Tudor Life

The Tudor Society Magazine

The Tudor Society

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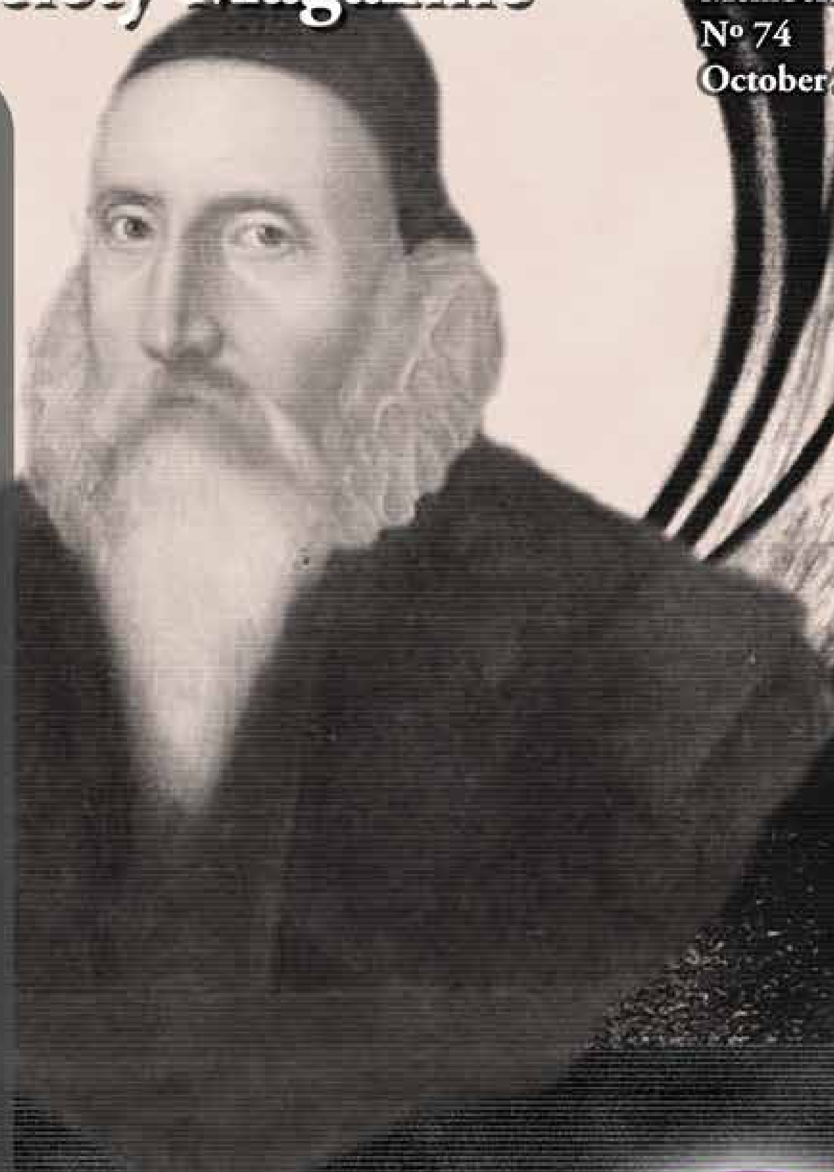

SPIES AND SEDITION

Mary Tudor's Daring Escape

The Hesketh Plot

Eyes and Ears in the Wall

Sedition Against Elizabeth I

Christopher Marlowe

PLUS

The Abraham Tapestries

AND MUCH MORE

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by **Ian Mulcahy**

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Spies and Sedition

Spies and sedition are very much en vogue in the reading world at the moment, with the genre even receiving the Royal seal of approval from HRH The Duchess of Cornwall who, in her reading list recommendations for summer and autumn, identified Alexandre Dumas's "The Queen's Necklace" as one of her favourites. Dumas's epic tale of sedition, espionage, and confidence tricksters was inspired by a scandal in the 1780s in which a con artist passed herself off as one of Marie-Antoinette's ladies in waiting to abscond with a priceless necklace which the Queen was then expected to pay for. Skull-duggery on this scale bedevilled Tudor royals as much as luckless Hapsburg Queen of France two centuries later. In this issue, we look at how sedition and rumours of spies continued to shape the culture of the early modern era.

GARETH RUSSELL
EDITOR

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Possible potrait of CHRISTOPHER MARLOWE from 1585

SARAH-BETH WATKINS

CHRISTOPHER MARLOWE PLAYWRIGHT AND SPY

In May 1593 the poet and playwright, Christopher Marlowe, famous for his plays *Tamburlaine the Great, The Massacre at Paris, The Jew of Malta*, and *Doctor Faustus* was stabbed to death at a house in Deptford owned by the widow Eleanor Bull. He had spent the day drinking and gambling with Robert Poley, Nicholas Skeres and Ingrim Frizer. The coroner's report found that Marlowe had been stabbed in an act of self-defence. Frizer and Marlowe had argued over the payment of a bill - the reckoning - and Marlowe had grabbed Frizer's dagger and bashed him on the head. They struggled and Marlowe was stabbed above the right eye, piercing his brain and killing him instantly. The inquest concluded that Frizer was not to blame and he would receive a full pardon. But there was much more to his death than met the eye.

Christopher Marlowe was born in 1564 to Canterbury shoemaker John Marlowe and his wife Katherine. He gained a scholarship to the King's School in Canterbury and then went on to Corpus Christi College in Cambridge. But whilst there his secret activities were noted by his absences. He was missing for a term in 1584 and three months in 1585. On his return he always seemed to be well off spending large amounts on food and drink from the buttery.

Walsingham was Elizabeth I's spymaster and ran a spy network to gather intelligence for the queen. Marlowe was friends with Thomas Walsingham, a cousin to Francis, who may have introduced them. When he graduated in 1587 with his MA, it was on the Privy Council's orders because he had been involved 'in matters touching the benefit of his country'. They were forced to deny he had been at Rheims and more specifically Cardinal Allen's college – a hotbed of Catholic conspiracy – and a focus of Walsingham's investigations.

In 1592 Marlowe was arrested in Flushing in the Netherlands. He had apparently been counterfeiting of coins. Walsingham had died in 1590 and was no longer able to intervene on his behalf. He was sent to William Cecil, Lord Burghley, to answer for his crime yet he wasn't charged or imprisoned. Marlowe was arrested again just days before his death on a charge of libel. *A Note*

Containing the Opinion of One Christopher Marly Concerning his Damnable Judgment of Religion, and scorn of gods word, listed his blasphemies:

- He affirmeth that Moses was but a Juggler
- That the first beginning of Religion was only to keep men in awe
- That Christ was a bastard and his mother dishonest
- That all they that love not tobacco and boys were fools
- That in almost every company Marlowe persuades men to atheism, willing them not to be afraid of bugbears and hobgoblins

As the Privy Council was not in session he was not incarcerated but told to return when they next convened to answer their questions. He would have faced accusations of heresy, atheism and blasphemy. If it had gone to trial, a trial that would quite possible lead to his execution, he could have implicated many other people and divulged secrets that would have led to their downfall.

The Elizabethan spy network was now run by two rivals William Cecil, Lord Burghley and Robert Devereux, 2nd Earl of Essex and Queen Elizabeth I's favourite, after the death of his stepfather. And they had everything to lose if Marlowe talked.

Just days after his arrest Marlowe was dead at the age of twenty-nine. What was he doing with such a strange bunch of men? They definitely weren't friends meeting for a day's drinking. Although Frizer's pardon would read they 'passed the time together & dined & after dinner were in quiet sort together & walked in the garden belonging to the said house until the sixth hour after noon of the same day & then returned from the said garden to the room aforesaid & there together and in company supped; & after supper the said Ingram & Christopher Morley were in speech & uttered one to the other divers malicious words'.

It has been suggested that Frizer, Poley and Skeres were all previously in Walsingham's employ and they were the only witnesses to Marlowe's tragic death. Called gentlemen at the inquest, all three of them were far from it. Poley was known for his dubious connections and called the 'very genius of the Elizabethan underworld'. He had worked as a spy to uncover the Babington plot after which he had spent two years in the Tower supposedly to protect him from the recriminations of chief Catholics who blamed him for betraying Babington.

Skeres was a swindler and had run money-lending scams with Frizer. He had also once worked for Essex. Amongst many theories surrounding Marlowe's death is that Essex was using these men to force Marlowe to bring Sir Walter Raleigh, his nemesis, down and their argument resulted in his death. Or that Raleigh knew what Essex was up to and had Marlowe killed before he got to him.

It has also been suggested that Marlowe knew too much, especially about Lord Burghley and his son Robert, enough to be responsible for their downfall and have them tried for heresy. Burghley had struggled for many years to rise to his position and was extremely influential at the Elizabethan court. Essex challenged his position

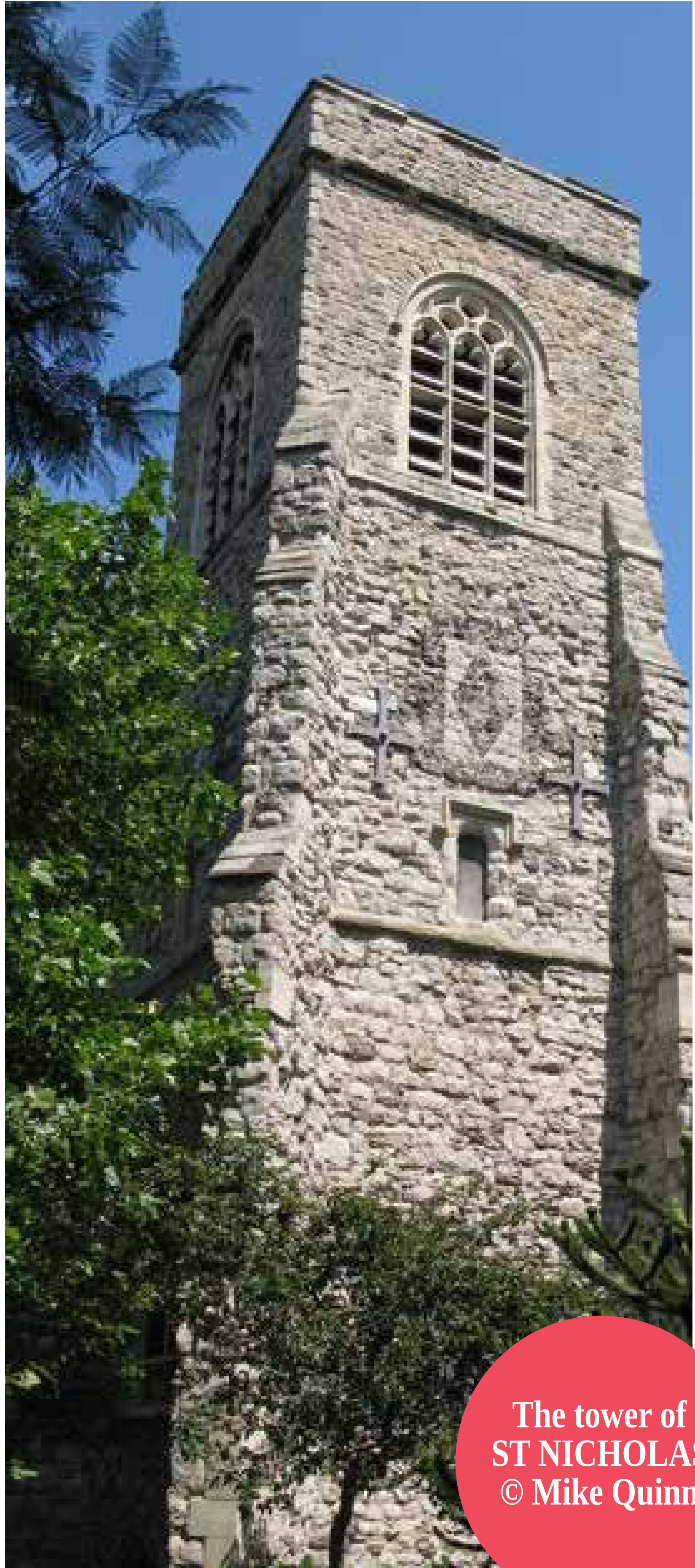
and his network of spies were quickly outgrowing that of Cecil's. Had he employed Marlowe to dig up dirt on his rivals?

One theory even has Marlowe faking his own death and fleeing England. It is said he went to live abroad and continue writing his plays which were sent home and attributed to William Shakespeare. Interestingly Marlowe was buried immediately after the inquest in an unmarked grave in the churchyard of St. Nicholas, Deptford.

And the inquest itself was dubious. It was conducted by the Queen's Coroner, William Danby, but he did it alone without the county coroner present, an illegal act. Danby was friends with Lord Burghley and probably conducted the inquest as per the Lord Treasurer's instructions. This has led to rumours that it was the Queen herself who ordered Marlowe's assassination.

No one will ever know for sure the extent of Marlowe's work as a spy and why he was killed but it seems his life was thwart with danger and in the end the secrets Marlowe knew may well have led to his demise.

SARAH-BETH WATKINS



The tower of ST NICHOLAS © Mike Quinn

Vanessa Redgrave as Elizabeth I in “Anonymous”

Scandal and Sedition

The Salacious Rumours That Plagued Elizabeth I

While the tabloid press is a relatively recent phenomenon, speculation around the sex-lives of public figures is an ancient tradition. Concerns over Elizabeth I's sexuality, and speculation surrounding her relationships with her favourites, were frequently expressed through the rumours spread during the course of her reign. Carole Levin notes 'while questions, comments, and gossip about Elizabeth's sexual behaviour had begun long before she became queen, attention to her behaviour intensified once she had ascended the throne, and continued throughout her reign, even when she was in her sixties.'[1]

The rumours surrounding the relationship between Elizabeth and her favourite Robert Dudley continually evolved over the course of her reign. In the 1560s and 1570s rumours spread that they were embroiled in an affair, which directly caused Dudley to dispatch his wife by staging a 'death by misadventure' in order for him to clear the way to marry the queen. 'The gossip about the two continued throughout the reign and was carefully gathered up by worried government officials… Implicit in these comments and speculations… is a definite thread of malice – the sense that Elizabeth, this unmarried woman of questionable morals, had no business of ruling.'[2] When it became clear that they would never marry, and as Elizabeth advanced toward old age, rumours began to circulate that the pair had several illegitimate children. Accusations of infanticide or smuggling illegitimate children to the continent were shared in taverns, markets, and between families and neighbours. There are numerous examples of people who were tried for saying inflammatory things about the Queen in relation to her favourites.

