anonymous



On 8th November, the Mary Rose is offering a Platinum VIP Experience with a behind-the-scenes tour that takes guests for the first time into the Weston Ship Hall – an exclusive chance to get closer to the ship than ever before. Aside from offering this unprecedented level of access, this generous package includes a Q&A with the conservation experts, refreshments in the Wardroom and enrolment onto the Bronze Patron membership scheme, giving unlimited free entry to the Museum for a whole year.

As the Mary Rose Museum prepares to sail out of 2019, King Henry VIII will host two special Christmas celebrations. The Royal Christmas experience on the 14th December will provide guests with an expert tour of the Museum followed by a reception of mince pies and mulled wine in the private Wardroom, as the King regales his audience with gripping tales about life in the Royal Court.

Finally, between the 21st and 23rd December, the King along with his last and only surviving wife, Catherine Parr, will invite guests to experience the magic of Tudor Christmas traditions. In an incredible event of dance, merrymaking and music, guests will learn all about Tudor etiquette, how to dance like a Lady and Lord and to curtsy and bow, as they discover the other colourful characters from Henry's Court.

Tickets for The Mary Rose can be purchased from their website, www.MaryRose.org, or from The Mary Rose Visitor Centre or museum reception.

PLEASE MENTION THAT YOU HEARD ABOUT THE
EVENTS FROM THE TUDOR SOCIETY



THE BURIAL OF QUEEN JANE SEYMOUR

by Elizabeth Jane Timms

Jane Seymour, the third and ‘*entirely beloved*’ queen of Henry VIII died at Hampton Court Palace on 24 October 1537, sometime before midnight. Her death occurred in that same palace where only twelve days earlier she had given birth to a boy, Henry’s long-anticipated male heir and in so doing, achieved her greatest triumph.

THE CHILD’S birth resulted in an outpouring of national joy. England – which had been as equally expectant as Queen Jane – at last had its baby Tudor prince. God, in the mind of the King, had seen fit to bless his third marriage. There was no need this time to insert that extra ‘s’ in the elaborate document in which queens officially announced the happy birth to the world, as had been the case with Queen Anne Boleyn on the birth of the Princess Elizabeth in 1533. Hugh Latimer wrote of the birth ecstatically that ‘*there was so much rejoicing as at the birth of John the Baptist*’. The birth was the source of such jubilation that it seemed indeed to have something miraculous about it, not least because of the quite extraordinary fact that it had taken three marriages to finally achieve Henry’s longed-for son and heir. It was a universal joy that very possibly exceeded even the birth of Catherine of Aragon’s baby prince Henry born in 1511, precisely because it took just that long.

Jane’s death meant that she perished after giving the King what he most wanted, something which surely ‘sealed’ her in Henry’s mind with securing his heart’s desire at the price of her own life. Henry’s deep adherence to the medieval principles of chivalry both as a King and a knight could well have



further influenced his appreciation of Jane's sacrifice. Henry VIII's own moving words in a letter to the French King best convey this mixing of joy and grief and confirm that Jane caused both of these strong emotions: '*Divine Providence has mingled my joy with the bitterness of death of her who brought me this happiness*'. Even allowing for the florid tone of polite royal language, there is a genuine chord of sorrow in Henry's words. Precisely because Jane did not survive long after this first birth, there were no later miscarriages or subsequent babies of Jane dead shortly after birth, as had been the case with her predecessors Catherine of Aragon or Anne Boleyn. She simply did not survive long enough to acquire a lengthy gynaecological history of her own. Therefore her firstborn child was her only child. And crucially, it was a boy.

Queen Jane's personal badge, which showed a phoenix rising from a castle from which grew Tudor roses could be seen in posthumous interpretation, to depict Queen Jane's soul rising from Hampton Court Palace, leaving behind her a baby Tudor rose in bud as the flower of the future dynasty. In Jane's case, her life's career could be crudely symbolized by key moments in the royal bed: marriage bed, childbed, death bed.

Queen Jane's death at Hampton Court meant that her body, so recently the focus of midwifery and all its attendant paraphernalia, was now given over to the embalmers.

The bells that had pealed with such rapturous enthusiasm were silent. The spectacular christening ceremonial had given way to obsequies. The churches which had been entreated to '*pray for the Queen that was then in labour of child*' were now to change their tone and pray for the soul of Jane. Twelve thousand masses were ordered to be sung in London alone '*for the soul of our most gracious Queen*' (636 masses were ordered by Henry VII on Queen Elizabeth of York's death in London). Touchingly, the Lady Mary paid in her own money for thirteen masses to be sung for her beloved stepmother's soul, while the King paid for twelve to be sung in private. As we shall see, however, some inner parts of Jane's body would remain at Hampton Court Palace.

Queen Jane had been clothed in rich velvet and fur to receive the congratulations of the court in the antechamber at Hampton Court and now was being dressed for her lying-in-state, in cloth of gold tissue, jewels and a crown at her head.

The body of Queen Jane was placed in a '*chamber of presence*' where it remained for a week, brightly illumined by some twenty-one wax tapers from 26 until 31 October when it was taken by procession to the chapel royal at Hampton Court to lie in state on a special catafalque. Priests shared their solemn vigil over Jane's body together with her ladies and the Lady Mary, who was recorded as having been quite '*crazed*' (mad) by the death of

the stepmother she had loved and who had contributed to her rehabilitation at court. Amongst the presents listed in the royal accounts that Queen Jane exchanged with her stepdaughter, had been little personal gifts from Mary to Queen Jane's gardener at Hampton Court.

Poignantly, there is a continuation in the strange joy/sorrow symmetry that surrounds the period between the birth of Prince Edward and the death of Jane, in the natural choice of Hampton Court's chapel royal as the place where she would lie in state, as it was also where the baby Prince Edward was christened. The chapel royal at Hampton Court maintains that Queen Jane's body '*lay in state in the Chapel Royal for three weeks*'. Certainly, the Queen's body must have remained there until 12 November when it was removed to Windsor, but the above shows us instead that whilst the Queen's body did indeed lie in state for some three weeks, it was for one week in the '*chamber of presence*' and two weeks in the chapel royal as opposed to a full three weeks in the chapel royal.

Traditional royal convention would have presumed the process of embalming for a queen of Henry VIII under normal circumstances. Embalming helped to preserve the royal body whilst the elaborate ceremonial business of obsequies and burial was prepared. The burials of Henry's two previous queens had of course, however, been anything other than normal. The man

who performed the autopsy on the body of Catherine of Aragon was, in fact, the wax chandler (embalmer) and this duty was part of the job he had to carry out. The curious attempt made in 1777 to establish whether Lady Willoughby was buried in the same tomb as Catherine of Aragon showed that when a single hole was bored in the Queen's casket and a fragment of black and silver brocade was recovered, it apparently still bore the strong odour of embalming fluid even after two centuries.

Queen Anne Boleyn of course, had no funeral and only a burial, with her body being interred quietly in the Chapel of St Peter ad Vincula, the chapel royal at the Tower of London. If the assumed bones found when the remains beneath the high altar in the Chapel of St Peter ad Vincula were exhumed in 1876 are indeed Anne's, they are a sad testament to the fact that in her case as a 'fallen' queen, there had been no embalming. It is important to note, however, that the Victorian plaque which marks the supposed burial place of Anne Boleyn was only placed there after the restoration of the chapel and there was no previous marking to suggest the exact spot of Anne's grave. Certainly, skeletons and bones were found when the remains were removed, whatever the truth of their assumed 'identifications' and Anne's remains are somewhere beneath the altar.

Queen Jane Seymour was importantly, therefore, the only one of Henry VIII's queens, who had a

burial according to proper ceremonial during his lifetime. It is significant that the obsequies for Henry VIII's mother Elizabeth of York nearly thirty-five years earlier were studied as 'precedents' by the Garter King of Arms, as Elizabeth of York was the last queen for whom full official mourning had been decreed. It will be remembered that a popular legend had Henry VIII wearing yellow on Catherine of Aragon's death. By contrast, he was noted as having worn white mourning the following Sunday after Anne Boleyn's execution (white being in fact also, the traditional mourning colour of French queens).

Henry VIII's strong fear of illness and dislike of death meant that he removed himself from Hampton Court after the Queen's passing. It is also possible that Jane's death may also have revived painful recollections of the death of his own mother Elizabeth of York, in 1503.

The King went to mourn privately at Whitehall, where he '*retired to a solitary place to see to his sorrows*', behaviour that closely matches that of his father, Henry VII on the death of Queen Elizabeth of York - which also occurred after childbirth - as does the language that describes what both kings did. Henry VII left for Richmond, where he '*departed to a solitary place to pass his sorrow*' (1). Perhaps it is significant that Henry VIII went to Whitehall after Jane's death; it was at the Palace of Whitehall in the 'Queen's closet', that he had married Jane on 30

May 1536. When Henry VIII died, his body was laid in state at the Palace of Whitehall, where he had gone to '*see to his sorrows*' when Jane died.

Elizabeth of York had lain in state for some eleven days at the Tower of London's '*parish church*', probably that of St Peter ad Vincula, the chapel royal. On Elizabeth of York's death, her body was embalmed on the same day of her death by the Sergeant of the Chandlery. It would have been washed with '*sweet wine*' and rosewater, anointed with the balm and then '*spiced*' and '*cered*'. After this, '*the King's plumber closed her in lead*' (2).

Queen Jane's body was embalmed by the wax chandler who '*did his office*' on 25 October. It was then '*leaded, soldered and chested*', which as has been noted, would have been performed by the plumbers. Queen Catherine of Aragon's body had been embalmed and '*cered*' before it was chested by the plumber, '*for that may not tarry*'. The Queen's entrails (viscera) were removed and buried in the chapel royal at Hampton Court. A modern display sign in Hampton Court Palace's chapel royal mildly alludes to this: '*Her heart may be buried here*'.

Heart burials were more common on the continent but historically speaking, are not without English royal example. One of these is the old London Franciscan church of Greyfriars (now lost but the site of Christ Church, Greyfriars) which received the heart of Queen Eleanor of Provence. There are similarities in Catholic royal or imperial

sites of burial on the continent, such as the Chapel of Mercy at Altötting in southern Bavaria which has the hearts of the Bavarian Wittelsbach dynasty or the famous *Herzgruft* in the church of St Augustin in Vienna, which has the hearts of many members of the House of Habsburg. The embalming process also meant that the ‘viscera’ or internal organs in the body’s main cavities are removed, something practised notably in ancient Egypt and in England continued even into the eighteenth century, as may be seen in the burial ceremonies of Frederick, Prince of Wales. Imperial Habsburg examples of ‘viscera’ burials are to be found in the Ducal Crypt at Vienna’s St Stephen’s Cathedral.