The State Papers Domestic show that in 1598, Edward Fraunces of Molbury Osmond (Dorset) had

1 Carole Levin, *The Heart and Stomach of a King*, pp. 66-67

2 Carole Levin, *The Heart and Stomach of a King*, p. 75

attempted to win Elizabeth Baylie

> to leade an incontenent lyfe with him… whiche when she refused…the said Fraunces replied that the beste in England had myche desyred the plesuir of the fleshe and had allso three bastards by nobell men of the courte. And theirfore had needed not to be ashamed to aske her suche a question nor she to denye… him in that respecte.

He goes on explain 'that her maj*es*tie had twoe sonnes and a daughter, And was her selfe base borne'. [3] We see here that Fraunces had attempted to seduce a young woman through spreading rumours of the queen's sexual immorality. In another example, Levin notes that 'in 1563, Edmund Baxter openly expressed the not uncommon view that Elizabeth's reputed unchastity disqualified her as a monarch'.[4] Baxter's reported words were 'that Lord Robert kept her Majesty, and that she was a naughty woman, and could not rule her realm, and that justice was not being administered.'[5] Elizabeth's ability to administer justice and her sexual morality were inextricably linked in the minds of her subjects. The corruption of the body politic resulted in the corruption of the entire realm, and so even the most private sin impacted the public.

3 *The National Archives,* SP12/ 269.

4 Carole Levin, *The Heart and Stomach of King,* p. 75

5 CSP Dom. Addenda, Eliz. XI, no. 86, p. 534

This idea was enthusiastically promoted by the Catholic exiles on the continent. Cardinal William Allen used the stories that had been circulating since the 1570s, that Elizabeth had an illegitimate daughter of marriageable age, in his 1588 *Admonition of the Nobility and People of England*. This was a propaganda tract to gain support for Philip II's proposed invasion. He describes how she has "unlaefule, longe concealed, or fained issue," and claims that "she forced the very parliament to give consent to a law, that none should be named for her successor, savinge the natural, that is to saie, bastard-borne child of her owne bodie."[6] Allen's attack on the queen's rule demonstrates the sexually charged, and extremely gendered, way in which her adversaries levelled their arguments. Levin notes that 'such an attack on a king – that he had lovers and was thus unfit to rule and somehow monstrous – would be laughable, unless, of course, the king's lovers, like Elizabeth's, were male.'[7]

Parliament continually sought to tackle the rumours associated with the queen. In 1559 it was made treasonous to conspire to depose Elizabeth, and even to imagine it, as well as to "maliciously, advisedly, and directly say… or hold opinion that

6 Cardinal William Allen, *Admonition to the Nobility and People of England,* 'Oxford Text Archive', (http://downloads.it.ox.ac.uk/ota-public/tcp/Texts-HTML/free/A16/A16774.html) (accessed 5/10/18)

7 Carole Levin, *The Heart and Stomach of a King,* p. 81

the Queen's Majesty that now is, during her life is not or ought not to be Queen of this realm…".[8] This was further reinforced by the treason act of 1571 which expressly condemned those who, 'by writing, printing… or sayings… affirm the Queen… is a heretic, schismatic, tyrant, infidel or an usurper of the crown…'.[9] The parliament of 1581 also made the 1554 law against sedition more stringent ordering that any person who 'advisedly and with a malicious intent' spoke 'any false, seditious and slanderous news, rumours, sayings or tales against… the Queen' should be sent to the pillory, have both ears cut off, or pay £200 to the crown's use and also 'suffer imprisonment by the space of six months.'[10] The records of the Privy Council during the reign of Elizabeth I 'are filled with examples of people charged with the crime of slandering the queen.' This suggests that rumours about her sexuality served as a way for her subjects to express their fear and discontent over the sexual ambiguity associated with her royal favourites and the 'dangerous precedent of a woman ruler.'[11]

LAUREN BROWNE

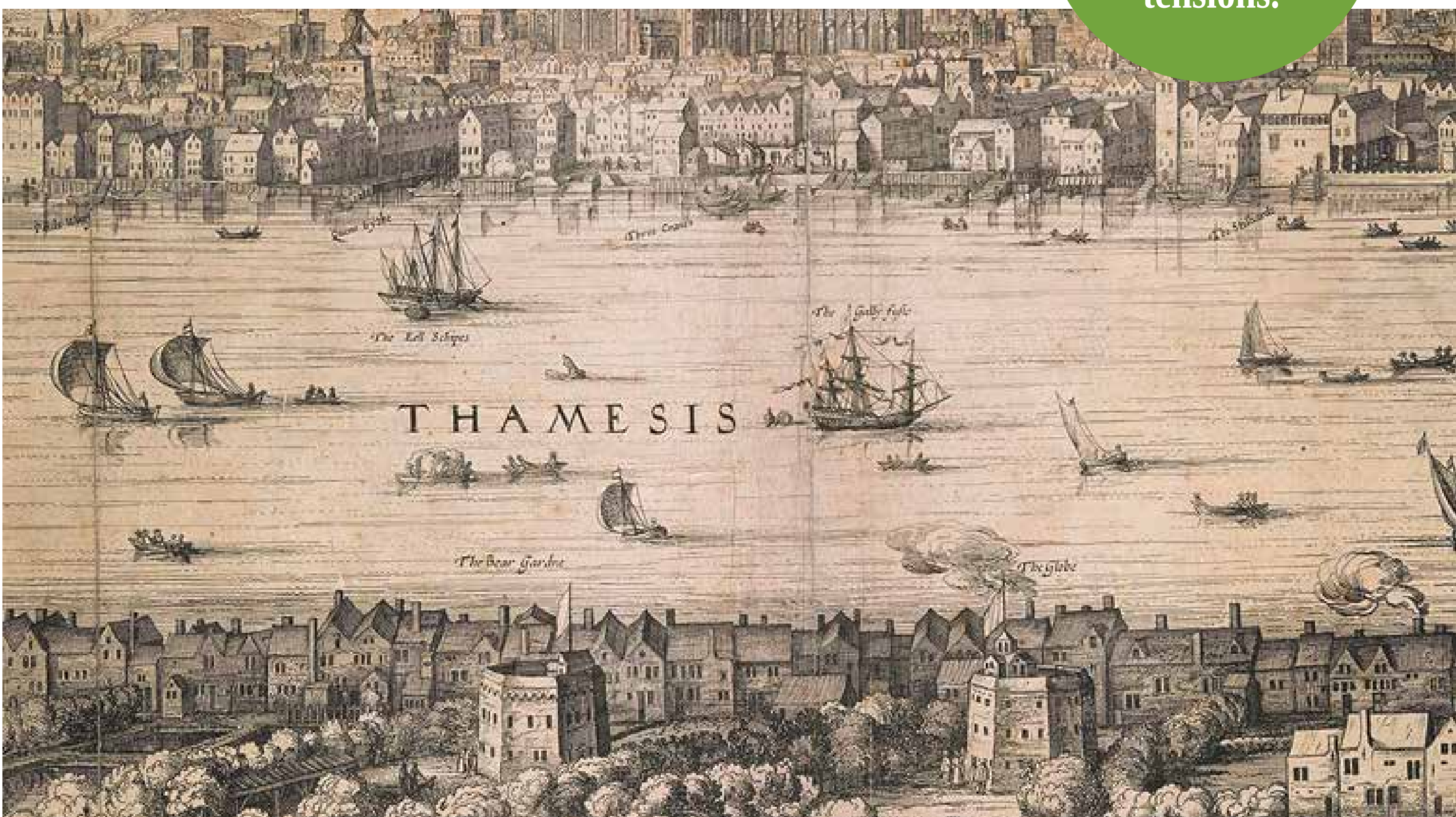
8 Lacey Baldwin Smith, *Treason in Tudor England: politics and paranoia,* (Princeton, 1986), p. 137; George Walter Prothero (ed.), *Select Statues and other constitutional documents illustrative of the reigns of Elizabeth I and James I,* (Oxford, 1906), pp. 23-24

9 George Walter Prothero (ed.), *Select Statues*, p. 58

10 *ibid.*, p. 77

11 Carole Levin, *The Heart and S… King',* p 67-69

LONDON A hotbed of rumour and political tensions.



Mary I, painted by Antonis Mor in 1554

Mary Tudor's (Almost) Daring Escape

by Kyra Kramer

In the late spring of 1550, Mary Tudor found herself in a bit of a pickle. Her very Protestant teenage half-brother, King Edward VI, was taking more control over his government and he was becoming increasingly unwilling to put up with her Catholic shenanigans. Always a little prone to drama, Mary decided that the king's insistence that she follow the law and not have Catholic mass celebrated in her household was persecution and the first step in her eventual martyrdom.

Mary Tudor began to tell her supporters she was in fear of her life. This was not taken terribly seriously, since King Edward had shown no signs of wanting his sister's head on a pike. Mary then took another tack to convince her allies she was in grave danger. She pointed out that if her brother died (although he was a healthy lad at the time) then his top officials "would despatch me too; there is no doubt of that."[1]

The idea that Protestant councilors would kill or imprison Mary rather than allowing her to take the throne was a much more legitimate seeming concern. The newly established English Church was constantly facing resistance from those who wished to hold on to their former religion, and Mary was real and present danger as a rallying point for pro-Catholic forces. Edward VI's councilors and ministers would have good reasons to kill Mary, and no brotherly love to stay their hand. Thus, the Imperial ambassador, François Van der Delft, began to scheme with Emperor Charles V and myriad Catholic sympathisers in England on a way to smuggle Mary out of the country. Obviously, the princess would have to escape via boat ... but how was this to be accomplished?

Van der Delft came up with a cunning plan. The getaway ship would be supplied by Van der Delft's personal secretary, Jehan Duboys, who would disguise himself as a grain merchant and sail into Maldon, a port town on the Blackwater estuary in Essex. Once the grain was unloaded and sold, Van der Delft and a handful of men loyal to Mary would then

1 Calendar of State Papers, Spain, Vol. 10, 1550

escort the princess to Duboy's ship and make haste toward Imperial territories. To make things easier, Mary even "changed her abode" to Woodham Walter, which was "only two miles distant from an arm of the sea (whereas her place of Beaulieu is four miles further inland), with the excuse of having Beaulieu cleaned and repaired," so that she was prepared to "board the [escape] vessel" with a small retinue at a moments notice.[2]

It was a good plan, and it probably would have worked if Van der Delft hadn't been unlucky enough to contract a fever and died in early June. Although the emperor still sent two ships to rescue Mary, without Van der Delft there to encourage her the princess could not summon the bravery to make a break for it. Some of her advisors were against the escape, and she couldn't come to a decision on her own. When Duboys arrived at the end of June, he was confronted by a waffling, fearful princess who couldn't make up her mind whether to fish or cut bait. She dithered and moaned, claiming:

"I am like a little ignorant girl, and I care neither for my goods nor for the world, but only for God's service and my conscience. I know not what to say; but if there is peril in going and peril in staying, I must choose the lesser of two evils. What gives me most pain is the thought of leaving my household, which, though small, is composed of good Christians who may, in my absence, become lost sheep, and even follow these new opinions. Thus might I incur God's censure, which would be a heavy grief to me. But if, in your opinion, I had better go, so be it in God's name; for I know of no danger in going that will not be as great or even greater (at any future time). So I would willingly stay were I to be able to live and serve God as I have done in the past; which is what I have always said. But these men are so changeable that I know not what to say … I do not know ,,, how the Emperor would take it if it turned out to be impossible to go now, after I have so often importuned his Majesty on the subject."[3]

In the end, Mary hesitated for too long. After several days the English authorities began to become suspicious of Duboys' delayed departure. After begging the princess to join him one more time, Duboys had to set sail back without her to avoid arrest.

What would have happened if Mary had been brave enough to flee to the court of Charles V in the summer of 1550? It would have been seen as a major crisis in England, but it may not have been something that would have actually changed history per se. Mary would have undoubtedly married King Philip II of Spain in 1550 or 1551, rather than in 1554 after her brother's death, but her 'female troubles' make it unlikely that she would have been able to

2 Ibid.

3 CSP, Spain, Vol. 10. 15 July 1550

have had a baby even with three years head-start trying. Even if she had still overthrown Jane Grey, the crown would have eventually come to Queen Elizabeth I after Mary's death in 1558.

Moreover, there was a chance her marriage to Philip may have *prevented* Mary from gaining the throne when Edward VI died. Mary's English supporters felt justified in giving her the throne as Henry VIII's eldest daughter, and support for Jane Grey was slight because she was merely a Tudor cousin. However, if Mary was seen as a figurehead for a Spanish regime, there would have almost certainly have been more resistance to giving her the crown. Catholics in England would have been happy to secure their former religion, but had no interest in becoming an Imperial territory. They may have fought the Spanish invaders ferociously, keeping Jane Grey on the throne. If the young and seemingly healthy Jane Grey had remained the monarch, she would have likely born children, and England may have never had a Queen Elizabeth I.

As it was, Mary's victory over Jane Grey put a very shaky crown on the new queen's head. Once it was known that Queen Mary would wed King Philip her reign became plagued with increasingly and hostile Protestant sedition, starting with Wyatt's Rebellion in the north. In order to cement her marriage to Philip, Queen Mary had to behead Jane Grey to prove the security of her new reign. However, even after Jane's death and Mary's marriage, the new queen's 'Protestant problem' refused to go away. No matter how many Protestants the queen burned at the stake, large sections of the population refused to embrace Catholicism again. These staunch Protestant were hoping Mary would die childless, and that her half-sister, Elizabeth, would be crowned. Elizabeth's existence became as big a thorn in the queen's side as Mary herself had been for King Edward VI. Fearing further rebellion, Philip pestered Mary to execute her sibling, so that the young princess could not serve as a Protestant figurehead. Only Mary's familial conscience spared Elizabeth's life.

Perhaps poor Mary Tudor would have been happier if she had escaped to the continent in 1550. Even if she had never been crowned in England, she could have enjoyed the relative peace, security, and Catholicism of the Spanish Court. She could have had the dreams of a renewed Catholic England, without the reality of having to rule a divided nation. She would have never had to make the choice to execute her own cousin, and would have never garnered the unfair historical moniker of "Blood Mary". She would have still died too young, and childless, but the last years short life might have been much happier ones.

KYRA C KRAMER

Portrait of Fernando Stanley from around 1594 by an unknown artist

Susan Abernethy talks about...

THE HESKETH PLOT – ESPIONAGE DURING THE LAST DECADE OF THE REIGN OF QUEEN ELIZABETH I

Ferdinando Stanley, Lord Strange, was a great-great-grandson of King Henry VII. His mother, Margaret Clifford was the daughter of Eleanor Brandon, who in turn was the daughter of Henry VII's daughter Mary Tudor. Pursuant to Henry VIII's will, Eleanor Brandon's successors were the lawful heirs to the throne of England leaving Ferdinando with a rightful claim. During the last years of Queen Elizabeth I's life, she was not forthcoming about who would succeed her and anyone with a legitimate claim was under surveillance.

Ferdinando had grown up in a household where his parents' marriage was unstable for many reasons. Principally, both his mother and father were spendthrifts and therefore always in debt. At a young age, Ferdinando went to college at St. John's, Oxford and graduated at the age of twelve. He spent his early years at court, learning good manners, working as a page and close by so the Queen could keep an eye on him. He was never appointed to any high-ranking position and was groomed to take over the patrimony of his father, the fourth Earl of Derby.

Ferdinando had dignity and could command feudal loyalty. Many of his followers were Catholic but he tried to take a neutral course and not offend anyone, Protestant or Catholic. He was happily married to a beautiful wife, Alice Spencer and had three daughters.

With the help of his wife, Ferdinando maintained a good relationship with the Queen's minister, Robert Cecil.

There doesn't seem to be any doubt Ferdinando benefited from the trust and fondness of Queen Elizabeth and he naturally returned her affection. He preferred to inhabit the domains of his family but always did his duty at court when called upon. Ferdinando, along with his companion Thomas Gerard, participated in a tilting tournament in 1590. During the Christmas festivities of 1591, his company of actors presented six plays before the Queen to great acclaim. By now he was in his early thirties and at the height of his good reputation.

During the previous May, events had been set in motion having a critical bearing on the life of Ferdinando. Among the papers of Lord Burghley, there is a document that was brought over from the Continent by a renegade priest and adventurer named John Cecil. Cecil had been in the employ of the government since 1588. Cecil and his partner, a man named Fixer, intended to offer their services as spies. During their presentation, they divulged new routes by which priests were arriving with private letters entrusted to them by Catholic exiles.

Several of the papers they produced included written statements, one of which disclosed that a certain Father Persons instructed them to "seek entrance with my Lord Strange and cause Catholics to cast their eyes upon him", presumably as a claimant to the throne. Another letter hinted Ferdinando had been a party to some kind of negotiation with Persons to put himself on the throne when Elizabeth died. This written evidence presented by John Cecil was in direct contradiction to previous missals by Persons asking Catholics not to back or advance any English candidate for the throne, strongly indicating John Cecil's evidence was counterfeit.

Whether the evidence was genuine or fake, and whether Sir Robert Cecil believed it or not, it was damaging to Ferdinando. These documents were never brought to light but they did remain in the espionage records and there was always a risk they could be exposed to suggest Ferdinando was a traitor. In certain circles, rumors started to circulate that Catholic discontents, and possibly the papacy, harbored hopes for Lord Strange to become king. In March 1593, John Cecil accused Richard Hesketh of being persuaded by Sir William Stanley and Dr. Worthington (a Catholic divine in Brussels) to offer a hallowed crown to Lord Strange and to incite him to rebel and depose Queen Elizabeth.

Hesketh was the son of a landowner from Lancashire and a cloth merchant. In October 1589, Hesketh was entangled in an affray at Lea Hall in which two men were killed. Hesketh was never charged but went into exile to avoid being accused of murder. He traveled to Germany and Prague and became a friend of Dr. John Dee. Hesketh searched for books for him

and carried Dee's correspondence to his associates in Antwerp.

In 1592, Hesketh was on the payroll of a regiment of Sir William Stanley in Flanders and worked in intelligence. Both Stanley and Cardinal Allen were promoting the claims to the English throne of Ferdinando's father, Henry, 4th Earl of Derby. Hesketh was told the plot had been endorsed by the pope and the king of Spain.

Hesketh arrived in England at Lathom House, the home of the Earl of Derby, on September 25, 1593. His mission was purportedly to present his passport to the Earl, in his capacity as lord lieutenant, for his return to England after three plus years of exile for his part in the murders. Unfortunately, on the day of his arrival, Henry Stanley had died and Ferdinando had now succeeded him as 5th Earl of Derby. Hesketh took the opportunity to propose to Ferdinando that he head a revolt to claim the English crown before the death of the Queen and begin negotiations by sending a representative to Flanders.

Ferdinando made no commitment. He may not have doubted the personal responsibility of Hesketh but was deeply worried about the forces behind his discussion of the plot. He told Hesketh he enjoyed his company and asked him to accompany him to court in a few days. Hesketh was to meet up with him on October 2 at Brereton in Cheshire and Hesketh agreed. Hesketh did appear as arranged and joined the party on its way to court. The details of what happened next are obscure.

The end result was that within a week, Ferdinando had first visited his mother and then obtained an audience with the Queen at Windsor. Hesketh was detained at Ditton House nearby. Ferdinando was satisfied with his conversation with the Queen and relieved she heard about the plot from his lips alone. Elizabeth ordered Hesketh be questioned. He was interrogated by William Wade, clerk of the privy council and executed on November 29. The historian Christopher Devlin believes Hesketh was used as an agent by Robert Cecil to bring down Ferdinando, perhaps acting on the espionage he had gathered earlier. The truth is we will never know.

Ferdinando was told the indictment against Hesketh was complete and was given no further updates on the case. The Queen intervened for Ferdinando personally and although Cecil harbored suspicions against him, there were no accusations and he was never interrogated. However, once he was home, he found there were malicious rumors being circulated against him by Richard Hesketh's brother Thomas.

Ferdinando was in the process of consolidating his position as Chamberlain of Chester within the Duchy of Lancaster. The office was vested by hereditary right to the Earls of Derby. His father had held the position and he had petitioned Robert Cecil three times to be jointly vested with his father before his death. There

had been no reply to his requests. Finally, at the end of December, Cecil informed Ferdinando the office of the Chamberlain of Chester had been given to the Attorney-General, Sir Thomas Egerton. This was clearly an indication of the public disgrace of Ferdinando.

A further step in his decline was his estrangement from the Earl of Essex. It appears there were certain persons who deserted Ferdinando's service for that of Essex. They were found to be hanging around Ferdinando's house of Lathom, presumably to spy on him and he had ordered them to depart. Finally, Ferdinando became violently ill on Friday, April 5 after hunting. The next day he was vomiting blood and fleshy material and this continued for eight days. He died in a wasted condition on April 16, 1594.

A commission was set up immediately by Egerton. The possibility of poison was brought up as with all cases of unexpected death. The official report presumed he died from the effects of witchcraft and this was accepted without exception. From 1587-97, prosecutions for witchcraft on the Home Circuit reached the highest point ever known in English history.

The physician's report ascribed the earl's illness to over-exercise. An examination of this report by modern doctors would probably conclude he suffered from a burst appendix which led to acute peritonitis. The clysters frequently prescribed by doctors as treatment at the time included mercury in the form of calomel. This would have increased the inflammation and hastened death.

The Hesketh Plot may have indicated there was a determined campaign to eliminate Ferdinando as a political factor. The Queen did appear to favor him as she openly intervened on his behalf. But Essex was her premier favorite and the Cecils were her indispensable administrators, so it was unlikely she would do anything further to come to his rescue.

SUSAN ABERNETHY

Further reading:

"Hamlet's Divinity and Other Essays" by Christopher Devlin

Entry on Richard Hesketh in the Oxford Dictionary of National Biography written by David Brinson

Entry on Ferdinando Stanley, fifth Earl of Derby in the Oxford Dictionary of National Biography written by David Kathman

"From Strange's Men to Pembroke's Men: "2 Henry VI" and "The First part of the Contention" by Lawrence Manley

"Shakespeare Quarterly, Volume 54, Issue 3, Fall 2003, Pages 253-287

October's Guest Expert

Caroline Angus

Thomas Cromwell: Is there more to learn?

Elizabeth I
(by an Unknown Artist)

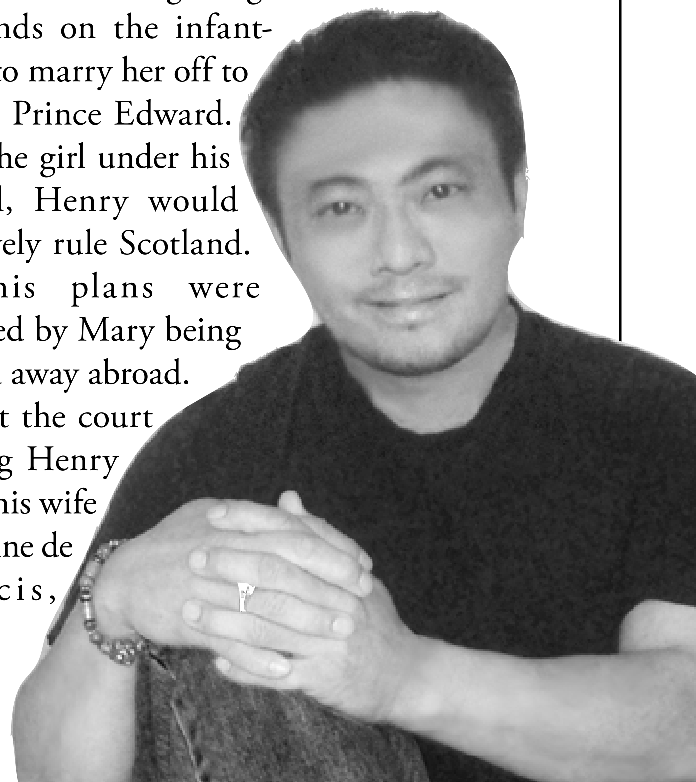
The Conspiracies of Mary, Queen of Scots and Thomas Duke of Norfolk

by Roland Hui

In May of 1568, the court of Queen Elizabeth of England was thrown into uproar. News had come from the north that none other than Mary Stuart, the former Queen of France and the Queen of Scots, had landed in Cumberland. Driven from her kingdom, Mary had crossed the Solway Firth with a handful of supporters to seek the help of her cousin the English Queen.

Mary Stuart (by an Unknown Artist)

Even before she became a refugee, Mary Stuart's life had already been one of great drama. Born in 1542, she had been sent to France for own safety by her mother Mary of Guise. Her father, King James V of Scotland, had died shortly after Mary's birth, and the King of England, Henry VIII, was intent on getting his hands on the infant-queen to marry her off to his son Prince Edward. With the girl under his control, Henry would effectively rule Scotland. But his plans were thwarted by Mary being spirited away abroad.



At the court of King Henry II and his wife Catherine de Medicis,

Mary was welcomed into the French royal family. She grew up with the King's children, and in 1558, she wed the heir to the throne, the young Francis. The pair were a happy couple, but then tragedy struck a year later. King Henry was killed in a jousting accident, making Francis and Mary King and Queen of France. Whether Francis would have made a good ruler or not will never be known. He died of an illness in 1560 shortly before his seventeenth birthday.

As she was no longer Queen Consort and had no more prospects in France, Mary returned to her native country in 1561 to resume her reign. Her mother who had been appointed Regent in her daughter's absence, had died the year before. Back in Scotland, Mary was set on remarrying. Unlike her cousin, Elizabeth Tudor, ruling in England, Mary firmly believed in the necessity of taking a husband. Besides the companionship she craved, Mary did not feel that a woman could rule successfully on her own. Eventually, her choice fell on Henry Stuart, Lord Darnley. Not only was he handsome and charming, he also came from royal blood. Like Mary (and Elizabeth) he was another descendent of King Henry VII of England.

But Darnley would prove disastrous. The marriage infuriated Queen Elizabeth (who had wanted Mary to accept her cast off lover Robert Dudley), as well as the Protestant nobility of Scotland. Already, they were wary of Mary as a Catholic, and with Darnley one too, they feared that the kingdom, recently made Protestant, would go back to Rome. In short time, even Mary herself came to regret her match with Darnley. He was jealous and capable of violence. He resented Mary's close friendship with her musician, David Rizzio, so much that he had him murdered in front of her in March 1566. The birth of a son, named James, a month later did nothing to repair the relationship between the royal couple. Mary had come to loathe Darnley, and in February

Lord Darnley
(by an Unknown Artist)

1567, he too was the victim of a conspiracy. Darnley was found strangled to death after a great explosion of his house at Kirk o' Field.

The sympathy Mary initially received - even from her cousin Elizabeth - was soon gone when she then married James Hepburn, the Earl of Bothwell. It was incredible news and the union did much to damage Mary's reputation. Bothwell was widely believed to have planned Darnley's death. The Protestant Scottish nobles were outraged and made war against Mary, whom they vilified as a murderous adulteress. After Bothwell fled abroad, Mary was captured and forced to abdicate in favour of her son Prince James.[1] However, through her cunning, she later managed to escape and made her way to England.

Mary was received by English officials in Workington, and was given lodgings at Carlisle Castle. As soon as Elizabeth and her Council were notified, a message was sent back north

as to how this extraordinary and unexpected guest was to be handled. She was to be treated with honour as befitting her rank, the Queen ordered. However, there was another note attached, and a chilling one at that for Mary and her companions - *'let none of them escape'*.[2]

Mary was unaware that she was in fact Elizabeth's prisoner. Interestingly enough, Elizabeth's first instinct had been to welcome her cousin to her court. But the Queen was advised by her councillors, particularly William Cecil, that Mary was a threat. Should she help her by restoring her to her crown, the Queen of Scots as a Catholic, would be a constant danger to Protestant England. Already, some considered *her*, not Elizabeth, as the rightful Queen of England. To some Catholics, Elizabeth was the illegitimate daughter of Henry VIII, as he had illegally married her mother Anne Boleyn while his first wife, Katherine of Aragon, was still alive. Not only that, it would stain Elizabeth's reputation by receiving a woman who had been accused of killing her husband. Elizabeth heeded Cecil's advice, and cancelled her plans to have Mary brought up to London.

Meanwhile, Mary continued to rely on her cousin's old promises of friendship. As she told her supporters, she expected to be back in Scotland at the head of a great English army, and back on her throne very soon. But her hopes were dashed when she was notified that she would get no support from England until she cleared herself of Lord Darnley's murder. Mary was shocked, but she had no choice but to submit herself to Elizabeth's wishes.

At an inquiry held in York from October 1568 to January 1569, Mary maintained her innocence. She was not allowed to attend, only to send representatives, but her enemies, the Protestant Lords were permitted to present their case against her in person. They told a lurid tale - as set down in Mary's own letters they claimed - of how she allowed herself to be seduced by Bothwell, and how the pair then arranged for Darnley to be killed by barrels of gunpowder hidden beneath his house. In going over the letters, one of the English delegates at the hearing, the Duke of Norfolk, expressed his horror at Mary's alleged writings. Even though he and some others believed them to be genuine, the presiding commissioners were reluctant to pronounce Mary guilty. In the end, no conclusive verdict was given.[3] The Scottish nobles returned home, satisfied that their former Queen would be detained indefinitely in England. Mary herself was devastated by the outcome. It now became clear to her that Elizabeth was no friend, and that she was her prisoner.