I have worshipped as a visiting guest in the chapel royal at Hampton Court and became intrigued by the display sign about Queen Jane’s heart. (The heart of Mary I, is traditionally believed to have been buried under the pews of the chapel royal at St James’s Palace). The chapel royal at Hampton Court maintains that it has always been accepted wisdom that Queen Jane’s viscera were buried in the chapel. Important burials traditionally took place in either the Quire of a church or anywhere between that space and the high altar. The chapel royal maintains of Queen Jane’s body that *‘her viscera were buried by order of the King beneath the altar of the Chapel Royal at Hampton Court Palace’* (3). Whilst the King may have ordered this as befits any burial in the chapel royal,

it was the Duke of Norfolk who had been put in charge of arranging the late Queen’s obsequies.

I was keen to establish if there was any documentary evidence to support this. Certainly, it was accepted tradition to remove entrails as part of the royal embalming process and inter them in the place of death. Research enquiries with the chapel royal at Hampton Court Palace confirmed that the long-held tradition had always been that Queen Jane’s viscera had been buried under the High Altar, but that no one had ever looked. It is unlikely that anything ever marked the spot.

The private papers of Henry VIII, of which the Chapel Royal Archives also possess a copy, contain the sentence: *‘her entrails were honourably interred in the chapel’*. In all likelihood, the burial was probably beneath the High Altar. The papers do at least, confirm that Queen Jane’s viscera were indeed buried in the chapel royal at Hampton Court Palace. The exact spot is presumed.

The visitor to Hampton Court Palace’s chapel royal is understandably overawed by its magnificent ceiling and its lofty embellished beauty. Few would think first of Queen Jane Seymour, yet it is an appropriate choice for part of her to remain, enshrined where the christening of Prince Edward was performed. It is worth noting that Hampton Court had in fact also, been the palace where Jane Seymour and Henry VIII’s mysterious ‘betrothal’ had taken place, thought to have been

on the morning of 20 May 1536 (the day after Anne Boleyn's execution).

At Windsor, her tomb is overshadowed by the kings with whom she shares it. At Hampton Court, there is no monument over the place where these parts of her body were buried, except perhaps – the High Altar.

It seems almost certain that Queen Jane had her own customary funeral effigy, but that it has since vanished. Such wax effigies were long-established elements of royal funeral ritual. The head of Queen Elizabeth of York's wax effigy survives, whose obsequies as has been noted, were consulted as part of the '*precedents*' for Queen Jane. Elizabeth of York's effigy head is preserved in the collections of Westminster Abbey and is now displayed in the new Queen's Diamond Jubilee Galleries within the Abbey's triforium. The body of the effigy, according to Westminster Abbey, was '*damaged by water during the blitz*' in the Second World War, whilst most of the moveable figures from the tomb of Henry VII and Elizabeth of York were moved to country houses for safekeeping.

We might imagine that Elizabeth of York's funeral like that of Jane Seymour's, was magnificent in keeping with the fact that both were mothers of the Tudor dynasty. It was no accident that the wording on Elizabeth of York's tomb read: '*Here lies Queen Elizabeth, daughter of the former King Edward IV, sister of the formerly appointed King Edward V,*

once the wife of King Henry VII, and the renowned mother of Henry VIII'.

When Henry VIII died, his funeral effigy paid true homage to his true splendour in life, clad in crimson velvet with miniver trimmings, gloves of velvet and '*a night cap of black satin, set full of precious stones*' (4). Funeral effigies were part of the royal cult of spectacle, a pageantry as much a part of death as in life, so in Henry's case, it was correspondingly resplendent. For even in death, the royal presence remained and the King's awesome status was reflected in the jewellery and precious cloth of its attendant effigy.

Jane's body was taken by special chariot to Windsor, pulled by six horses '*with all the pomp and majesty that could be*'. The Lady Mary headed the procession as chief mourner, riding on a horse which was hung with trappings of black velvet. Alms were given to the poor who were present at Windsor and the Provost and boys of Eton College stood as the procession passed '*with caps and tapers in their hands*' (5). Queen Jane was solemnly buried the next day in the vault in the Quire at St George's Chapel, as regal funerals normally required the actual burial to take place the day after the body arrived. Henry VIII did not attend the burial of his wife, as kings did not by tradition do this. (It will be recalled that Catherine Parr, Henry VIII's sixth wife, looked down on the King's burial in 1547 from the oriel window sometimes called Catherine of Aragon's closet, at St George's Chapel). All was recorded

as *'finished by twelve o'clock that day'*.

If we compare the above with Elizabeth of York's funeral 'precedents', it is interesting to note that Elizabeth of York's funeral cortege was followed by *'eight palfreys saddled with black velvet'* and that thirty-seven young girls in white met the procession at Fenchurch and Cheapside, holding lighted tapers, as would the boys of Eton when it came to Queen Jane. Elizabeth was temporarily interred in a space *'between the high altar and the choir'* at Westminster Abbey, where she remained until Henry VII's spectacular new Lady Chapel was completed (6).

Jane Seymour's death followed swiftly after she had fulfilled her primary function as a queen. One might again look to Elizabeth of York's death for possible comparison with those words and verses that appeared as tributes to both queens. One of Elizabeth of York's epitaphs read: *'God grant her now Heaven to increase, And our own King Harry long life and peace'*. The Registrar of the Order of the Garter Dean Aldrich chose these words for Jane: *'Mater in caelo gaudeat'* [Let the mother in heaven rejoice] (7).

We might assume with this healthy male Tudor son and heir, Henry VIII might also look forward to that same *'long life and peace'*. But one male heir was never enough to secure the dynasty and in an age of high infant mortality to which royalty was as subject as any other rank in society, the widower Henry VIII would soon

look forward to his next marriage prospects, not least because England needed a Duke of York to truly secure that *'peace'*, with a spare as well as the heir. After the customary three months of court mourning, he abandoned his own mourning dress. Lady Margaret Beaufort, Countess of Richmond, was fortunate in that her only child – the future Henry VII – was born when she was only thirteen and survived. Henry VIII could not afford the delicate possibility of his dynasty's future resting solely on the baby shoulders of the newborn Prince Edward.

But it was solely to Jane that he owed this son. We can see the importance of this in the great dynastic portrait of the family of Henry VIII displayed at Hampton Court, where the long-dead Jane appears at the side of Henry VIII in a small group completed by the boy figure of Prince Edward, flanked by Henry's daughters, Mary and Elizabeth on both sides. Finally, Henry VIII of course also, chose that same place for himself at Windsor where Jane was buried, having referred to her in his last will as his *'true and loving wife'*. Their planned shared monument was never completed.

In the next century, the great diarist and naval administrator Samuel Pepys visited St George's Chapel and wrote that he *'was shown where the late [King, Charles I] is buried, and King Henry the 8, and my Lady Seymour'*. The vault was opened in 1813 when the coffin of Charles I was

discovered, but Queen Jane's coffin was left undisturbed.

The fact that Henry VIII chose to be buried with Jane Seymour tells us much about how he must have regarded his third wife - although he could hardly have chosen logically to rest with any of the others at the time of his death, two of whom had been beheaded and the other the woman he had acknowledged in life as none other than the 'Princess Dowager'. He was, of course, survived by Anne of Cleves and Catherine Parr, his fourth and sixth wives respectively. But Henry chose Windsor and not Westminster Abbey,

where Henry VII and Elizabeth of York's magnificent tomb was situated, and where Anne of Cleves would in time come to be buried, amongst the Kings and Queens of England.

Jane's burial in the same vault as Henry VIII - which she shares also with King Charles I and an infant child of Queen Anne - somehow keeps her eternally bound to her motto of '*Bound to obey and serve*', the motto that Holbein immortalised in the gold cup he designed for her. It also surely confirms how much this third wife was indeed '*entirely beloved*'.