The conditions of Mary's captivity were actually not harsh. As a queen-in-exile, she lived in some luxury. Her expenses were paid by the English government, and she was served by a number of staff. Many were old friends and servants who were allowed to come into England and take up places in Mary's household. With nothing but time on her hands, the Scottish Queen's days were spent at recreations (she was sometimes allowed outdoors to ride and hunt, but always under guard) and in plotting. It was gilded cage she was put in, and Mary was desperate to be released.

A ray of hope was in a scheme that was actually endorsed by her English captors. Mary, they thought, could be made less dangerous if she were married to an English Protestant lord, one unquestioning loyal to Queen Elizabeth. Neutralized, she could even be returned to Scotland to take up her rule again. The candidate in mind was Thomas Howard, a kinsman to Elizabeth through her mother Anne Boleyn. Such was his prestige that along with Robert Dudley's, his name had also been suggested as a possible husband for the Queen of Scots before her marriage to Lord Darnley.

After she was notified of the proposal, Mary was enthusiastic. In actuality, she knew nothing about Norfolk, only what she had heard

from his sister, Margaret Howard, when she was entertained by her and her husband Lord Scrope at Carlisle Castle. Mary learned that at 33 years of age, he was England's only duke, and was one of the most powerful noblemen in the realm. As a widower, he was looking to remarry. Convinced that Norfolk would be the key to her freedom, Mary began corresponding with him. The Duke, despite his former view of her as a murderess, now changed his opinion of Mary. An ambitious man, he imagined himself as the future King of Scotland, and married to a woman who was still widely considered the most beautiful princess in all of Europe. Norfolk wrote back, and soon the two were exchanging love letters and gifts. Mary affectionately called Howard, 'my Norfolk', and declared herself 'yours till death'.[4]

All this was done behind Elizabeth's back. Not knowing how she felt, the supporters of the marriage dared not raise the subject to her. Even Cecil, who knew and was opposed to it, said nothing. However, Elizabeth would eventually learn of it from Robert Dudley. Afraid that his loving relationship with the Queen would be compromised if she suspected something and he had not told her about it, he revealed everything to her.

Elizabeth was furious, though she was probably not as ignorant as everyone thought she was. She had apparently already suspected something was afoot through her gossiping ladies-in-waiting. Still, she kept her cool. When she confronted the Duke, she gave her cousin a playful pinch, and at the same time warned him, as he later recalled, 'to take good heed to my pillow'.[5] The remark was in reference to Howard's former declaration that he would never entangle himself with the Queen of Scots, as he looked to a safe sleep; Lord Darnley had been murdered after his house was blown up at night.

Despite his reassurances to the Queen, Norfolk acted suspiciously. In the middle of September 1569, without a word to anyone, he suddenly left London for his estates in East Anglia. Elizabeth was convinced he was plotting an uprising in favour of Mary Stuart, and in October, he was arrested and locked up in the Tower of London. In truth, the Duke had retired from court because he was made nervous by the Queen's suspicions of him. It was a foolish move, as his conduct seemed to justify her fears.

Thomas Howard, Duke of Norfolk (by an Unknown Artist after Hans Eworth)

Even though Norfolk and Mary did not have treason in mind, others did. In November, the Earl of Northumberland and the Earl of Westmorland, both Catholics, took to arms against the Queen. The Northern Rebellion as it was later called, aimed to put Mary Stuart on the English throne with Norfolk at her side. Elizabeth's hateful Protestant Church would be dismantled, and the Old Faith restored.

The rebel army consisted of thousands of men, but the revolt was a failure. By January 1570, government forces were able to beat down the insurgents. Knowing all was lost, the two Earls fled. While Westmorland was able to escape overseas and live out the rest of his life in exile, Northumberland was eventually captured in Scotland and was beheaded as a traitor.

Shortly after the suppression of the Northern Rebellion, Pope Pius V, exasperated with Elizabeth as a heretical Protestant who 'has oppressed the professors of the Catholic faith, and has reappointed most wicked preachers and ministers of impiety... [and] has destroyed and utterly taken away the Sacrifice of the Altar, the prayers, the fasts, the use of the Sacraments, and every other Catholic rite', excommunicated her. Furthermore, he deprived her of her authority. As a result, all Catholics in England were freed from their allegiance to the 'pretended Queen of England'. Even though more extreme measures were not actually stated, the implication was that as Elizabeth was a 'servant of all iniquity', it would be no sin to kill her.[6]

Emboldened by the Vatican's decree, in 1571, a Florentine banker by the name of Roberto Ridolfi conspired to kill her. Highly sympathetic to the Catholics of England, he hoped to succeed were the northern Earls had failed. He would put Mary Queen of Scots and the Duke of Norfolk on the throne with the help of the Pope and the King of Spain. To set his plan in motion, Ridolfi met with the Bishop of Ross who acted as Mary's representative in England. The Bishop approved the plot, and advised Mary to do likewise. Although she had not involved herself in the Northern conspiracy, she did lend her support to Ridolfi's scheme. Whether Mary was personally in favour of Elizabeth's assassination is unclear - perhaps she imagined that Elizabeth would only be dethroned and imprisoned - her chief objective was her freedom and restoration. With that in mind, Mary began corresponding with foreign powers, asking for help.

**Robert Dudley,
Earl of Leicester
(by Steven van der Meulen)**

Meanwhile, Thomas Howard, despite his vow to have nothing more to do with Mary Stuart after he was freed from prison, was pulled into the conspiracy as well. Even though he was a Protestant, he strangely allowed himself to be used by Ridolfi. While he himself, like Mary, may have disagreed with the notion of killing Elizabeth, the thought of being King whatever the means - was too enticing.

Norfolk's involvement had him sending money to Mary's supporters in Scotland. However, the cache of gold coins was discovered and reported to William Cecil. Not only had Norfolk been caught, but also a servant of Ridolfi's trying to leave the country at Dover. Upon his person was a packet of letters. They were most suspicious as they were written in

code. The letters implicated the Duke, and he found himself back in the Tower. Another prisoner was the Bishop of Ross. Even though he was an envoy of the Scottish Queen, and thus immune from prosecution as a diplomat, he was nonetheless seized. He was even threatened with torture if he did not confess. Terrified, the Bishop betrayed his mistress, even going so far as to denounce her as a murderess.[7]

In January 1572, Norfolk was put on trial and found guilty. He should have been executed within days of the verdict, but Elizabeth hesitated. She had never condemned one so high before, and one who was her own relative. Each time she signed the death warrant, she had it withdrawn to Cecil's great frustration. It was not until June that the Duke finally went to his death on Tower Hill. The scene was made more chilling as Norfolk's own father, the Earl of Surrey, had been beheaded at the same place for high treason in 1547 by the Queen's father Henry VIII.

Mary Stuart was held to blame too. That spring, the members of Parliament demanded her execution. Instead of a trial, it was suggested that an Act of Attainder would suffice to have her dealt with. Surprisingly, Mary found a defender in Elizabeth. If not as her cousin, but as an anointed queen, Elizabeth would not permit her to be put to death.

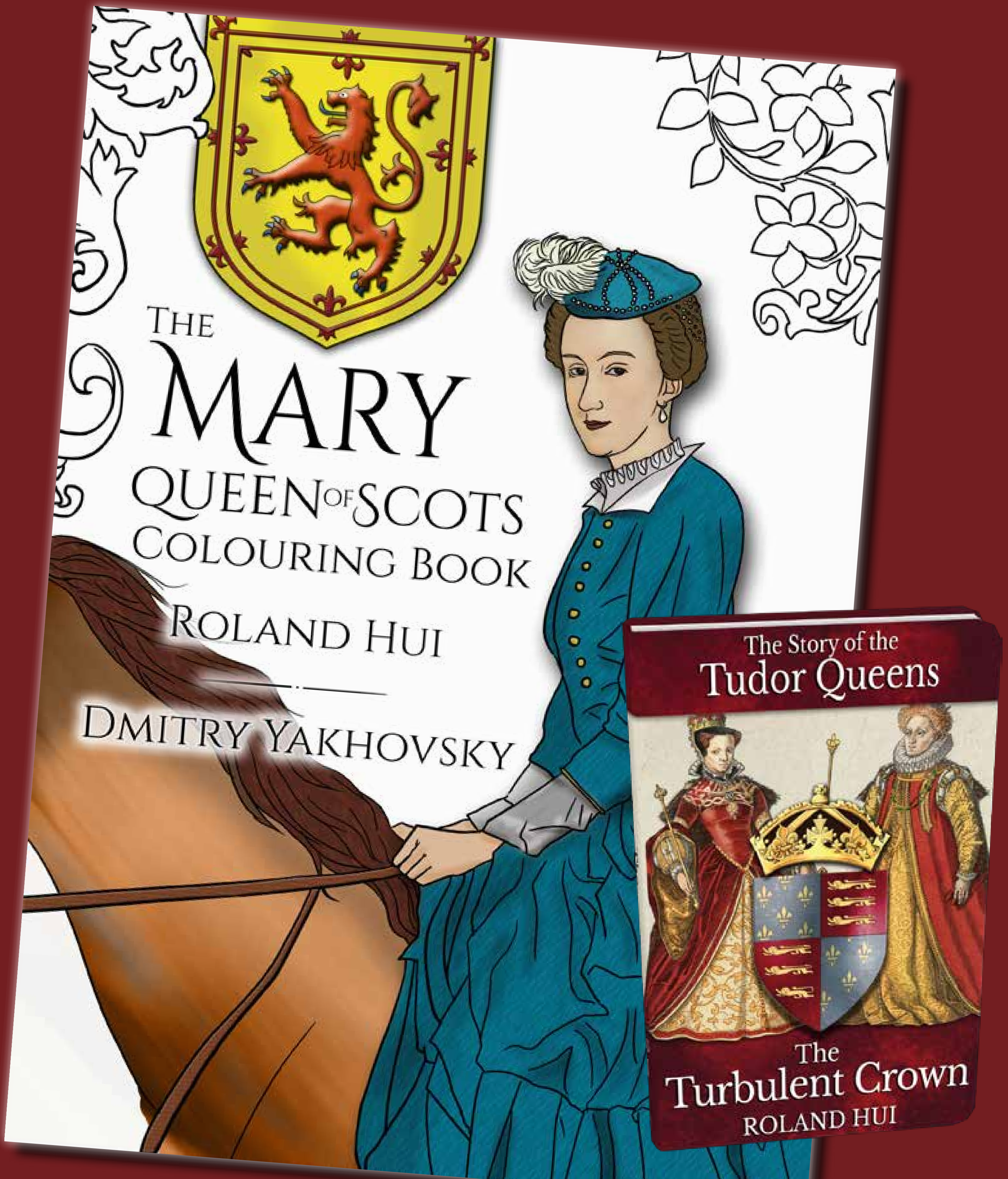
So for the meanwhile Mary was saved, at least for the next fifteen years. But in 1586, after being found guilty of plotting Elizabeth's assassination in the Babington Plot, her cousin was not so forgiving. On the morning of February 8, 1587, Mary followed Norfolk to the scaffold.

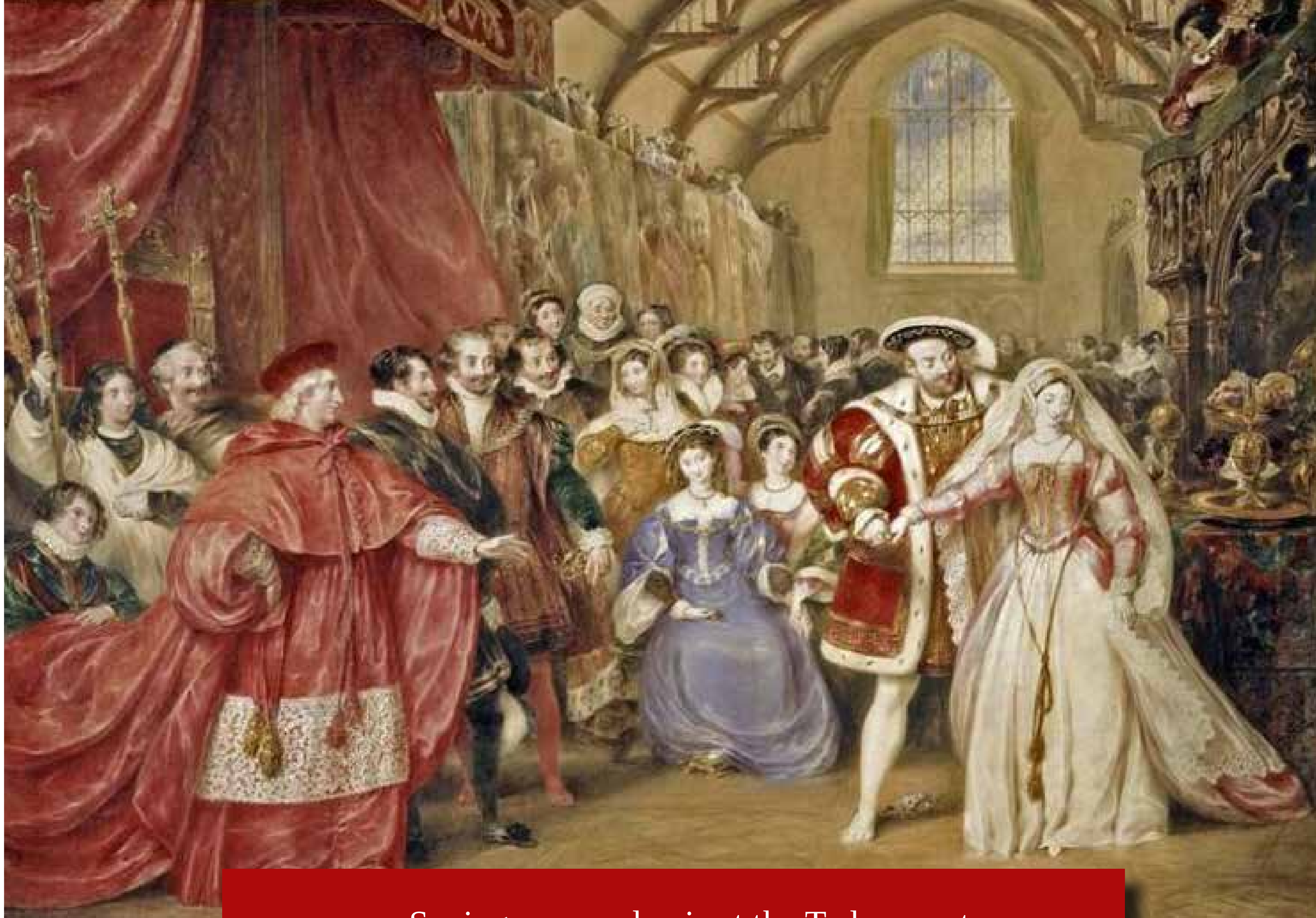
William Cecil
(by Jacob Houbraken)

ROLAND HUI

1. The Earl of Bothwell fled to Denmark, where he died in a prison in 1578. Before his death, Mary Stuart planned to have her marriage to him annulled so she could wed the Duke of Norfolk.
2. *Calendar of State Papers, Scotland,* II, no. 665.
3. The so-called Casket Letters remain controversial. That they were genuine pointing to Mary's guilt, see Jenny Wormald, *Mary, Queen of Scots: Politics, Passion and a Kingdom Lost,* London: Tauris Parke Paperbacks, 2001, pp. 180-182. For an opposing view: John Guy, *Queen of Scots - The True Life of Mary Stuart,* Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 2004, pp. 384-423.
4. Agnes Strickland, *Letters of Mary, Queen of Scots,* London: Henry Colburn, 1845, vol. I, pp. 196-198.
5. *Calendar of State Papers, Scotland,* IV, no. 43.
6. *Calendar of State Papers, Venetian, VII,* no. 475.
   The Bishop was later released from prison in 1573. He died in 1596. As for Roberto Ridolfi, he was luckily in France when the conspiracy was uncovered. He lived on until 1612.