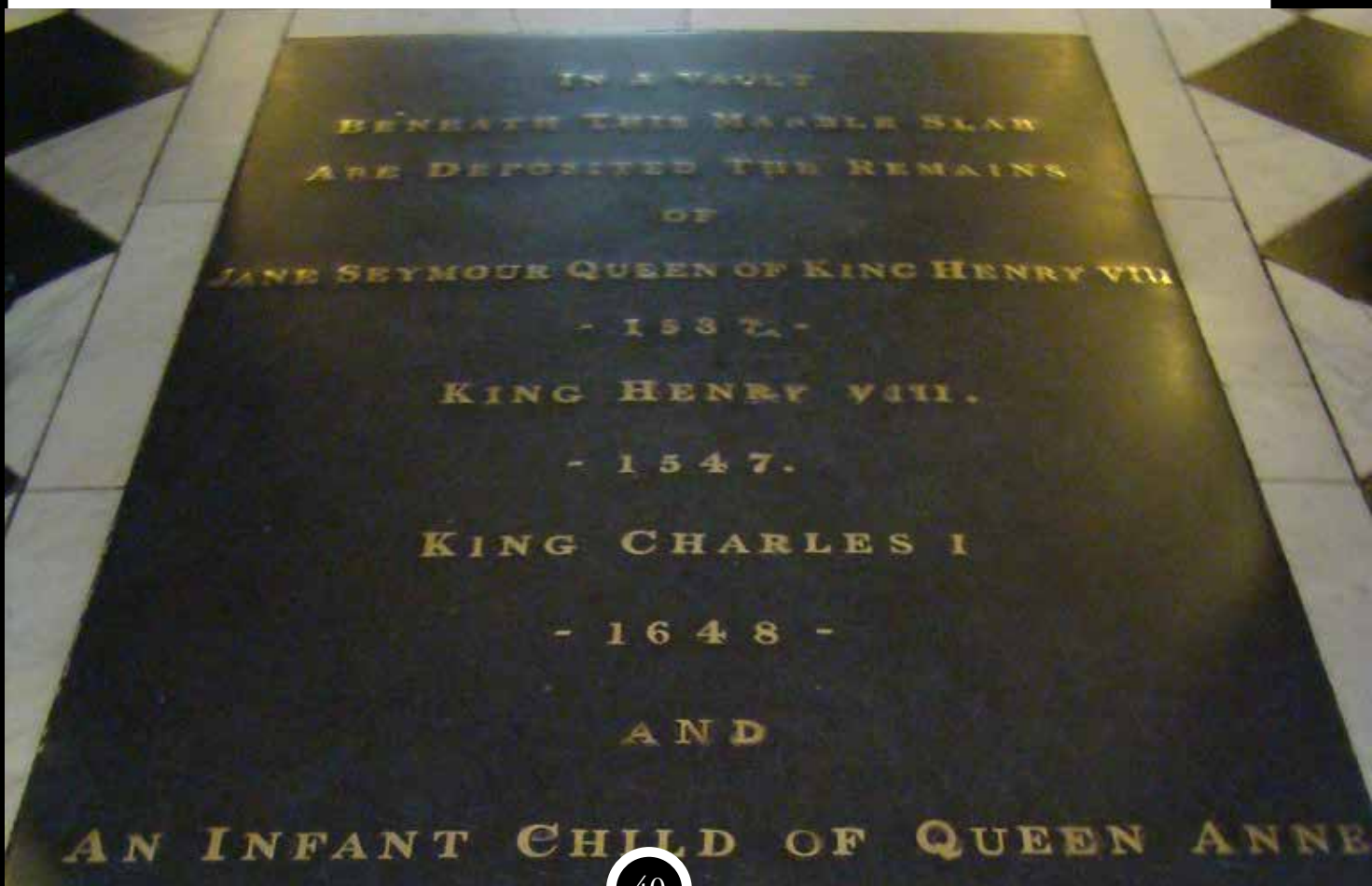
ELIZABETH JANE TIMMS

Alison Weir, *Elizabeth of York*, 404-416

<https://www.chapelroyalhamptoncourt.org.uk/the-tudor-palace-and-chapel-royal/>

Alison Weir, *Henry VIII: King & Court*, 503

Antonia Fraser, *The Six Wives of Henry VIII*, 347



ABOVE: A close up of the memorial at St George's Chapel

RIGHT: St. George's Chapel, Windsor Castle showing the memorial plaque in the centre



Sons of Scandal

by Gareth Russell

Tudor history presents a conundrum. It produces many admittedly, but of specific pertinence to this article is the odd juxtaposition of residual misogyny alongside its inverse, by which I mean that frequently Tudor women are judged unfairly by the double standard – would we, I wonder, include “ambitious” in a list of negative traits in descriptions of Anne Boleyn had she been a man? Yet, there is also a tendency to see the historical men destroyed

alongside these queens as pawns, ciphers, or plot points. We re-shape the portrayals of these men not because of any new evidence or, in some cases, any apparent knowledge of the existing evidence, but because of what we have decided we want the queens to be this decade – victims, vamps, heroines, monsters. The wheel turns frequently.

This, of course, does not happen when it comes to men of the Tudor elite who were dragged under by scandals that were separate from the Royal Family’s. Lord Hungerford, executed in 1540 under the terms of the Buggery Act of 1533, perished on the same day as Thomas Cromwell, but for very different crimes. The baron stood accused of papism, dabbling in witchcraft, treason and having conducted sexual flings, or romances, with two men in his employment. How much of this was true, we may never now know, but it has been Lord Hungerford’s fate to be outshone by the drama of the politician who died alongside him on that sweltering day in 1540.

But of those who were annihilated because they flew too close to the Sun, what do we really know? Or rather, what are we prepared to forget? The five men who lost their lives in the coup that unseated Anne Boleyn in 1536 are achingly tragic examples of figures who were in the wrong place at the wrong time. It is true that Lord Rochford, as the Queen’s brother, and Henry Norris, as her friend of many years, had frequently proven their loyalty to Queen Anne and may have objected, strongly, to Cromwell’s attacks on her, but even then it is hard not to reach the conclusion that they, like Francis Weston, William Brereton, and Mark Smeaton were inconvenient to Cromwell or provided welcome fodder in his quest to usher Anne off this mortal coil.

It is, I think, revealing that when it came to the acclaimed pages of Hilary Mantel’s novels “Wolf Hall” and “Bring up the Bodies” that a storyline was inserted to show most of these men in the worst possible light, to justify Cromwell’s treatment of them as one of long-festering and justified hatred.



Otherwise, the hero of the novels becomes a monster. If there was not a huge defect in the men who were executed on 17th May 1536, then what happened to them was unquestionably monstrous.

We know even less about Henry Manox and Francis Dereham, Catherine Howard's pre-marital romances. When researching her life for the biography I wrote of her, I chased up every shred of evidence I could on Manox and Dereham. I was left with an interesting impression; in that, I think both of them were thoroughly unpleasant individuals. In Manox's case, a flippant and arrogant musician; in Dereham's, an obsessive, possessive, unstable braggard. However, try as I might I could not find any evidence to support the recent presentation of the two men as paedophiles or men who groomed Catherine. All the evidence I could find suggested that both Manox and Dereham were of a similar age to each other and, crucially, to Catherine. It was fascinating to watch how much had been built on so very little, in terms of concrete evidence from the period. The frequently made suggestion that Manox was somehow ten or even twenty years older than Catherine is not, in any way, borne out by the evidence that survives from the 1530s or 1540s. I was relieved to conclude that this

unutterably horrible aspect of poor Catherine's life was not, in my opinion, likely to have happened and while I do not think Dereham deserved the grotesque death he endured in December 1541 at Tyburn, where he was hanged, drawn and quartered for his intimacy with the Queen before her marriage, I still did not feel the need to exonerate him for his many failings as a human.

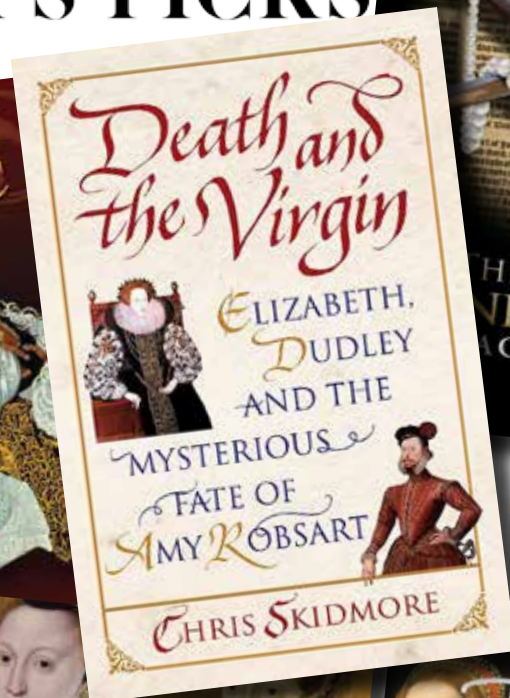
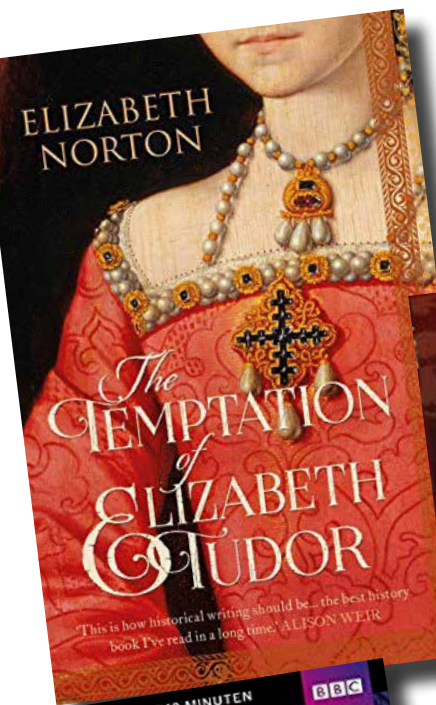
There is a balance to be struck, between the fair and the appropriate. The scandals that destroyed these men were particularly brutal manifestations of a brutal period. Anne Boleyn was a magnificent woman, her personality an eddying swirl of ferocious kindness and equally ferocious temper, neuroses and brilliance interacting constantly; Catherine Howard was elegant, vivacious, charming, a little self-centred but so full of the joys of life that it is impossible not to warm to her. Their respective destructions in 1536 and 1541-2 showed Henry VIII at his worst and the scandals he unleashed gutted the lives and reputations of men caught as bystanders or dim-witted participants in the royal drama. Whatever one might think of their morality and personalities, those men died unfair deaths, as did the glittering, tragic, charismatic queens they served.

GARETH RUSSELL



Tudor Life

EDITOR'S PICKS



For the scandals that faced Henry VII, I am going to recommend an old BBC drama series, "The Shadow of the Tower". It's fantastic and hugely under-rated. It deals in particular delicious detail with the Perkin Warbeck issue. On Henry VIII, there is almost an embarrassment of riches but why not start with Claire Ridgway's "The Fall of Anne Boleyn: A Countdown" and Derek Wilson's "The Queen and the Heretic" for coverage of specific episodes.

David Starkey's "Elizabeth" and Elizabeth Norton's "The Temptation of Elizabeth Tudor" cover the Thomas Seymour debacle, while Alison Weir's "The Children of England" gives a great narrative on Elizabeth I's and Mary I's rivalry in the mid-1550s. Chris Skidmore's "Death and the Virgin" should not be missed for its ground-breaking assessment of the Amy Dudley mystery, while Jenny Wormald's biography of Mary, Queen of Scots gives a spirited argument on what scandal did to Mary Stewart's political career.

THE TUDOR SOCIETY



MEMBERS' BULLETIN

A warm welcome, as always, to our new members. If you're new to us then please do take the time to post something in the Forum as we'd love to get to know about your interests, how you discovered the Tudors and what you want to learn. As you know, we're here for you to make sure you get the most possible from your membership so please share any thoughts and ideas with us so we can bring them to life!

This month I'd like to talk about our incredible Live Chat events for full members. We hold two events every month, one is informal and the other is what we call an "Expert Live Chat". Both are text-only discussions, so you can attend in your pyjamas if you want to! There is no obligation to ask or answer any questions at all - you can simply watch the conversation flow past. As you know, we have an expert video at the start of each month and then the expert joins us in the chatroom to answer any questions you might have.