Queen of Scotland by birth, Queen of France by marriage, and Queen of England by right (some said), the life of Mary Stuart (1542-1587) was the stuff of legend. A monarch at only six days old, Mary's early years were spent at the glittering court of France. Pampered and indulged, she was little prepared for what lay ahead upon her return to Scotland to take up the reins of power. Murder, scandal, and betrayal would send her fleeing to England to seek the help of her cousin, Queen Elizabeth. Mary's fateful journey, which began with so much hope, would lead to her greatest tragedy.





Spying was endemic at the Tudor court

WALLS WITH EYES AND EARS

Historian *Gareth Russell* contemplates how being a spy was actually quite acceptable in Tudor times...

While researching "Young and Damned and Fair," my biography of Queen Catherine Howard, there were many interesting discussions along the way but one relevant to this issue was the prevalence of spying in the Tudor court. Not only its prevalence, I ought to say, but also the lack of shame with which it was admitted to by its practitioners. Foreign ambassadors to Henry VIII's England were the most open about the need for, and risk of,

spies. Eustace Chapuys, envoy in London for the Hapsburg Emperor Charles V from 1529 to 1540 and again from 1541 to 1545, reported that he watched his dinner guests to figure out if they had been sent to spy on him. He told the Emperor's sister, the Dowager Queen of Hungary, that during supper with an Italian doctor practising in London, he realised the man was a spy and "who had sent him". Chapuys, like many people in his positions, wrote most of his letters in ciphers and he and his rival in London, the French diplomat Bishop Charles de Marillac, paid informers to steal copies of the other embassies' codes.

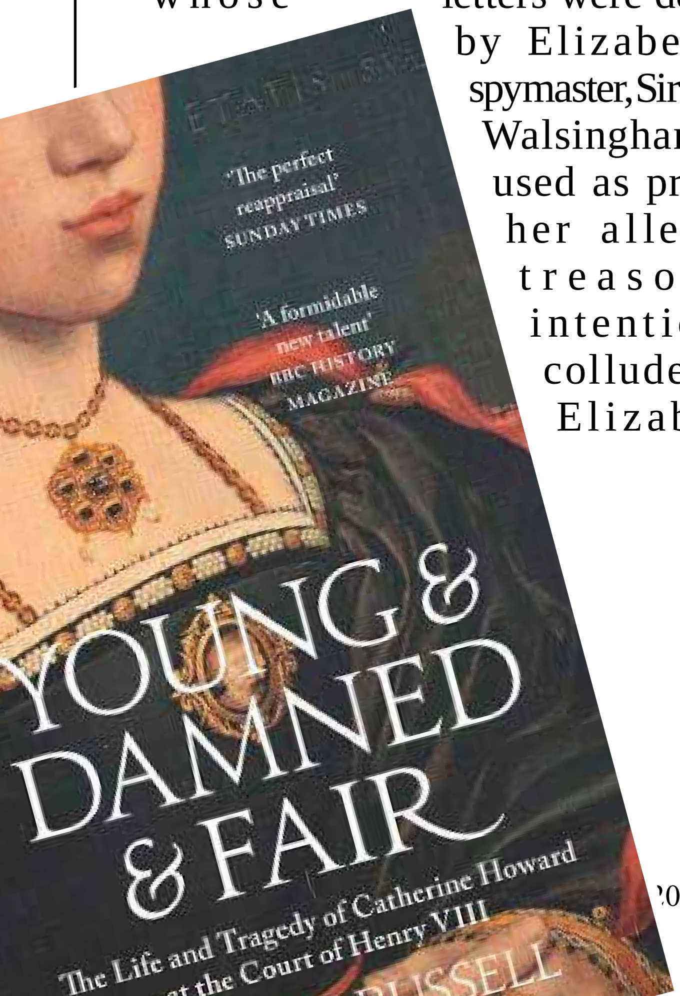
De Marillac admits in his camouflaged correspondence to paying servants to report on their masters, most noticeably those in the employ of Henry VIII's eldest daughter, Mary Tudor. We know much about Mary's mental and physical health in the 1540s thanks to the servants' reports to de Marillac and his passing of that information on to his king, François I, or his chief minister, the Constable de Montmorency. The things they told de Marillac were astonishingly, even uncomfortably, intimate. Even at the distance of five centuries, reading de Marillac's assessment of Mary's daily routine and her struggle with depression – what he described as fits of "ennui" – still feels slightly invasive, because one has the powerful impression of how deeply private this information was. As de Marillac saw it, however, he was furthering a greater cause by informing his King and the French government of what was happening at the heart of the English royal family.

Mary's late mother, Katherine of Aragon, had been quite tprepared to resort to similar methods, again in pursuit of a greater cause – and, once again, it is thanks to that policy that we have a treasure trove of historical information that has survived to the present. In the case of Katherine's machinations, they brought us Henry VIII's early love letters to Anne Boleyn, surely one of the most important cache of sources from the sixteenth century. We know that at least one priest, Father Thomas Abel, worked as a spy or "intelligencer" for Katherine and that they must also have suborned someone on Boleyn's staff to steal the letters, which they sent to Rome as proof that Henry was pursuing the "Great Matter" because he wanted to marry somebody else, not because he genuinely had doubts about the canonical validity of his union with Katherine. The stolen letters were, and are, still preserved by the Vatican Archives.

The purloined letters ended up doing Anne more good than Katherine, in a twist of fate, since they proved that the relationship between Anne and the King had not been consummated, thus undercutting the pro-Aragon claim that they were committing adultery. Another queen who found herself the victim of backfiring espionage was less lucky in the form

Sarah Bolger as the young Mary I in "The Tudors." Her household staff regularly sold information about her mental health to the French ambassador (Showtime)

of Mary, the deposed Queen of Scots, whose letters were decoded by Elizabeth I's spymaster, Sir Francis Walsingham, and used as proof of her allegedly treasonous intention to collude with Elizabeth's assassination. Those papers, which some still believe to have been maliciously doctored while others believe they truly reflect Mary's plan, formed an epistolary noose around the ex-monarch's neck. They were damning evidence in the case that carried her to the scaffold in 1587.



As unpleasant as it may have been for its victims, the unpalatable truth seems to be that we owe an enormous amount of our knowledge of the Tudor period to the industry of men and women whom we would now consider snoops and spies.

GARETH RUSSELL

TUDOR OCTOBER QUIZ

Inspired by Claire Ridgway’s book ‘On This Day in Tudor History’, this month’s quiz is all about events that happened in the month of October during the Tudor Era. Once you have answered all the questions, see if you can add the year as well.

DAY	EVENT	WHO/ WHAT WAS IT?	WHICH YEAR?
1	This Bishop crowned Mary I at Westminster Abbey		
2	Which queen consort arrived in England at Plymouth, in Devon?		
4	The signing of the marriage treaty between Henry VIII and which of his wives took place?		
6	The traditional date given for the execution of the author of ‘The Obedience of a Christian Man’. What was his name?		
8	Birthdate of Lady Margaret Douglas. What was her title?		
9	Mary Tudor marries her first husband, Louis XII of France. How much older was he than her?		
11	Pope Leo X ironically conferred this title on Henry VIII		
12	Henry VIII finally gets his longed for son, born on which Saint’s day?		
18	Cardinal Thomas Wolsey surrendered the Great Seal after having what filed against him?		
24	Jane Seymour tragically passed away. She is buried in St George’s Chapel at Windsor Castle, but where does rumour have it her heart lies?		
26	On this date, who took their oath as Chancellor?		
30	Henry VII, the first Tudor monarch was crowned at Westminster Abbey. At which battle had he been victorious and won the crown?		

Claire’s book is available from Amazon and is published by MadeGlobal Publishing. It is an amazing treasure of information and I highly recommend it

CATHERINE BROOKS

“QUIZ ANSWERS” on page 73

Henry VIII playing the harp in Henry VIII's Psalter

ELIZABETH JANE TIMMS ON

HENRY VIII
AND THE
ABRAHAM TAPESTRIES

Since the medieval period, tapestries provided a rich backdrop for court ritual. The superior craftsmanship of their design and creation resulted in vast, symbolic artworks woven in silk, gold and silver thread to be hung in the palaces and houses of the monarch or transported around when the royal court was travelling. Tapestries were an important part of the art of display, especially significant for a monarch such as Henry VIII, who understood and practised magnificence. With Henry, this revealed not only what people saw but importantly, how he wished to be seen through the manipulation of the royal image. The enormous expense that entailed the weaving of such tapestries was in itself revealing of regal status, because only the very wealthiest would have been able to afford such a costly example of the riches they possessed and that as a luxurious art for decoration. More practically, they also made the royal rooms warmer, with heavier examples sometimes hung up for the winter.

The inventory of Henry VIII's assets on his death is preserved in three originals, one in the Society of Antiquaries, of which the British Library holds a duplicate copy, and two additional manuscripts. [1] This inventory reveals that Henry owned over 2,450 tapestries at his death. [2] Listed among these is a magnificent set known as The Story of Abraham Series, more popularly, the Abraham Tapestries. A set of ten panels, they depict scenes from the Book of Genesis, Chapters 12-24 and comprise of the following: *the Departure of Abraham, the Return of Sarah, the Separation of Abraham and Lot, the Meeting of Abraham and Melchizedek, God appears to Abraham, the Circumcision of Isaac and the Expulsion of Hagar, the Sacrifice of Isaac, the Purchase of the Field of Ephron, the Oath and Departure of Eliezer and Eliezer, and Rebekah*

The Abraham Tapestries at Hampton Court Palace

A ABRAHĀ DEDIT LOTH
IONIS ABRAHĀ HABITAT
PERGIT AD SODOMĀ

The Abraham Tapestries at Hampton Court Palace

at the Well. The 1542 inventory of Whitehall listed alphabetically over 4,000 items owned by the King, watched over by the Keeper of the Palace, Sir Anthony Denny. It naturally included tapestries. The "Second Part" of the Inventory of Henry VIII's Wardrobe after his death was "*made by virtue of a commission dated Westm. [inster] 14 September 1 Edw. [ard] VI*". It recorded in the 'Guarderobe' at the Tower of London, an '*individual description of hangings of crimson, arras, tapestry'*, with a description of the hangings at Greenwich, as well as the 'Guarderobe' at Westminster, with its '*Hangings, carpets, bedsteads, etc*'. [3]

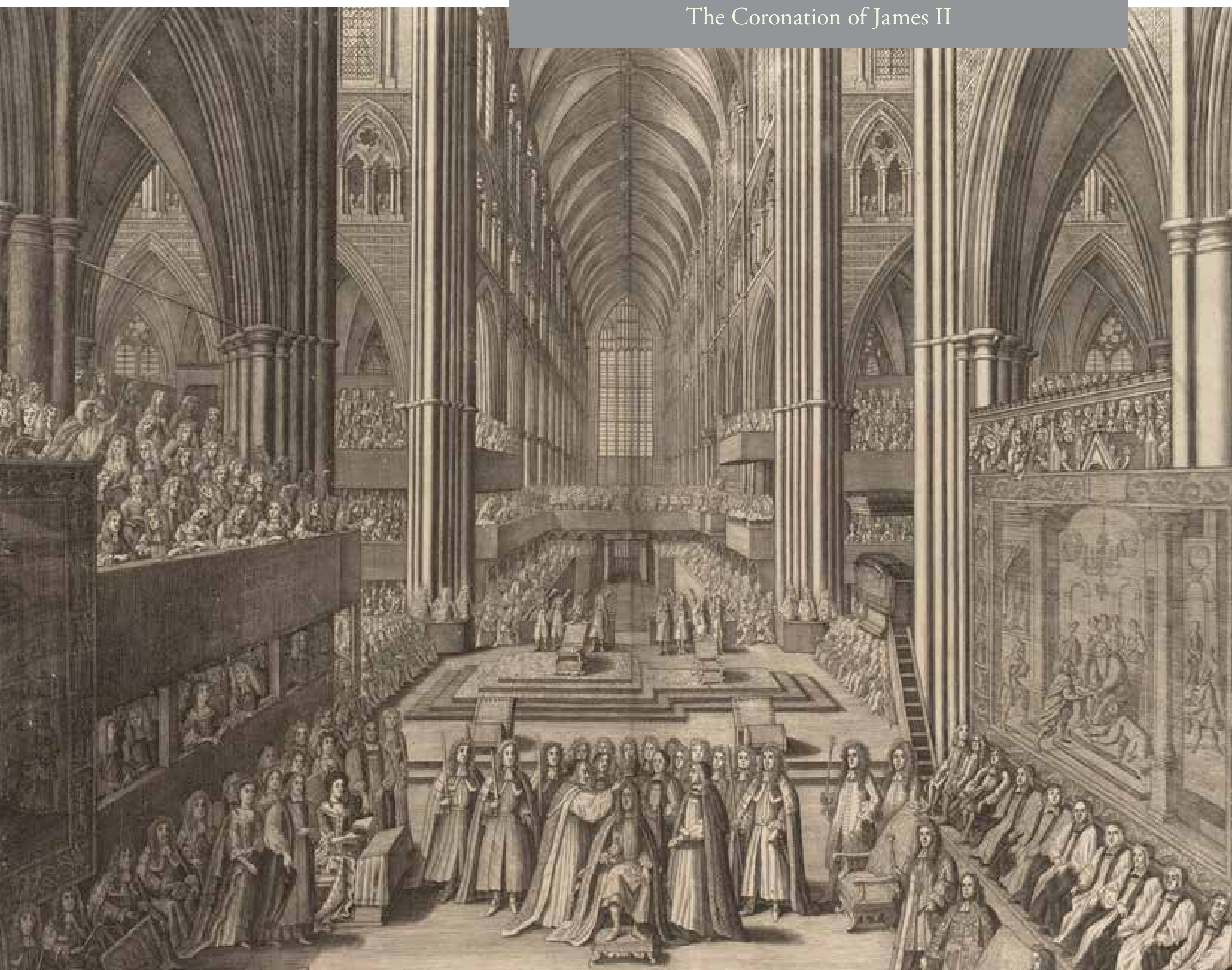
Tapestries were a woven token of royal magnificence, indeed, their mere presence denoted the King's person. The tapestries at Richmond were directly described by the Venetian ambassador, Sebastian Giustinian and his Italian colleague Piero Pasqualigo, when they visited the palace in 1515: '*We were conducted to the presence through sundry chambers all hung with most beautiful tapestry...*'[4]. In 1520, tapestries had featured prominently at the Field of Cloth of Gold, with one visitor commenting on the '*marveilous clothes of Arras wroughte of golde and silke, compassed of many auncient stories, with which clothes of Arras, every wall and chambers were hanged, and all the wyndowes so covered, that it passed all other sightes before seen'*. Within the sumptuous temporary palace erected for the occasion was a chapel decorated with '*tappettes embraudered with riche worke fret with pearles and stones'*. Soardino, Mantuan Ambassador to the French Court wrote that *'two enclosures, side by side, had been prepared with tapestries and cloths of gold, in the centre of the stage opposite the chapel'*, which had been erected on the field. '*The house'* or temporary palace of Henry VIII contained an entrance hall divided by tapestry, the first hall was '*hung with silken tapestry, without gold, of astounding beauty; the second tapestried in the same fashion. In the chamber are most beautiful tapestries of gold and silk*'. [5]

The rich symbolism of the Abraham Tapestries for Henry's personal reign is suggestive. Whilst there is no actual evidence for this,

the panel *God appears to Abraham* could certainly be applied to Henry's sense of self-styled patriarchy, for it is thought that in *God appears to Abraham* we might see God appearing to Henry, Supreme Head of the Church since 1534. Having displaced the Pope, he was now the Christian monarch of the English, their royal priest with no need to look to Rome. The later propaganda painting *'Edward VI and the Pope*: *An Allegory of the Reformation*' picks

up on this for his son and successor. It shows the imaginary deathbed of Henry VIII, with the King pointing to his son Edward VI; the Pope is crushed at Edward's feet, the words *'All fleshe is grasse'* (Isaiah 40:6) on his chest, whilst the open book above the Pope's head reads triumphantly (in English): '*The Worde of the Lord endureth for ever'*.

The Great Bible in the British Library is probably Henry VIII's own personal copy. Its title page depicts a centralized Henry, receiving the *Verbum Dei* [Word of God] directly from God. Beneath Henry's feet are the proud words: '*The Byble in Englyshe'*, whilst the figure of Henry is shown handing books written '*Verbum Dei'* to his clergy. In front of Henry's feet are the Royal Arms of England and the Garter motto and the King is sat on a throne not unlike, I think, the Coronation Chair in Westminster Abbey. The title page well illustrates the complex ambiguity of Henry's role, as God's representative now claiming not only regal but spiritual authority over his people, who appear at the bottom of the illustration praising Henry with the words: 'VIVAT REX' and 'GOD SAVE THE KYNGE'. Examining this title page, I also found that one of the crowns in the heavens closely resembles the one on Henry's own head, near a kingly figure robed in purple trimmed with ermine, who again is like Henry but could possibly even be King David himself. The prologue in a copy of the Great Bible (1540) that I consulted ends



The Coronation of James II

The Great Hall at Hampton Court Palace

with the King's 'H' 'R' and the words '*God Save the Kynge';* it was written by Thomas Cranmer, Archbishop of Canterbury '*the most reverende father in God'*.

The imagery in the *Circumcision of Issac and the Expulsion of Hagar* may symbolize Henry's securing the survival of the dynasty through the birth of his longed-for son and heir in 1537, Prince Edward, an English Issac. We might recall here that Abraham's son Issac was born as the result of God's promise in the Book of Genesis revealed to Abraham, of descendants as numerous as the stars: the so-called Covenant of the pieces. Henry VIII might well have sympathised with the plight of Abraham, the (ageing) future founder of Nations, who had wondered how this promise would be fulfilled when despite years of marriage, he still had no son. In the Book of Genesis, Sarai first gave Abraham her handmaiden by whom he had an illegitimate son, Ishmael. Post-1519, Henry's only living son was also an illegitimate child, a boy by his brief

mistress, Bessie Blount: the child, Henry Fitzroy was adored by the King – his *'worldly jewel'*. With the birth of a healthy living daughter, Princess Mary in 1516, he and Queen Catherine were certainly not childless rather instead, crucially without sons. Certainly, by the 1520s, Henry VIII might well have identified with Abraham's amazement of how he was to be a founding father with no (legitimate) male descendants then living, echoing Abraham's words in Genesis 17:17: "*Shall a child be born unto him that is a hundred years old? And shall Sarah, that is ninety years old, bear?*"

Whether or not he did identify with Abraham, Henry VIII's Psalter, preserved in the British Library indicates that by the 1540s the King considered himself a new King David. [6] The British Library even suggests that the first illustration of Henry reading in his bed-chamber may depict him holding the Psalter itself as the book in his hands is bound in red, like his personal Book of Psalms. An illustration for Psalm 52, f. 63v clearly shows this identification with David, as Henry VIII sits in his Privy Chamber playing a harp, symbolic of the biblical king. Two other illustrations, possibly by Jean Mallard ('the King's poet') show Henry as David with Goliath (Psalm 26, f. 30) and then at prayer (68, f. 79). Psalm 88: 20-21 shows Henry's direct alignment with David because Henry marks in his own hand *'the promise made to David'* [promissio David facta]: *'I have laid help upon one who is mighty, and have exalted one chosen out of my people. I have found David my servant, with my holy oil I have anointed him'*.

Henry would have been anointed at his coronation and the nature of kingship was in itself something semi-divine. But Psalm 88 is symbolic in another way. As possibly in *God appears to Abraham*, Henry's annotations in the Psalter suggest an English King looking to David's Book of Psalms for guidance in his newly self-nominated position of spiritual supremacy. Another example of this may be seen in the second part of Psalm 2: v 10-11, *'Advice for Princes'*, [Exortatio ad principes] which Henry has marked in his own hand. The advice is to be wise, serve and fear the Lord.

Importantly, King David had been designated one of the 'Nine Worthies' in the medieval period, a biblical figure in that group held to personify the attributes of chivalry, something which Henry, created a Knight of the Bath at the age of three-and-a-half, would have surely identified with. King David was considered to be the biblical ancestor of the Christian Roman Emperors and in identifying with King David, Henry VIII may have found royal inspiration in that king variously referred to as Holy Monarch and Vicegerent of God. We see Henry VIII as God's servile representative on earth, identifying with scriptural kingship by means of his Psalter. Henry's virtual obsession with matters of religion in the latter half of his reign shows that he did indeed take on the full responsibility of what it meant to be the ultimate spiritual authority in the land, the supreme head of his English Church, now with its own English Bible. The British historian David Starkey has shown that a copy of Henry's coronation oath at the British Library has been added to in his own handwriting, showing that a later Henry wanted the *'universal church'* to be that

of England. [7]

It is also possible that a stained glass window in the Chapel of King's College, Cambridge may represent Henry VIII in the figure of another biblical king, Solomon[8] whilst alluding to the King's authority as (royal) head of the Church. It is significant that most of the windows in King's College Chapel, Cambridge were glazed in Henry's reign, possibly by Galyon Hone.

We might suppose that even when Catherine of Aragon's pregnancies were long passed, she might reasonably have hoped to still be able to bear a healthy baby boy, making her a royal Sarah, as Sarai became. It had been Thomas More who had said of Catherine of Aragon on her marriage to Henry VIII that '*she will be the mother of Kings as great as her ancestors'* which after all, was the principal role that queen consorts had to fulfil (Queen Elizabeth of York's tomb – significantly hewn in Henry VIII's reign - had borne such inscriptions extolling her as '*pretty, chaste and fruitful'*.) When Princess Mary was born in 1516, it is not surprising that Henry reasonably expected healthy sons to follow. Finally, of course, it was through Jane Seymour, his '*entirely beloved'* third wife and not Catherine, that Henry's longed-for son and heir was born. Abraham's son Issac was born when he was '*an hundrede years old'*. When his own 'Issac' was born, Henry VIII was forty-six.

Certainly, the birth of the future Edward VI in 1537 on the eve of the feast day of St Edward, was laced in language little short of miraculous. England was ecstatic with its King at the birth of a healthy baby boy, harkening back perhaps to the birth of the short-lived Prince Henry in 1511. Hugh Latimer, Bishop of Worcester wrote with joy, likening it to the birth of John the Baptist in a letter where he rejoiced, '*Thanks to our Lord God, God of England'*: thanks from a - since 1534 - English Church to an English God. This kind of biblical simile belongs to panegyrics. It will be remembered that Thomas More had celebrated Henry VIII's coronation in practically Messianic terms, in his book of Latin poems.[9] Among the wedding pageants for the marriage of Arthur, Prince of Wales and Catherine of Aragon in 1501, had been one which even went so far as to compare Henry VII with God himself, whereas Prince Arthur was hailed as his 'Sun [or, Son] of Justice'. [10]

With the tapestry depicting the *Circumcision of Issac and the Expulsion of Hagar*, we might conclude that Henry's long-held desire for dynastic fatherhood had been answered, justifying perhaps, this allusion to biblical iconography[11]. The one-year-old Edward VI had, after all, been painted by Hans Holbein in the Younger holding his golden rattle, above an inscription reminding him to emulate his father and if possible, surpass him. Like all the births of sons desperately waited for, that of Prince Edward would have probably been viewed at the time in the way that the birth of the future King Louis XIV in the next century, was greeted: '*Dieudonne*' and '*Deodatus*', meaning literally, God-given[12]. John Husee writing to Lord Lisle spoke for many when he said: '*The Prince was christened on Sunday last at 12 o'clock, whose birth has more rejoiced all true hearts than anything done this 40 years'*[13]. The Garter King of Arms proclaimed Henry's love for his baby son in the language of ceremony

when he pronounced Prince Edward at his christening, Duke of Cornwall and Earl of Chester, the '*most dear and entirely beloved son to our most dread and gracious lord, King Henry VIII'*.

Whilst all the evidence suggests that Henry almost certainly commissioned the tapestries, when I researched this in the Royal Collection, I found that nothing actually confirms this[14]. The set of tapestry panels was woven in Brussels of wool, silk, and gold and silver thread, designed possibly first by Bernard van Orley but probably completed by Pieter Cocke van Aelst before 1544. Made in the workshop of Willem de Pannemaker, the de Pannemaker family were renowned tapestry weavers in the Southern Netherlands, creating works for the French Royal House and most importantly, for the Habsburgs. Willem de Pannemaker was tapestry weaver for the royal Flemish courts and created the historic set of twelve panels on the *Conquest of Tunis* for the Holy Roman Emperor Charles V, beginning them in 1548 and completing the set in 1554. When one of the Abraham tapestries was loaned to an exhibition at the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York in 2014-2015, the panel depicting *The Meeting of Abraham and Melchizedek* was listed as being woven under the direction of Willem de Kempeneer and designed around 1537-1538, which suggests the panels for Hampton Court took around eight years, roughly the same period as Charles V's twelve panels took.

When the tapestries were valued following the execution of Charles I in 1649, they were estimated at the staggering sum of £8260 in the inventory compiled of the late King's assets. This means that they probably were the most expensive items in the collection. Records in the Royal Collection show that during Charles I's lifetime, the tapestries had been hung for the celebration of St George's Feast Day in 1635 and during the visit of the Moroccan ambassador in 1637. Charles I would have instantly recognised the importance of the tapestries, given his connoisseurship for art *par excellence*. Significantly, the set featured later at the coronations of Charles I's sons, Charles II and James II at Westminster Abbey when at the latter, they were ceremonially draped around the shrine of Edward the Confessor[15] and in the Abbey itself it was ordered that there should be the '*same Hangings and furniture which was furnished in every place at the Coronation of his late Majesty [Charles II]'*. Importantly in the case of the Abraham tapestries, they were not sold off like other works in Charles I's collection, but retained by Oliver Cromwell in the Interregnum.

The Abraham tapestries are probably those featured to the left of the Choir in the 1662 engraving by Wenceslaus Hollar, *Coronation of Charles II in Westminster Abbey,* which took place on 23 April 1661. The diarist Samuel Pepys was an eyewitness at the event of which he left a detailed account, whilst not mentioning the tapestries. I discovered a series of plates by the artist William Sherwin depicting the coronation of James II at Westminster Abbey, held in the New York Public Library's collections. Whilst the tapestries are not directly referred to, the plate '*A perspective of Westminster-Abby from the high-altar to the west end, shewing the manner of His Majesties crowning'*, clearly depicts them. So detailed are the plates that I identify the

tapestry to the right of the throne as the '*Circumcision of Issac'*, with its distinctive figure lying forward on the ground with his bowl. I believe the opposite tapestry is '*The Separation of Abraham and Lot'*.

The Royal Collection lists these tapestries as '*probably... delivered autumn 1543 or early 1544'*; Historic Royal Palaces states they were '*certainly first hung in the Great Hall in 1546'*. The former is supported by the TNA, *Records of the Exchequer*, which state that the completed set of tapestries on the *Story of Abraham* is first mentioned as being in Henry VIII's ownership between September 1543 and September 1544.[16] If they were only first hung in 1546, they were certainly not long to be enjoyed by Henry VIII, who died the following January at the Palace of Whitehall. However, these dates are interesting if we consider again that de Pannemaker began his set of tapestries for Charles V in 1546, a series which took him about eight years to create. This could concur with the sources that state that Henry's Abraham tapestries were commissioned in the late 1530s – probably c. 1537-38 - if this time period is anything to go by. All this suggests that Henry VIII had been keen to acquire tapestries woven by the renowned weavers de Pannemaker, in keeping with his European royal contemporaries. The Inventory of Historical Monuments in London (1927) states that tapestries in the (private) Jerusalem Chamber at Westminster Abbey are in fact, two panels by Willem de Pannemaker ('W. Pennemaker') ca. 1540-50, to the designs of Bernard van Orley and woven in Brussels. They are a series from the life of Abraham, with one additional section in the St Faith's Chapel. The Inventory states that their design 'corresponds' with the set at Hampton Court.

I believe that these dates – 1543, 1544 and 1546 - are of possible significance, because around this time Henry was also proclaiming his successive heirs in that large dynastic portrait known as *The Family of Henry VIII* by the British School, painted about 1545. If Henry was thinking of a political statement in the Abraham tapestries – and there is no actual evidence for this - the canvas in which he fittingly seats at the centre under a canopy of state with his son Prince Edward to his right, is a deliberate exercise in royal propaganda. To the King's right and left stand the (since 1544 reinstated) Princess Mary and Princess Elizabeth, whilst his '*entirely beloved'* third wife, Queen Jane is seated at his side as the mother of the heir Prince Edward, her importance suitably stressed. Henry probably commissioned it and it was first hung in the Presence Chamber at the King's Palace of Whitehall. The garden in the background of the painting may represent the Great Garden at Whitehall. The painting is in the Royal Collection and is hung in Hampton Court's so-called Haunted Gallery in Henry VIII's surviving apartments.