One thing that you might not know ... if our expert has a published book then we always give away a copy to one of the members who comes to the chat. So not only will you enjoy the chat but you can also get a book! Please do come to the live chats - the more people there are, the more fun they are!

Tim Ridgway



TONI MOUNT

'PASTIMES IN GOOD COMPANY' PART II



Four Gentlemen of High Rank Playing Primero
attributed to the Master of the Countess of Warwick or his circle

Last month, we looked at some of the most popular dice and board games that amused the Tudors, both rich, poor and in between, on chilly winter evenings. In this article, I shall be writing about a few of the card games that were played

in the sixteenth century and then about a more active pastime.

Playing cards were originally imported from France and were differently shaped from the cards we are familiar with today, being longer and narrower and the backs

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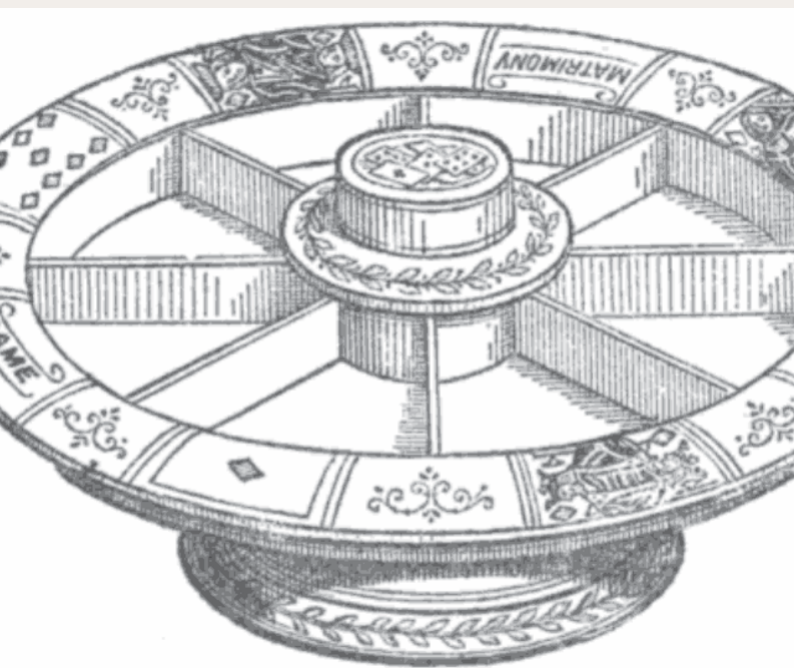
were blank, not patterned. Despite their French heritage, there is an English tradition that the Queen of Hearts was supposed to be based on an image of Elizabeth of York, wife of Henry VII.

Tudor card games had some strange names, such as Mumchance, Click-Clack and Gleek. Imperial was a trick-taking game for two players, similar to the nineteenth-century game of Piquet, but Henry VIII's favourite was Primero. Primero was the forerunner of Poker and Henry never had much luck as a player since this was the game that led to his huge losses, as mentioned last time. Primero was played slightly differently across Europe, usually with a deck of only forty cards, omitting the eights, nines and tens. It may have originated in either Italy or Spain and seems to be the first card game ever played in England, probably in Henry VII's reign c.1500. Shakespeare mentions Primero in a number of his plays, including *The Merchant of Venice* and, not surprisingly, *Henry VIII*, in which there is a scene where

the king and his brother-in-law, Charles Brandon, Duke of Suffolk, play the game. In the painting below, the grey-bearded man, second from the right, is said to be Lord Burleigh, although he once claimed he was too busy dealing with affairs of state for Queen Elizabeth to have time to waste on so frivolous a matter as playing cards.

If you wish to have a go at playing Primero, the rules can be found online.¹ A card game with the unusual name of 'Pope Joan' was all the rage at the English court in the late 1520s. It had come from France, where it was known as 'nain jaune' or 'yellow dwarf' which is how the French refer to the 9 of diamonds. It is suggested that the game was also called Pope Julius, but the Protestants renamed it Pope Joan as a joke, referring to the legend that the Pope who reigned from 855-857/8 was actually an English woman – a story vehemently denied by the Roman Catholic Church and yet there is, intriguingly, a two-and-a-half-year gap

A 'Pope Joan' board from 1730



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in the list of popes between Benedict III, who was expelled from office in September 855, and the election of Nicholas I, in April 858.²

Pope Joan was a game for three to six players, using a pack with the eight of diamonds removed. It is said that the game became symbolic of the quarrel between Henry VIII and Catharine of Aragon over the annulment of their marriage because the cards and combinations of them were named Ace, King, Queen, Jack/Knave, Pope [the 9 of diamonds], Game, Matrimony and Intrigue. There is a story that Catherine of Aragon was playing the game with her lady-in-waiting and future rival, Anne Boleyn, and seeing Anne winning the hand, said: 'Lady Anne, you have the good fortune to always stop at a king. But you are not like the others, you will have all, or none'. In this case, the stakes could not have been higher for both ladies.

To begin, the board is set up or 'dressed'. It has eight compartments named Pope Joan, Matrimony, Intrigue, Ace, King, Queen, Jack or Knave and Game. Each player contributes a stake: two counters or coins are put into each of the divisions Matrimony and Intrigue, one each into the other divisions and any remaining counters or coins all go into the 9 of diamonds or Pope Joan division. The fifty-one cards [the whole pack minus the 8 of diamonds] are then dealt out to the players, plus an extra hand that will not be played. The unknown cards in this hand act as 'stops' because they will prevent the completion of a suit, e.g. if the 6 of clubs is in this extra hand, this will prevent the playing of the 7 of clubs. Cards

are dealt so every player has the same number of cards and any remaining are added to the 'stops' hand, except for the final card which is turned over to indicate the suit of trumps.

The Ace is the lowest card; the King the highest. The player to the dealer's left plays his lowest card in a suit and names it, following with the subsequent cards of the same suit, if he has them. If he doesn't have the next card, then the player who does have it then plays it, until a 'stop' is reached, i.e. a card of which the next highest in the suit lies in the extra hand not being used. All Kings are stops, as is the 7 of diamonds and every card that precedes one hidden in the extra hand or below a card that has already been played. After a stop, the player of that last card leads again with the lowest card he has.

If a player opens a round with the Ace of trumps, he takes the 'pot' from that compartment. If a round follows through to a court card of the suit of trumps [K, Q or J], then the player takes the 'pot' in the appropriate compartment. If the same player lays the Jack and Queen of trumps, he claims the Intrigue 'pot'; the Queen and King of trumps wins the Matrimony 'pot', and laying all three trump court cards wins both, plus the King 'pot'. If a player opens a round with his lowest card being the 9 of diamonds, he wins the Pope Joan 'pot'. In some cases, if agreed before hand, the playing of the Pope Joan card may end the game. Otherwise, the first player to lay all his cards down wins the Game 'pot' and receives penalty counters or coins from each player, one for every card left in their hand, except from the player who may hold the Pope Joan card

TONI MOUNT

but hasn't played it. He is excused this penalty payment. Unclaimed stakes are left in the compartments and added to the 'pots' for the next game.

The game of Pope Joan remained popular until Victorian times and was so frequently played in Scotland, with such huge sums of money being lost, that the 9 of diamonds was renamed there as the Curse of Scotland.

For those in need of a more energetic pastime than sitting around a card table, then as now, they could play football. Quite when the game was invented we don't know but in 1314 a law was passed, banning the game in London because men and boys preferred kicking and throwing balls to practising the far more important skills of archery that were vital for the defence of England. Despite the ban being renewed by Edward III, Henry IV & V, Edward IV, Richard III and Henry VII & VIII, it becomes clear from the records that no one could stop the popular game. William Porlond, the clerk of the Brewers' Company of London, noted in his memorandum book that the Brewers' Hall was regularly hired for use by other City Livery Companies, Guilds and various groups. One entry notes that 'ye ffootballpleyers' hired the Hall twice in 1422-23, the earliest evidence for any kind of 'football club'.³

However, Tudor football was a very different game to the one we would recognise. The goals – usually the porches of two neighbouring parish churches – could be miles apart, the number of players was unlimited and the pig's-bladder ball could be picked up and thrown or kicked in an attempt to score a

goal. Wrestling, punching, head-butting and hair-pulling were all allowed and injuries to players were expected. Fatalities were not unknown, as Coroners' Rolls record. There were no time constraints except darkness and a game could go on all day. The teams were often made up of men from rival villages, or married men versus apprentices. Despite its rowdiness, women's matches were popular: maidens versus wives.

In 1514, Alexander Barclay, a monk from Ely in Cambridgeshire, described a game of ball which, although it includes reference to both hands and feet, he says is called 'Foote-ball':

*They get the bladder and blowe it
great and thin, with many beanes and
peason put within, It ratleth, shineth
and soundeth clere and fayre, While
it is throwen and caste up in the
eyre, Eche one contendeth and hath
a great delite, with foote and hande
the bladder for to smite, if it fall to
the ground they lifte it up again...
Overcometh the winter with driving
the foote-ball.*

In c.1520, Richard Mulcaster became a teacher and headmaster at a number of English schools. He was enthusiastic about football and seems to have attempted to restructure the violent game, introducing elements we would recognise. His writings refer to 'sides' and 'parties' (teams), 'a judge over the parties' (a referee), 'standings' (positions) and even a 'trayning maister' (a coach). Mulcaster also suggested:

*Some smaller number [of players]
with such overlooking [rules]*



applied], sorted into sides and standings, not meeting with their bodies so boisterously to trie their strength: nor shouldring or shuffling one an other so barbarously ... may use footeball for as much good to the body, by the chiefe use of the legges.

Despite both Henry VII and Henry VIII forbidding the common folk from playing football because it interfered with their compulsory Sunday archery practice, the law didn't apply to the rich. In fact, Henry VIII's Great Wardrobe accounts note that in 1526 the king's footwear included: 'Shoes ... one leather pair for football'. The king's boots had cost four shillings (nearly £100 today) and had been made by his personal shoemaker, Cornelius Johnson, in 1525. They were included in the inventory made of the king's clothes when he died in 1547. It would be fascinating to know how a royal game of footie was organised.

In 1531, the Church complained about football being played on Sundays and the unchristian violence of the game but then, oddly, went on to extol its health benefits. A churchman, Thomas Eliot, said that:

Foote balle, wherin is nothings but beastly furie and exstreme violence; wherof procedeth hurte, and consequently rancour and malice do remaine with them that be wounded.

By 1572, the Bishop of Rochester was so against the violent sport, he demanded that the 'evil game' was outlawed for good, for rich and poor alike. As before, nobody took any notice.

Henry VIII wasn't the only sixteenth-century monarch interested in football. Mary, Queen of Scots must have been a fan because, according to Sir Francis Knollys, in 1568, at Carlisle Castle in Cumbria, the queen watched as '20 of her retinue played at football before her for 2 hours, very strongly, nimbly and skilfully'.

Scotland can also lay claim to the oldest surviving football which was found hidden behind panelling in The Queen's Chamber of Stirling Castle in 1981.⁴ The ball dates to c.1540 and was made from a pig's bladder covered in leather and is approximately 6" (150mm) in diameter, so rather smaller than a modern football.

Next time, I shall be looking at the more relaxing outdoor sport of angling and some refined indoor pastimes that did not involve gambling.

TONI MOUNT

1 <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Primer>

2 An old but intriguing book about Pope Joan, if you want to read more, is *The She-Pope* by Peter Stansford, 1999.

3 <https://www.brewershall.co.uk/public-news/the-brewers-book-of-william-porlond/>

4 <http://www.graveshamtrophycentre.com/pages/131-tudors-football-history-1500-50>



THE ANNE BOLEYN FILES AND
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TUDOR CALENDAR 2020



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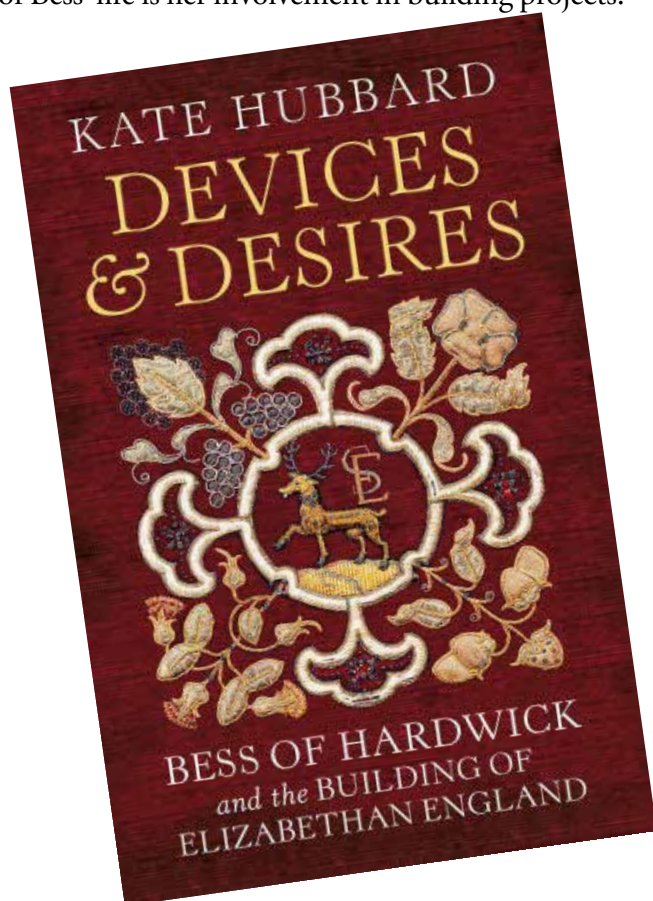
Charlie Book Reviews

DEVICES AND DESIRES: BESS OF HARDWICK

Kate Hubbard



Bess of Hardwick was perhaps one of the most interesting noblewomen in Elizabethan England, having married four times, been involved in the imprisonment of Mary Queen of Scots, as well as being remarkably independent for a woman of the period. Perhaps one of the most overlooked aspects of Bess' life is her involvement in building projects.



Devices and Desires: Bess of Hardwick and the Building of Elizabethan England by Kate Hubbard is both a biography of Bess and, through her many splendid buildings, an architectural history of Elizabethan England. It is an interesting angle to take and Hubbard tackles the subject well.

The author explains why Bess did so well and gives us an idea of the person she really was, explaining that early loss and financial insecurity help explain Bess' 'drive to fortify herself with land, assets and cash, though for Bess the process of acquisition became compulsive, not merely a question of security, but of power and control'. She goes on to say:

'She had learned that the rights of a widow were considerably superior to those of a wife: as a widow, her goods and chattels were her own; she could hold, buy and sell freehold land and property; she could bring a lawsuit and write a will. She had discovered that she could expect no one to look out for her interests other than herself. And she had borne witness to the determined efforts on the part of both her parents to keep intact a small Derbyshire estate, Hardwick, a place that would come to exert a similar hold on Bess.'

There is much information in this book on everyday life and about running a household, including how Bess managed her own expenses. The vast amount of research Hubbard has put into this book is evident throughout, with the author frequently referring to her letters (more than 230, we are told), building plans and household accounts. It is fascinating but can feel a little bogged

down by detail at times and so perhaps not for the casual reader.

Devices and Desires: Bess of Hardwick and the Building of Elizabethan England will only appeal to a select crowd of readers, due to its mixture of both biography and architectural history, but it is an interesting book nevertheless. There is a lot of information in there that may not interest those just wanting a biography of Bess of Hardwick, but it is presented in an engaging manner and so I would recommend this book to those interested in the topic. Any prospective readers should also be warned that they will find themselves wanting to visit the places mentioned in this book.

BOLEYN GOLD

Richard M. Jones



There have been countless fiction books on Anne Boleyn over the years, most of which tell the same old story of her catching the King's eye and being beheaded after three years of marriage. However, some have recently started to incorporate modern elements, changing the story slightly and, in this reviewer's opinion, making it more interesting after years of reading the same story. Richard Jones takes this a step further with his book *Boleyn Gold*, which is set in the present day and involves a treasure that was lost with Anne Boleyn's execution.

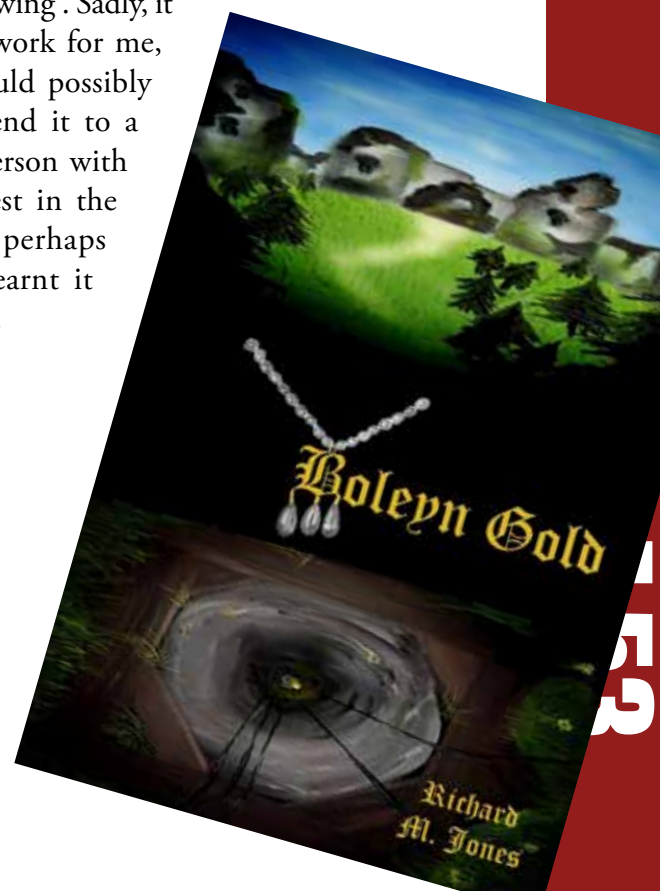
The book starts with the unearthing of some documents that suggest that Anne Boleyn was trying to help the monasteries during the Dissolution. The author came up with the ingenious idea that Anne was saving the treasures from the churches being destroyed, working from the inside to help protect her religion:

"So good old Queen Anne, the one that most people didn't like, was secretly saving the treasures and the people from certain death. There was a secret group calling themselves the

Guardians of the People and they managed to save hundreds of church relics, thousands of people and had them all spirited away in secret locations across the country."

The main character is a treasure hunter and, with his daughter and a friend, decides to go looking for the relics that Anne and her followers managed to hide away from Henry VIII and Cromwell's men. The author has done his research, as it presents Anne as a reformer, not a Protestant. Having started a secret group to hide the relics is an interesting idea and one that initially caught my attention, however, it did drag on a little too long. There seemed to be a lot of dialogue compared to description and it was not exactly a heavy read, with really short chapters. It could do with a good edit, which is a shame as the idea is a good one. It would have also been nice to see some flashbacks, like the one at the beginning, to show more about how Anne started the group.

Boleyn Gold is very much a fiction book but with a Boleyn twist, one that should have worked well. The premise is a good one and could have been excellent, a way of using history but without repeating the same old story. Unfortunately, the characters lacked depth and the writing style was difficult to get on with. It seemed simple, perhaps aimed at a younger audience, with a lot of dialogue and very little description. There was too much 'telling' rather than 'showing'. Sadly, it did not work for me, but I could possibly recommend it to a young person with an interest in the Tudors, perhaps having learnt it at school.





WENDY J. DUNN ON WRITING

Thinking about writing

Dear Writer/Reader,
Jessamyn West once wrote: “Writing is a solitary occupation. Family, friends, and society are the natural enemies of the writer. He must be alone, uninterrupted, and slightly savage if he is to sustain and complete an undertaking” (Gabay 2006, p. 294).

For me, fiction writing is all about surrender. To arrive at that point needs discipline, and the interior space to dream stories onto the page. Writers need passion to dig out the clay to make the bricks of narrative. Passion gives writers drive and purpose – the reason to write. I believe a writer’s passion is also what engages the reader.

Life is the prism through which all art is filtered and made sense of. Like all writers, I use my own life to dig out the clay to shape into stones that construct my writing. I also use my life experience as a way to test the weight of these

stones.

The ancients believed that when “two harps being tuned alike, and one being played, the chords of the other would follow the tune with a faint, sympathetic music” (Philips 1860). This is what I seek in my writing, that the tune evokes the harp of connection, of collective memory.

My first draft requires silence. I need to hear myself, feel myself. My whole body is involved in the creative process. I am forever testing out my text, tasting, savouring words, to see if they make me vibrate. Through engaging with my imagination, I put myself in the same space as my characters, to feel their pain, their joy – their experience of being.