If we accept that the Abraham tapestries hung in the Great Hall, any reference to the King's longed-for son and heir would be highly appropriate at Hampton Court Palace where of course, Prince Edward was born. Significantly, Henry VIII was immortalised as a stucco figure with Prince Edward beside him on the wall of the south range inner courtyard of Nonsuch Palace, taking

their place with the Roman Emperors and the gods. Like the portrait *The Family of Henry VIII*, it was political architecture on the future of the Tudor dynasty, enshrined in Henry's last and most fantastical palace.[17] In the Inventory of the Historical Monuments in Middlesex (London, 1937), the tapestries are listed as hanging on the northern, southern and eastern walls of the Great Hall at Hampton Court; the inventory listed the tapestry depicting 'Abraham and the three angels' in 1937 as being at South Kensington.[18]

It was only by the time of the King's sixth marriage to Catherine Parr that he managed to achieve a state of family life. At his side was his sixth wife, as the matronly mother figure to three children from Henry's three earlier marriages. Whilst Catherine Parr was the actual queen of the Royal Family by the time that *The Family of Henry VIII* was painted, it was Jane Seymour who had given the King his longed-for heir, from whom Henry could hope to have his own descendants as numerous as the stars. We know of course, that none of Henry's children would have offspring of their own and the Tudor dynasty ended with his daughter Elizabeth. Catherine Parr does not feature in the King's dynastic portrait of his family but in the 1540s, she was still being referred to as the queen '*by whom as yet his majesty hath none issue, but may full well when it shall please God'*.[19] Perhaps significantly, around this same time as the portrait of the King's family was painted, Henry VIII was preparing for another campaign in France. The King made clear the successional order. Any child that might be borne to Queen Catherine Parr would be placed after that of Prince Edward and his future children, though before both the Princess Mary and the Princess Elizabeth.[20]

Other tapestries surviving at Hampton Court Palace from Henry's reign include *The Triumph of Hercules*, now hanging in the King's First Presence Chamber. Woven in Brussels in the 1540s, this tapestry was once part of a set of seven gold-threaded tapestries, as recorded in the inventory of furnishings of Whitehall Palace, listed as '*Antiques*'. The 1542 inventory records their arrival in England from the Florentine merchant John Baptist Gualteroti;[21] they were in fact, Henry's copies for a set designed for Pope Leo X. The Flemish tapestry panels from the set *The Triumphs of Petrarch* were purchased by Cardinal Wolsey in 1523 and hang in Hampton Court's Great Watching Chamber.

Later, some of the Abraham Tapestries were used to decorate the new apartments of William III at Hampton Court, for which they were specially cleaned and repaired. They were also mentioned in the inventory made in 1695, after the death of William's queen and co-monarch, Mary II. All this emphasised a conscious linkage with Tudor England through use of its surviving art treasures and reinforced the sense of continuity with the coronations of earlier Stuart monarchs, at which the Abraham Tapestries had been hung.

In Henry VIII's day, the Abraham tapestries would have brightly illuminated the Great Hall at Hampton Court, with their gold and silver thread against the dress of the court. Magnificent, they – like everything else at Hampton Court Palace - reflected Henry's magnificence.

ELIZABETH JANE TIMMS

TUDOR LIFE MAGAZINE

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THE TUDOR SOCIETY

Members' Bulletin

What a difficult time it's been for us all through lockdown and, in some cases, out the other side too. The social distancing and lockdown rules have had a devastating impact on many historical attractions, with most only now thinking about re-opening to the public. As an example, Claire (Ridgway) is in close touch with Hever Castle through contacts there and they've been twisting and turning to try and accommodate the new rules AND keep the visiting public happy and safe. Their struggles were even featured in the news! In some respects, Hever was lucky because they have the large gardens which were easier to open. They've also added one-way sections so that people can safely see the castle.

It is great that we've been able to continue to bring Tudor history to you through the Tudor Society. It's been tricky as Philippa Brewell wasn't able to visit places to do her roving reports, but we had a few editions already filmed, then we went to using archive photos from places we'd previously visited. You'll be happy to know that Philippa is now able to visit some places as they have sufficiently opened to the public. It's still an on-going situation as you'll understand. We hope that all Tudor attractions can come out of the other side of the crisis still able to open to the public.

Until then ... enjoy the Tudor Society!

Tim Ridgway

A VISIT TO BEAUTIFUL STEYNING

WITH IAN MULCAHY

The Parish Church of
St. Nicholas at Bramber Castle

Steyning is a small market town of approximately 7,000 residents situated at the foot of the South Downs in the valley of the River Adur. The name means *places characterised by stones* though to which stones this name refers remains unknown. The town has been the subject of many excavations and this has enabled archaeologists to confirm that the area saw substantial pre historic activity. Finds include Bronze Age spearheads, pottery and ditches, Iron Age metalwork and numerous Roman artefacts.

Steyning began to develop as a settlement in the 7th or 8th century when St Cuthman founded a Minster Church and was subsequently buried here, making Steyning a place of pilgrimage. By 850 Steyning had become a town of regional importance, shifting from an ecclesiastical centre to a royal centre and King Æthelwulf of Wessex was buried here in 858, though his remains were later exhumed and transferred to Winchester. A stone grave cover discovered in the 19th century and kept in the porch of the modern church is believed to be his. It is known that Æthelwulf's son, Alfred the Great, owned Steyning and his will of 899 left the church and lands to his nephew, Æthelwold.

In 1047, Edward the Confessor gave the Church and manorial lands of Steyning to the Abbey Church of the Holy Trinity at Fécamp in Normandy in recognition of the sanctuary provided by them during his exile, and this brought the church under the direct jurisdiction of the Pope. This state of affairs didn't last long however as in 1052, Earl Godwin (father of King Harold) expelled the monks from Steyning

and took the estate for himself. On the Earls death in 1053, Harold didn't rectify the situation, giving William of Normandy another reason to invade and, in 1066, the church and lands were repossessed and returned to the monks of Fécamp by William, with whom it remained until the dissolution.

Excavations to the east of the church in 1988 revealed the remains of a small cluster of mid-10th century buildings within an Anglo-Saxon Farmstead, one of which was reconstructed at the Weald & Downland Museum (see *Tudor Life, July 2019*) and by the end of King Cnut's reign in 1035, a mint was in operation at Steyning which remained in use until the time of William II. The Domesday Book records Steyning as being home to 223 villagers, 96 smallholders and 9 slaves, giving a total population of 328 which placed the town amongst the top 20% of recorded settlements by populace. Due to plaque and economic factors the size of the population remained steady and was of a similar size in 1524.

Other archaeological digs have discovered the remains of buildings to the south and west of the church which can be dated to the 10th, 11th & 12th centuries. In common with East Grinstead (see *Tudor Life, July 2020*), Steyning bore witness to the execution of a Protestant Martyr; 25 year old John Launder of Godstone, Surrey who was tied to a stake and burnt to death on Chantry Green in Church Street on 23 July 1555.

Having parked the car close by, we will start our walk at the oldest extant building in Steyning, which is, of course, **The Church of St Andrew**. The current building is not, however, the timber church that was founded and constructed by St Cuthman, but a grand stone structure, in keeping with its former minster status, built on the site of the Saxon church. The

Saxon Cottage

Rosemary Cottage (left) and Hawthorne Cottage

earliest parts, including many supporting arches inside, date back to 1090, but the bulk of the current fabric of the building was constructed between 1160 & 1180 and the internal door of the south porch is that which was installed at this time. By 1263 the dedication had changed from St Cuthbert to St Andrew, when it is first documented as such, but this is likely to have happened either pre conquest or at the time of the rebuild shortly after the conquest. After the dissolution, the eastern end of the church fell into disrepair resulting in the loss of the tower, the chancel and the eastern transepts. The current tower, at the west end of the church, was built in 1602.

Walking away from St Andrew's along Church Street, an ancient track which formed part of the medieval centre of the town, our first building of interest on the western side of the road is the thatched and timber framed **Saxon Cottage**; the surviving southern wing of what was originally a much larger house built in 1550. The owners of the house would have been able to watch from their windows as John Launder was burnt at the stake (see above) in 1555 on Chantry Green.

A little further south are the conjoined **Hawthorne Cottage** and **Rosemary Cottage**. Rosemary Cottage, to the left, is an early 15th century hall house with a peculiar looking third storey which is not a modern addition, but is certainly not original either. Hawthorne Cottage is a 16th century crosswing addition to Rosemary Cottage which is now an independent property. Adjoining to the south is **12 Church Street**, a 16th

12 Church Street

The Forge

century crosswing addition to **The Forge**, another 15th century hall house which has been much restored since its days as a blacksmiths workshop.

Crossing to the east of Church Street our first building here, on the southern corner of School Lane, is **Holland Cottage**, a lovely timber framed hall house built in around 1500 which boasts a full length jetty. Its similarly aged neighbour, **11 Church Street,** is also a hall house, but unfortunately the timbers are hidden behind later rendering. Formerly a pub known as the Smugglers Arms, number 11 is now the bursar's office for Steyning Grammar school.

The next building is probably the most spectacular in town. The Grade I listed 9 Church Street, better known as **The Brotherhood Hall**, is a timber framed building with a full length jetty which was built in 1461. It was built as the Guild Hall of the Fraternity of the Holy Trinity (first recorded in 1424) but ceased to be used by the Brotherhood at the time of the Dissolution and the hall was confiscated by Henry VIII and sold for £535 – the equivalent of almost 50 years salary for a skilled tradesman at the time and roughly £225,000 in today's money, when adjusted for inflation. By 1579 the building was hosting a free school and in 1614 Steyning Grammar school was founded by William Holland and took ownership of the hall, at which point the first two floors of the central brick built porch were constructed. The third floor of this section was added in the late 19th century and the building is still in use by the school, over 400 years after its founding. Adjoining the

Holland Cottage

11 Church Street

The Brotherhood Hall

Brotherhood Hall, and also a part of the school, is **7 Church Street**, an early 16th century timber framed house with a full length jetty, the right hand side of which has now been underbuilt in brick.

The final building before we reach the High Street is **1, 3 & 5 Church Street**, a quaint little late 14th century Wealden hall house with a mid 15th century crosswing to the south and an 18th century extension to the north.

Before we walk along the north side of the High Street we can fix our gaze beyond the crossroads at the end of Church Street on **The Stone House**, the lower stone portion of which was built in the early 1300s on the site which is believed to have hosted King Cnut's mint. The timber framed upstairs was added in the 16th century and the property has served time as a prison.

Back on the northern side, on the junction with Church Street, is **32 & 34 High Street**, a 16th century building that was refronted in the 18th century. The building is now home to Steyning Tea Rooms, and its timber framing is visible to the western side and rear, via Bank Passage.

There are many medieval and Tudor buildings in Steyning (31 buildings in the town predate 1500 and a further 12 are from the 16th century), particularly in the High Street, that are no longer recognisable as such due to their archetypal timbers being hidden behind 18th and 19th century renderings and facades. Many of these have been excluded from this tour as they do not offer anything spectacularly pleasing on the eye, externally, but should you visit the town the evidence of the

7 Church Street

1,3,5 Church Street

The Stone House

The rear wing of 32 & 34 High Street

true age of these buildings is visible inside some of the shops, the Post Office being a particularly good example.

Moving along the northern side of the High Street the next building we shall look at is **68-70 High Street**, a couple of hundred yards along. This is a 15th century Wealden house, unfortunately disguised with the recessed centre and lower floor built out to be flush with the jettied wings and the whole building rendered, though it remains recognisable by the shape of the roof. **84 & 86 High Street** is another 15th century structure, again unfortunately rendered, but retaining its character and identifiable by the roof.

90 & 92 High Street is another 15th century timber framed building, but its timbers are proudly on display for our viewing pleasure. It has a full length jetty, but this has been under built at both ends, leaving just the central portion overhanging. Continuing with the 15th century theme, **120 & 122 High Street** is a large L shaped block sitting on the western side of the junction with Tanyard Lane, another of the town's Saxon thoroughfares. Despite having been refaced in painted brick, the building still manages to project a certain charm, the ancient Horsham stone roof being invaluable in facilitating this.

68 & 70 High Street

84 & 86 High Street

90 & 92 High Street

At the end of the High Street where it becomes the Horsham Road, there is a little side turning called Mouse Lane and a few steps along Mouse Lane, on the right hand side, can be seen **Old Workhouse Cottages**, so named as the property was bought by the Parish as a workhouse in 1729; a function that it carried out until 1835 when larger premises were sought. An archetypal Wealden hall house, the cottage was built in approximately 1450 and its upper timbers remain visible, though the ground floor has been rebuilt in brick. To the rear is a large L shaped extension which, unusually, was added soon after the original build.

It's now time to turn tail and head back along the southern side of the High Street and the first building of interest here is opposite numbers 120 & 122. **95 & 97 High Street** is a relatively large pair of late 15th or early 16th century timber framed cottages with a couple of unusual features. Unlike most houses of this period within the central area of Steyning, 95 & 97 is set back a few yards from the road, affording the owners a small front garden. Was 16th century trade conducted from this space? The building is also raised on a flint and cobblestone base and, certainly with regards to no. 95, appears to have a cellar.

Opposite numbers 90 & 92 is number 69, better known as **The Old Cottage**, a 15th century timber framed building that was previously a forge. Interestingly, this building is also raised on a stone base. A few steps further along the road we find **61, 63 & 65 High Street**, a large early 16th century row of shops whose first floor is jettied for the entire length. Evidence of internal division right up into the roof space suggests that this was purpose built to serve as a row of shops.

At **51 High Street**, we find a small 15th century building with its timbers still on visible, but its jetty has been infilled. This sports an unusual gable end to the street on one side, reminiscent of a crosswing, but seemingly part of the original fabric of the building. **39 High Street** is an L shaped timber framed building of the late 16th or early 17th century whose front timbers have been hidden behind brick for the last two hundred years, but wander through the carriage archway between this building and the adjoining Chequers Inn, a much altered 15th century coaching inn, and you will see the fine timber framed rear wing.

As we near the end of our walk, we once again return to the Old Stone House at the junction with Church Street, cross the

120 & 122 High Street

Old Workhouse Cottages

95 & 97 High Street

The Old Cottage

Purpose built shops at
61, 63 & 65 High Street

51 High Street

The rear wing of 39 High Street

Penfold Cottage

Jarvis

road and continue walking south eastwards along the northern side of the High Street. The first building we come to is **Penfold Cottage**, a charming little 15th century hall house with a 16th century addition that was refaced in flint during the 18th century. The cottage somehow manages to squeeze two floors under its particularly low roof!