My creative habits have changed, or rather evolved, over the years. Once upon a time, I was writing my first novel while parenting young children. I did not have my own space to write then, but

worked in the midst of family. That was when I discovered how frighteningly obsessive I can be when I lose myself in a writing project. My writing apprenticeship taught me to work hard to achieve a life balance. Whilst I don’t always get that right, the core of my existence is my family; the well being of my family is more important to me than my writing.

One of the harsh realities of being “called to write” is only other writers really understand the work involved and the discipline needed to get it done. Sometimes, it seems to me my family think I am doing nothing in my study, or when they see me with my computer. Managing interruptions has been part of my writing process for ever; I have now two signs on my study door reminding my family to respect the closed door.

When I worked as a primary teacher, I used to wake up at dawn to write because no one else was up then, and



the house was quiet and still. I had at least one solid hour of writing time before I had to wake my children up to get ready for school. I made their lunches, did the washing, fed the cat, filled the dishwasher and had my breakfast. That became not so much a routine but a ritual.

Nowadays, I no longer greet the dawn, but – on the days I can dedicate to writing – I am generally up by 8am, and in my study by nine. Once a bedroom of one of my grown children, having my own place to write is still a delight. I'm surrounded by books and all the Tudor bits and pieces I have collected over the years.

Novel writing always gets put on the back burner during the university year. I work

as a writing tutor, and that keeps me very busy. But it also funds one or two annual writing retreats during the year, which helps me catch up on my writing goals. My long summer university break is another time I use to catch up. Whenever I am in my study to write fiction, I give myself a goal of 500 words a day to tick off for my work in progress. 500 words is easily done, and by the time I reach that target, I usually want to write more. The most important ritual to begin my day properly has been always my long morning shower. For me, long showers induce a dreamlike state and open the door to writing. I have solved many a writing problem washing my hair.

The space where writing

is created is called the drafting process. Rebecca McClanahan talks about this space in her practice as an essayist, "What a writer must do, I suppose—at least this is what I try to do as I write and revise—is to locate the essential character of the text that is trying to come forth" (McClanahan cited by Clark 2009). Her words apply to my practice as a fiction writer, too. The revision process is when the work tells me what it wants to be. Like McClanahan, I am a writer who has learnt to abide with the wishes of the work "rather than to force upon it my original intent" (Clark 2009). It is through writing my first draft that I discover what I am really writing about. That is when I turn more from an organic

writer to one plotting out how to make my story really work.

There is something quite magical about creating something out of nothing – when the first blank page becomes the threshold to stepping into a world inhabited by my characters, before I actually inhabit my characters themselves. It is when I take my work through subsequent drafts, the ghost of the work begins to gain true substance. Through the drafting process, I scrape away at the palimpsest of my textual ghost for the work to seize its life, its purpose for coming into being – first for me as its writer, and then, through more scraping, to connect to the reader. Once I have the clay of my first draft and start the process of shaping my bricks, building my work as if inside out, then more and more objectivism is called for until such time my creation is complete.

Writing gives me a voice. It takes me to a place where I can forget the physical me, surrender to my muse who articulates with confidence. Writing gives me a safe place to think. The paradox of writing is that it is not safe. Writing pushes and takes you out of

your comfort zone, opens your eyes, confronts you with hard truths. Inspiration; seeking out the unknowable; gaining knowledge by doing – all these things are the reality and excitement of art – and I practice writing as an artist. My work must “speak” to me, tell me its direction, its meaning, its substance. It is only through the drafting process this happens, when I discover what I am really writing about – or whether this work will move forward.

I want to conclude this brief reflection by returning to a theme I will speak about many times in this column. I want to speak about failure – something that stops so many, too many, from following their hearts.

One of my favourite writing quotes is something written by Samuel Beckett: “Ever tried? Ever failed? No matter. Try Again. Fail again. Fail better”.

I used to be terrified of failure. Years ago, I wrote in my first novel that it was easier to roll up and play hedgehog rather than face what you fear. I think that line birthed from receiving another rejection for that work. Nowadays, I remind myself that failure is not to be

feared. What is to be feared is allowing fear the upper hand to navigate our lives. The years have taught me that failure is a powerful learning experience. Sometimes, it seems my particular personal life quest – to unpack an experience of failure and come out stronger for it.

Writers, especially during their time of apprenticeship, must learn to deal with failure, or perceived failure. To be a “practicing writer” means to be willing to put our work “out there,” in the public realm. Subjectivity will always make its judgement; for a beginner writer, that judgement may mean work is returned, rejected. What a writer does then sorts out the stayers from the wannabes. A true writer does not give on their craft. Work rejected? All right – that means revisiting it, looking it over with critical eyes once again, maybe even doing a total rewrite. A writer’s skills as a craftsperson is honed and developed through engagement with text – through interrogating their own writing and through interrogating the writing of others.

Want to be a writer? Don’t give up.

WENDY J. DUNN

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Author Interview

HELPING OTHERS TO ENJOY HISTORY

This month our interview is with Beth von Staats. Many will know Beth for her work running the exceptionally popular website queenanneboleyn.com, but she has a number of strings to her bow.



Hello Beth. Thank you so much for joining us here at the Tudor Society. Not a first for you, of course. We have a long history together! But for the members who don't know you, please tell us a bit about yourself.

How did you first become interested in history? Is it just the Tudors you love, or is there anything else that you feel a real affinity to?

My mother was a WWII War Bride from Wales. My Welsh grandparents were very concerned that as an American I would not come to learn and value the customs and history of my Welsh/British heritage, so when visiting them, they made it a point to bring me to historic sites throughout the United Kingdom. Being

Author Interview

from Milford Haven, my grandfather taught me the history of King Henry VII, very proud that his home was forefront in Henry VII's conquest to the throne. My interest in the Tudor Dynasty was sparked from their influence.

Beyond English history, I have a strong interest in "local history", which for me is the history of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts. Thus, I love learning about the Wampanoag Nation of Native Americans of Southeastern Massachusetts, local Civil War History such as the heroics of the Massachusetts 54th Volunteer Infantry, and also early American Colonial and Revolutionary history.

Your website and associated social media, queenanneboleyn.com, has been and continues to be hugely popular, and you have so many well-known contributors. How did it come about?

Many people will be surprised that Queenanneboleyn.com was originally a high-end "Role Play" website. If a browser goes to the Categories listing on the home page the writing of the role play groups still is available for reading. (QAB is proud to preserve the hard work of the original role play contributors.) Eventually, Colleen Daly, QAB's fantastic web designer and I decided that our mission to highlight English History heavily outweighed the Role Play origins of the website, and at that time, the mission and guiding operational principles to host a non-income bearing website highlighting the Tudor Era of English History became the site's primary focus.

Colleen Daly is largely responsible for Queenanneboleyn.com's success. Let's face it. The domain name alone is worth its weight in gold, and Colleen secured the domain and later gifted it to me. Colleen also hosts and maintains the website with no financial compensation, her contribution to our mission to highlight both emerging and professional historians, history writers and historical fiction writers.

I know you have a great team of people who work with you. How did you meet them?

Heavens, I have been blessed with meeting many English History enthusiasts, historians and historical fiction writers through Queenanneboleyn.com. Many people do not realize that @QueenAnneBoleyn on twitter is a QAB account. Marisa Levy, a friend I met originally through Role Play. Marisa built @QueenAnneBoleyn on Twitter, and in doing so, networked with a variety of historians and historical fiction writers, inviting them to contribute to the website. It was my role to accomplish the same via Facebook. Over time, we met and developed relationships with many fantastic people in the Tudor History community.

I still pinch myself sometimes with the success of the website. As a non-income bearing endeavour, no one is paid for their contributions, yet Alison Weir, Leanda de Lisle, Claire Ridgway, Derek Wilson, Diarmaid MacCulloch, Natalie Grueninger,

Author Interview

Sarah Morris, Nancy Bilyeau and a host of other historians and fiction writers have been steadfast supporters. The Contributors page on Queenanneboleyn.com tells the story.

What are do you enjoy most about running QAB and what parts are the most challenging?

I enjoy providing a forum for those who may not have one otherwise, and this is why Queenanneboleyn.com hosts a variety of blogs on the website. We are very proud that several bloggers began their journey and QAB and now host their own sites and history forums.

My biggest challenge with the website is simply time to contribute my own writing and adding content of quality of a regular basis. My profession – the one that pays the bills – is in non-profit program administration, thus unlike professionals such as Claire Ridgway of *The Anne Boleyn Files* and *Tudor Society* and Natalie Gueninger of *In the Footsteps of Anne Boleyn*, Queenanneboleyn.com is a “hobby site”, everything done in my free time, which is limited.

You also run ‘The Tudor Thomases’ Facebook page, and have a book published on Thomas Cranmer. What is it that draws you particularly towards this group of men?

As I explained earlier, the domain name www.queenanneboleyn.com is a priceless gift to me from the site’s web designer Colleen Daly. I freely admit that the vast majority of content on the website focused on the remarkable life of Queen Anne Boleyn is contributed by our fantastic quest writers. My contribution more readily focuses upon the men around her, as well as her husband King Henry VIII, particularly Thomas Cromwell, Thomas Cranmer, and Thomas More.

Obviously, the name “Thomas” was widely popular during the 16th century, so there is an endless list of fascinating historical figures to learn about and highlight. When I realized how many articles I researched focusing on this or that “Thomas”, I decided to create a blog and Facebook page focusing on them.

I’ve heard you speak in the past about why you think American people love Anne Boleyn and the Tudors generally. We have so many fantastic members from the U.S.! Can you tell us about why you think this is?

I wrote an article about his very topic. For more on Americans fascination with Queen Anne Boleyn, so see *Anne Boleyn – Our Anointed Beloved Queen of Anglophilia*. <https://queenanneboleyn.com/2015/05/19/anne-boleyn-our-anointed-queen-of-anglophilia/>

Author Interview

You are incredibly knowledgeable, but also incredibly busy! Do you have any more writing projects in the pipeline? What are the things you'd like to be able to research more about?

Since my comfort level rests with short works rather than extensive biographies, anthology composition makes the most sense for me. I have three major interests that lend themselves to an anthology format I would love to pursue as time allows. Without giving away the store, let's just say several of England's most fascinating "Tudor Thomases" would be highlighted.

Lastly, the question I ask everyone – if you could recommend three 'must read' history books, from any period, what would they be?

My three favorite book are:

God's Traitors, Terror & Faith in Elizabethan England, by Jessie Childs

John Adams, by David McCullough

Cleopatra, by Stacy Schiff

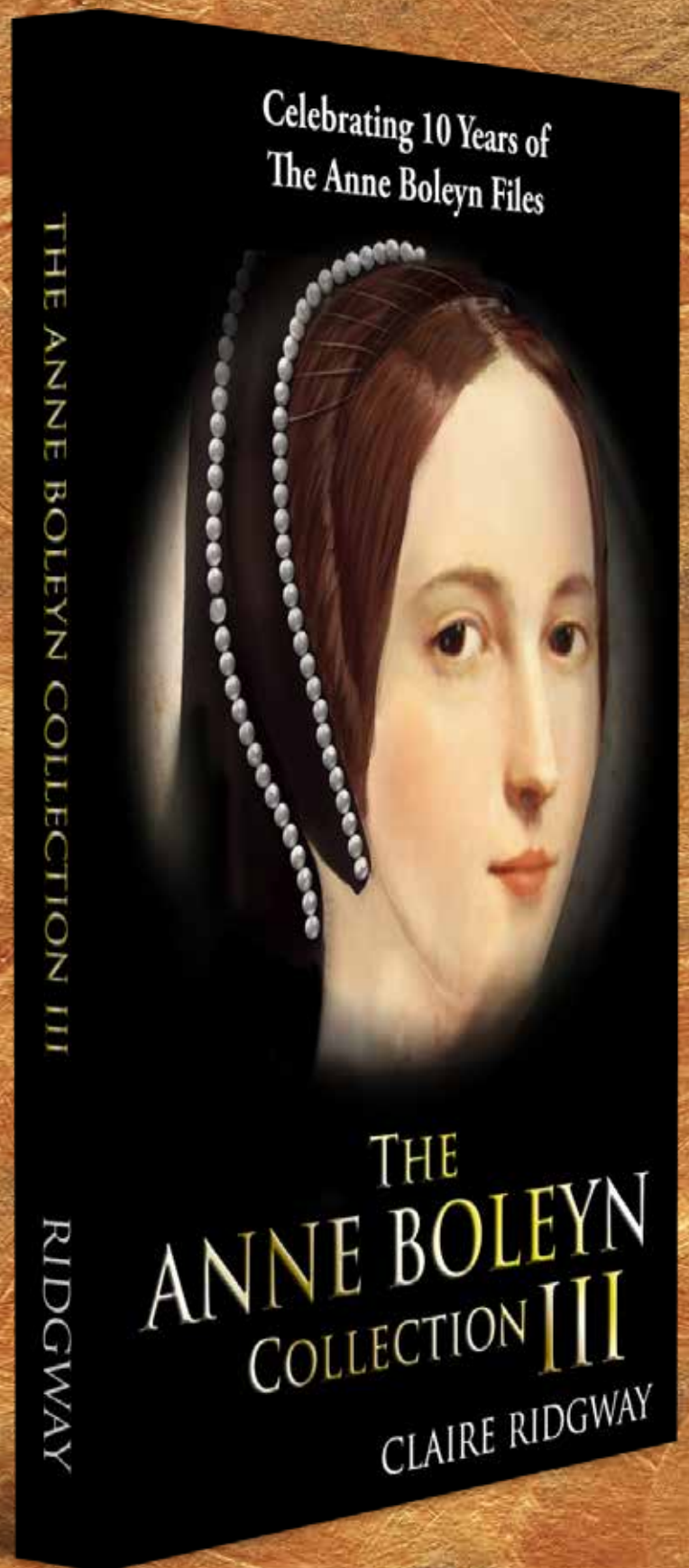
Please take a look at www.queenanneboleyn.com, as you will find a real wealth of Tudor treasures. You can also look out for @QueenAnneBoleyn on Twitter, and Queenanneboleyn.com on Facebook. You can also check out 'The Tudor Thomases' on Facebook. Beth's book 'Thomas Cranmer in a Nutshell' is published by MadeGlobal Publishing, and is available on Amazon both in Kindle and paperback formats.



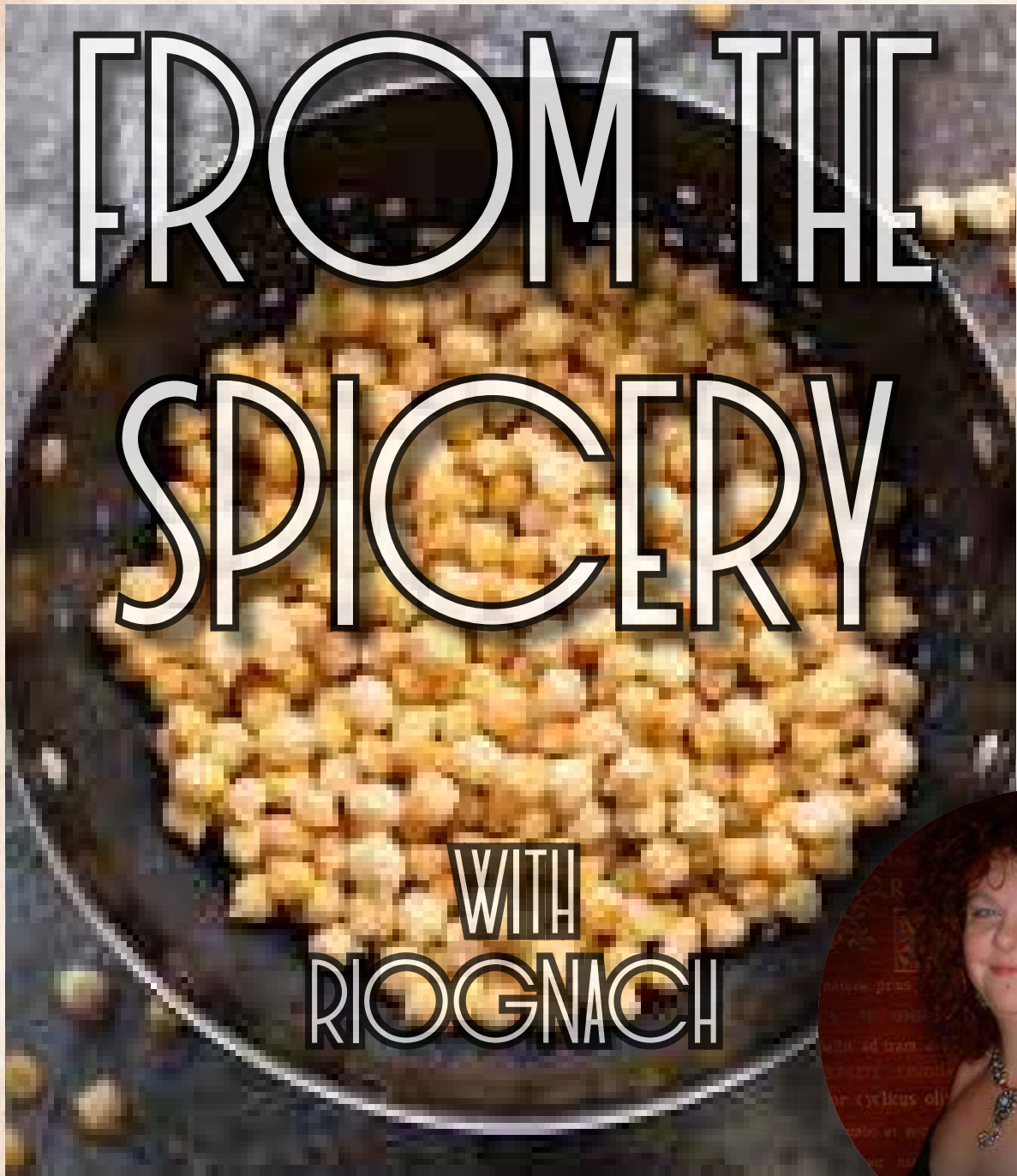
THE ANNE BOLEYN COLLECTION III

Claire Ridgway, best-selling author and creator of the Anne Boleyn Files website, celebrates the 10th anniversary of her site with this collection of articles on Anne Boleyn, second wife of King Henry VIII, and Tudor history.

Written in Claire's easy-going style, but with an emphasis on good history and sound research, The Anne Boleyn Collection III is perfect reading for Tudor history lovers everywhere. Myths, popular misconceptions and inaccuracies, are all challenged by Claire using contemporary evidence.



OUT EARLY NOVEMBER
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CIBOS VENEREM
INCITANTES

WE ALL KNOW that medieval foods weren't just something one ate to give the body fuel and sustenance. Far from it, in fact! In terms of health, everything one ate had a direct effect on the body. With this in mind, I thought we'd take a light-hearted look at some of the foods that were considered aphrodisiacs, and might have just fuelled Henry's lusty nature!

Frankly speaking, some of the oddest (and sometimes disgusting) things were considered to be the absolute bees-knees when it came to setting the scene for a romantic encounter. We're all familiar with things like oysters and strawberries, but would you associate chickpeas with a healthy libido?

Chickpeas

Apparently, while being a very nourishing food, chickpeas were considered to be a very windy, moist and warm food. In fact, they're the only foodstuff that combines these particular three properties.¹ The medieval concept of the body being ruled by the four humors (aka Humorism) is well known, and chickpeas enough of those humors to warrant the title of the ultimate medieval aphrodisiac. Why chickpeas, I hear you ask? Well to put it as delicately as possible, sprouted chickpeas bare an uncanny

resemblance to semen. I'll never look at a dish of fresh hummus that same way ever again!

If a dish of freshly prepared chickpeas isn't wild enough for you, how about a "cake" (and I use the term advisedly), made from the following:

"the brains of fifty birds and doves, twenty yolks of birds eggs, the juice of pounded and crushed lamb's meat, the juice of roasted onions, carrot juice, and a substantial amount of butter."²

This most tempting cake was concocted by a Twelfth-century Jewish physician for a male patient, who apparently found it to be most helpful.



1 Harvey, K. Medieval People and Their Aphrodisiacs in Brewminate - A Bold Blend of News and Ideas. August 15, 2018. <https://brewminate.com/medieval-people-and-their-aphrodisiacs/>

2 Harvey, K. Ibid

Allegedly said “cake” was allegedly “pleasant tasting”(?!), and was to be eaten with sweet wine.³ Probably a very large amount of sweet wine to get past the bird brains etc. Yuck :-)

Medieval Strawberries⁴

As mentioned above, strawberries were also considered a surefire way of seducing your lady (or lord). In fact, the entire strawberry plant was supposed to be a cure for depressive illnesses. The quintessential English dish of strawberries and cream was apparently created by Thomas Wolsey for Henry VIII.⁵ It is not known if this was the Lord Chancellor’s attempt to stay in the monarch’s good books. Of course, the strawberries enjoyed by Henry were vastly different from the intensively farmed varieties that abound today. Wild strawberries are much smaller than their modern counterparts, are white in colour and have a higher proportion of seeds. This makes me wonder if Wolsey might have had access to an early cultivar or hybrid that produced a more appetising-looking fruit.

A Proper Newe Booke of Cokerie (1557) gives us the following recipe for a Tarte of Strawberyes:

Take and strayne theym wyth the yolkes of foure egges, and a lyttle whyte

breade grated, then season it up wyth suger and swete butter and so bake it.⁶

The next dish was served up at a “Chivalric Love and Delight” feast one February several years ago. The idea was to serve foods that might ignite the fires of chivalric love and delight within the revellers. As far as I’m aware, there is no historical precedent for the dish, other than it is based on (and calls itself) a syllabub.

A Rose Syllabub is made by taking rosé wine, mixing it with caster sugar and a little orange juice and zest together in a bowl, and placing in the fridge to chill. Take a kilogram of small strawberries (small, because the larger varieties are frequently watery to taste), and sprinkle with a small amount of caster sugar. Allow the strawberries to macerate for 45 minutes at room temperature, before adding the sweetened and chilled rosé wine. To bring the dish together, gently beat some cream until it just begins to hold its shape. Carefully pour into to the chilled wine and strawberry mix, and continue to whisk until you have a bowlful of boozy creamy delight (the recipes creator’s words, not mine). Pour into serving glasses and top with candied rose petals.

As to why strawberries were first associated with love and lust, I’m not entirely sure. It MAY have something to do with their colour, aroma and taste. Or it might have something to do with the fact that strawberries contain various

3 Harvey, K. Ibid

4 <https://abbeymedievalfestival.com/2016/06/strawberries/>

5 Driscoll-Woodford, H. Wimbledon’s Strawberries and Cream Has Tudor Roots, 23 June 2010. http://news.bbc.co.uk/local/surrey/hi/people_and_places/newsid_8756000/8756132.stm

6 Wayback Machine Internet Archive. <https://web.archive.org/web/20121026025943/http://www.celtnet.org.uk/recipes/elizabethan/fetch-recipe.php?rid=eliz-strawberry-tart>



trace elements that are now known to be beneficial in correcting chemical imbalances within the brain. But then, of course, it might have more to do with the suggestive shape of the strawberry, looking for all the world like a pair of plump and pouting lips.

Skirret

A typically Tudor aphrodisiac is skirret. Looking very much like anaemic mandrake, skirret (*Sium sisarum*) in fact belongs to the same family as celery and carrot, salsify and parsley. Despite its Asian origins, skirret has been found in gardens and apothecaries since the early medieval period. Pliny the Elder, and renowned Twelfth-century Benedictine Abbess, Hildegard von Bingen, all spoke highly of skirret. Von Bingen considered skirret to be 'hot and dry', whereas herbalist Nicholas Culpepper called it 'hot and moist'. If we go back to the qualities of chickpeas (windy,

moist, warm), then there is something of humoral disconnect as far as skirret is concerned.

With regards to skirret's use as an aphrodisiac Modern-day food historian, Marc Meltonville cites "gentleman gardener" John Worlidge (1640-1700). Worlidge states that skirret is "by physicians esteemed a great restorative and good for weak stomachs, and an effectual friend to Dame Venus".⁷ Culpeper also states that skirret "provokes venery"⁸, where venery is an archaic term for sexual indulgence. Meltonville goes on to add "sadly anything vaguely unusual in the Tudor world seems to have been claimed as an aphrodisiac; there's no proof skirret is any more romantic than cabbage".⁹ I do like his last phrase :-D

Riognach O'Geraghty

⁷ Lawrence, S. Ibid

⁸ Culpeper, N. Culpeper's Complete Herbal & English Physician, 1841, p226

⁹ Lawrence, S. Op Cit

NOVEMBER'S "ON THIS"

Background image: Autumn Trees, Holywood, Ireland, © Albert Bridge

<p>1 Nov 1456</p> <p>Edmund Tudor, 1st Earl of Richmond, died from the plague at Carmarthen Castle.</p>	<p>2 Nov 1541</p> <p>Archbishop Thomas Cranmer left a letter for Henry VIII in the Holy Day Closet at Hampton Court Palace detailing Catherine Howard's colourful past, and how she had "lived most corruptly and sensually".</p>		
<p>6 Nov 1541</p> <p>Henry VIII abandoned Catherine Howard, his fifth wife, at Hampton Court Palace.</p>	<p>7 Nov 1541</p> <p>Archbishop Thomas Cranmer and the Duke of Norfolk went to Hampton Court Palace to interrogate Queen Catherine Howard, and to arrange that she should be confined to her chambers there.</p>		
<p>13 Nov 1553</p> <p>Lady Jane Grey, Guildford Dudley, his brothers Ambrose and Henry, and Archbishop Thomas Cranmer were tried for treason at a public trial at London's Guildhall for treason.</p>	<p>14 Nov 1501</p> <p>Catherine of Aragon married Arthur, Prince of Wales at St Paul's Cathedral.</p>	<p>15 Nov 1527</p> <p>Death of Katherine, Countess of Devon (also known as Katherine of York) at Tiverton Castle.</p>	<p>16 Nov 1612</p> <p>Death of William Stafford, the son of William Stafford, widower of Mary Boleyn, and his second wife, Dorothy.</p>
<p>20 Nov 1518</p> <p>Death of Sir Marmaduke Constable, soldier and administrator. He served in France with Edward IV and Henry VII, and although he fought on the side of Richard III at the Battle of Bosworth, he managed to gain Henry's trust.</p>	<p>21 Nov 1559</p> <p>Frances Brandon, Duchess of Suffolk, died at Richmond. She was buried in St Edmund's Chapel, Westminster Abbey</p>	<p>22 Nov 1545</p> <p>Henry VIII's trusted physician, Sir William Butts, died at Fulham Manor after suffering a "dooble febre quartanz".</p>	<p>23 Nov 1558</p> <p>The new queen, Elizabeth I, left Hatfield and processed to London.</p>
<p>26 Nov 1533</p> <p>Henry Fitzroy, married Lady Mary Howard at Hampton Court Palace.</p>	<p>27 Nov 1582</p> <p>18 year-old William Shakespeare married the twenty-six year-old Anne Hathaway.</p>	<p>28 Nov 1584</p> <p>Sir Christopher Hatton spoke to Parliament on the dangers of Spain, in a speech lasting 'above two hours'.</p>	<p>29 Nov 1530</p> <p>Cardinal Thomas Wolsey died at Leicester Abbey.</p>
<p>30 Nov 1601</p> <p>Elizabeth I delivered her famous Golden Speech to the House of Commons.</p>			

Catherine of York / Katherine, Countess of Devon

DAY IN TUDOR HISTORY

<p>3 Nov 1592</p> <p>Sir John Perrot, Privy Councillor and former Lord Deputy of Ireland, died at the Tower of London.</p>	<p>4 Nov 1530</p> <p>William (some say Walter) Walsh and Henry Percy, Earl of Northumberland, arrived at Cawood Castle and arrested Cardinal Thomas Wolsey for high treason.</p>	<p>5 Nov 1605</p> <p>Guy Fawkes was caught with thirty-six barrels of gunpowder in the cellars beneath Westminster. The idea was to blow up the House of Lords at the opening of Parliament on the 5th November, and to assassinate King James I.</p>		
<p>8 Nov 1543</p> <p>Birth of Lettice Knollys, daughter of Sir Francis Knollys and Catherine Carey</p>	<p>9 Nov 1518</p> <p>Queen Catherine of Aragon gave birth to a daughter but sadly it was stillborn or did not survive very long.</p>	<p>10 Nov 1565</p> <p>Robert Devereux, 2nd Earl of Essex, was born in at Netherwood, Herefordshire</p>	<p>11 Nov 1541</p> <p>Catherine Howard, fifth wife of Henry VIII, was moved from Hampton Court Palace to Syon House.</p>	<p>12 Nov 1537</p> <p>Jane Seymour's body was taken by chariot from Hampton Court Palace to Windsor Castle. She was buried on 13 Nov.</p>
<p>17 Nov 1558 </p> <p>Queen Mary I, died. She was just forty-two years-old. Her twenty-five year-old half-sister, Elizabeth, became Queen.</p>	<p>18 Nov 1531</p> <p>Birth of Roberto di Ridolfi, merchant, banker and conspirator, in Florence, Italy</p>			<p>19 Nov 1566</p> <p>Death of Reynold Corbet, member of Parliament and Justice of the Peace for Shropshire.</p>
<p>24 Nov 1534</p> <p>Death of Sir Thomas Wriothesley, herald and father of the Tudor chronicler Charles Wriothesley.</p>	<p>25 Nov 1626</p> <p>Death of Edward Alleyn, Elizabethan actor, patron, theatre builder and founder of Dulwich College.</p>			

Actor Edward Alleyn, an actor in Elizabethan times

TUDOR FEAST DAYS

- 1st Nov - All Saints
- 2nd Nov - All Souls
- 11 Nov - Martinmas
- 17 Nov - Accession Day
- 30 Nov - St Andrew

TudorLife

NEXT MONTH IN YOUR REGULAR

TudorLife

REGULAR CONTRIBUTORS

Charlie Fenton
Riognach O'Geraghty
Roland Hui
Toni Mount
Wendy J Dunn

Sarah-Beth Watkins

LAYOUT Tim Ridgway

VIDEOGRAPHER Tim Ridgway

MAGAZINE EDITOR

Gareth Russell

info@tudorsociety.com

CONTACT

info@tudorsociety.com

Calle Sargento Galera, 3

Lucar 04887

Almeria

Spain

ONLINE

www.TudorSociety.com

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