Our final building of interest in Steyning takes us slightly out of town but brings us back round nicely to the church and so where the car is parked. Turning left into Jarvis Lane we come, after a short walk, to **Jarvis**, a 16th century farmhouse whose lower floor has been rebuilt in brick, but the upper floor retains its plaster infilled timber framing. Jarvis is now surrounded by urban development, but 400 years ago it would have looked eastwards across its open fields as they gently sloped away towards the ruins of Bramber Castle…

Bramber

Adjoining Steyning to the south east is the small village, population 750, of Bramber. Sited at the point of a wide, now silted up, tidal compartment of the river Adur just north of the Downs Bramber, meaning 'Bramble Thicket', is most famous for the ruins of its Norman castle which

The western part of the Norman gatehouse at Bramber Castle. The roof of the Church of St. Nicholas can be seen beyond

was built on a natural knoll overlooking the Adur estuary soon after the Conquest. There is a small amount of archaeological evidence for prehistoric activity in the area which became Bramber and finds here include a Palaeolithic hand axe, Neolithic flints, flints, pottery and spearheads from the Bronze Age and a single Iron Age coin!

Bramber Castle was constructed by 1073 with the purpose of guarding both the estuary and the eponymous Rape of Bramber, one of six such rapes across Sussex which sub-divided the county into thin administrative areas running from the coast in the south to the borders with Surrey and Kent in the north. Records show that Edward I was a regular visitor to the castle between 1280 and 1305 and we also know that repairs were made in the early 14th century when it was in the ownership of Edward II. By the middle of the Tudor Period it is documented as being the 'Late Castle of Bramber' and in 1586 William Camden wrote, on visiting the castle, "*but now in steed of a Castle there is nothing but an heape of ruble and ruines*". The gradual ruination of the castle coincided with the fortunes of the town, which entered a steep decline in the late 13th century and was, by 1334, noted as being the poorest borough in the county of Sussex, a description which still held true in 1524 when the population of the entire parish was roughly 80. All that remains of the castle today is the large western part of the Norman gatehouse, parts of the 14th century curtain wall (excavations have shown that earlier curtain walls have collapsed down the steep banks of the ditch), the original earth motte and parts of the eastern range, which are also believed to date from the 14th century.

Outside of the castle's deep ditch is the **Church Of St Nicholas**. Built at the same time as the castle, it has been maintained with a greater degree of success and remains a functioning church today, though on a somewhat smaller scale than originally, the north and south arms of the transept having been demolished in the 14th and 15th centuries; another reflection of the poverty that afflicted the town during this period. The church remained unaffected by the dissolution despite the castle being held at the time by the Howard Family.

The village itself was a new town which grew up alongside the castle and was, as it is today, concentrated on a single east/west road running through the centre which, in the late Medieval and Tudor periods, formed part of the main route from Canterbury to Southampton. The road, and the buildings either side of it, are laid on a man-made causeway jutting into the estuary and this is thought to have originally been a timber structure incorporating a quay. The timber piles have been carbon dated to between 1010 and 1170 which gives rise to the theory that it was built before the castle as a way of transporting building material, much of which came by ship from Northern France, across the marshy estuary from the

The Old Priory

St Mary's Guest House

main river channel. The wooden causeway was later infilled with cobbles and stone to produce the causeway seen today. The evidence for this was discovered by chance during trench work by utility companies during the 1950s with further evidence being uncovered in the 1970s.

With the village suffering a significant and prolonged decline from the late 13th century, domestic buildings that would have been known to the Tudors are thin on the ground, and just two survive. By far the most impressive is the picture postcard **St Mary's Guest House**. With its close stud timber framing and a jetty along the full length of each of the two sides which are visible from the road, this house of approximately 1470 is the archetypal Medieval/Tudor period house. Built on the instruction of William of Waynflete, Bishop of Winchester, on a site connected with The Knights Templar, the internal design is unusual, particularly upstairs, where 3 of the 5 chambers are entirely self-contained. This seemingly original feature suggests that St Mary's was a purpose built guest house and it is believed that it initially provided lodgings for the monks who collected the tolls at the adjacent Bramber Bridge. It is said that Charles II stayed at the house during his flight to France following defeat to the Parliamentarians at the Battle of Worcester in 1651. St Mary's is open to the public on certain afternoons, but if you decide to visit, please check opening times before travelling. Opposite St Mary's is **The Old Priory**, a 2 bay aisled hall house from the 15th century whose timber framing is now hidden behind a brick and flint façade.

IAN MULCAHY

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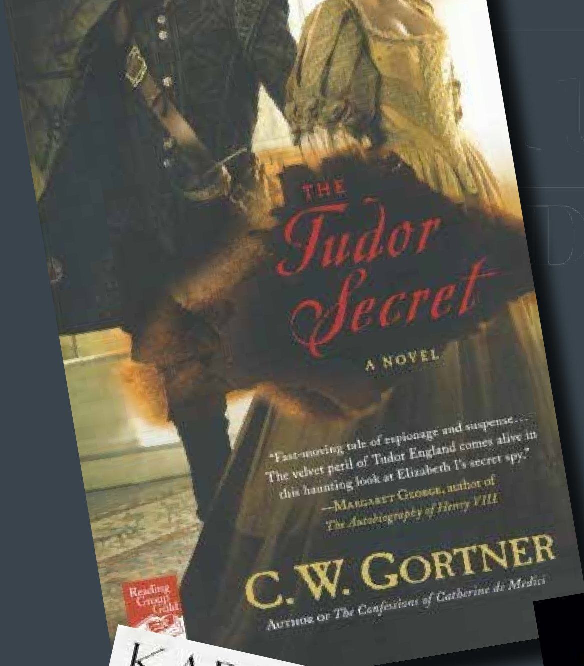
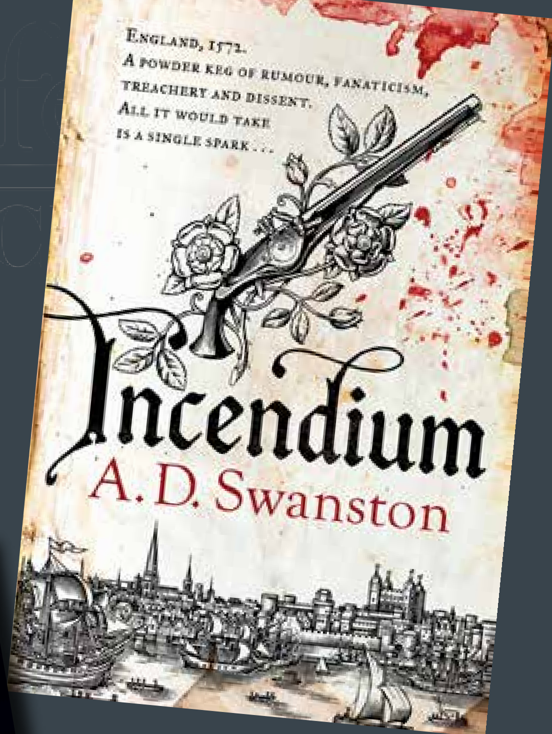
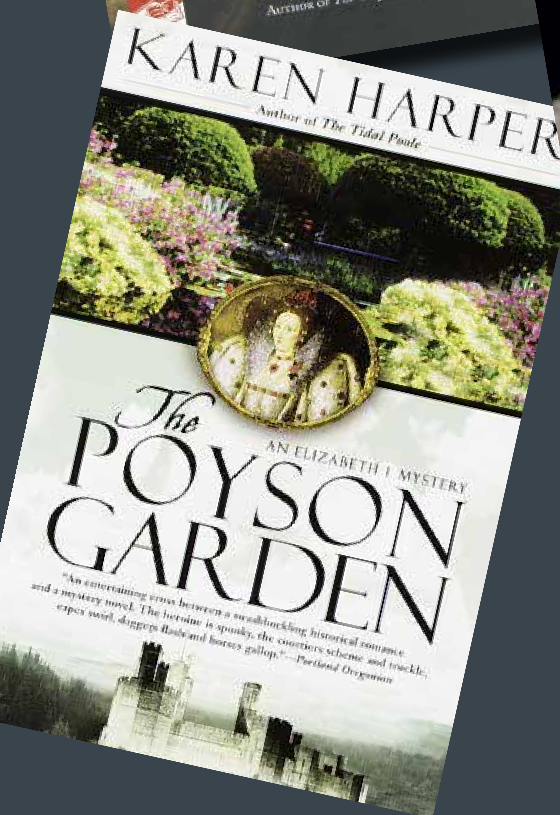
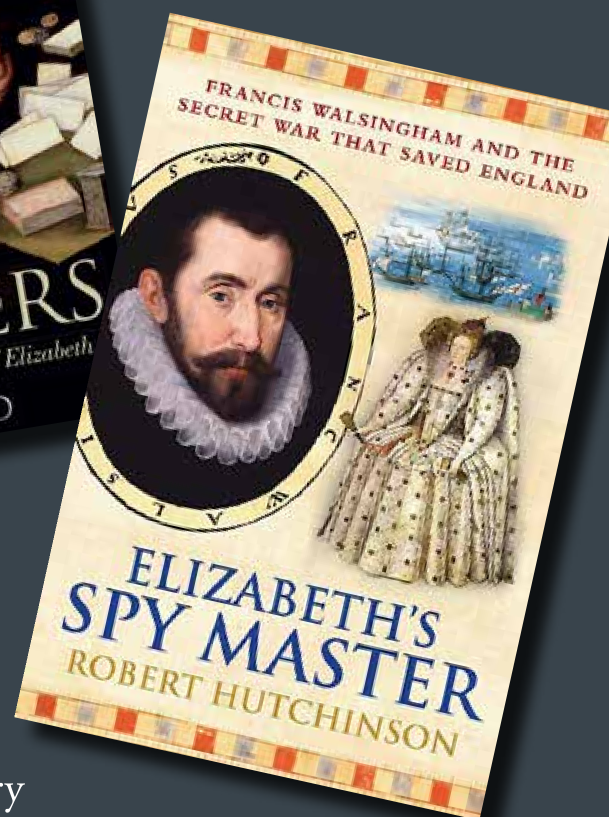








Fiction remains such a fruitful field for the world of Tudor espionage. For something in the ilk of Dumas's musketeers with a Tudor twist, why not try C. W. Gortner's "The Tudor Secret"? Karen Harper's mystery "The Poyson Garden" weaves the Boleyns in with the days of Mary I, while A. W. Swanston's "Incendium" gives us a spy operating between England and France around the terrible time of the Saint Bartholomew's Eve Massacre of 1572.

If you would like some non-fiction, "The Watchers: The Secret History of the Reign of Elizabeth I" by Stephen Alford is hard to beat. "Elizabeth's Spymaster" by Robert Hutchinson is a fine biography of Sir Francis Walsingham, arguably the greatest intelligencer of the era

Gareth Russell

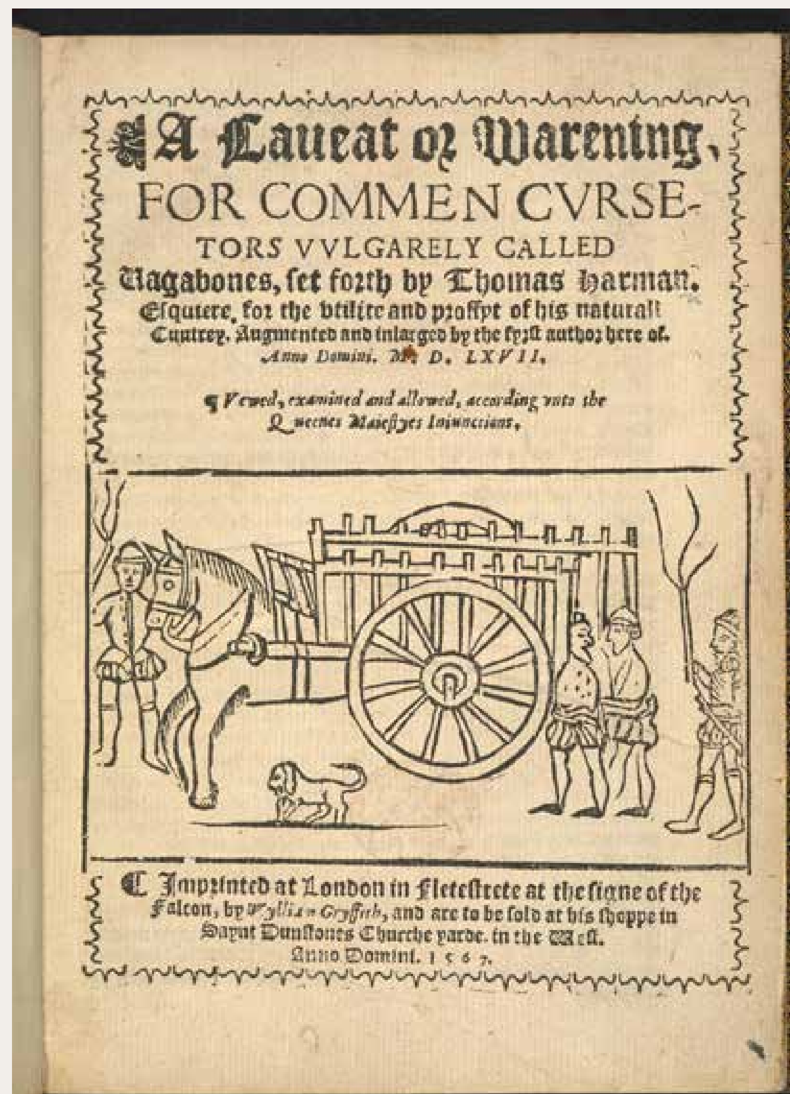
TONI MOUNT

Thomas Harman, Sturdy Beggars and Rogues

In some earlier articles for *Tudor Life,* I have written about beggars in a series on *What the Reformation meant to Ordinary Folk* [early in 2017], in *The Not-so-Golden Age of Elizabethan England* [Dec 2018] and *The Streets of Elizabethan London* [Jan 2019]. Today, I shall look at 'sturdy beggars', sometimes called 'sturdy rogues', and their Elizabethan nemesis in particular, Thomas Harman.

In medieval England, a sturdy beggar was someone who, despite being fit and well enough to work, preferred to wander the country, begging for alms instead. The Statute of Cambridge of 1388 was an early law which defined these able beggars as opposed to the 'deserving poor'. The deserving poor were those with some disability, infirmity or of an age that they were unable to earn their bread. The latter should receive sympathy and charitable alms. The former were despised as idle scroungers. The Vagabonds and Beggars

The front cover of Thomas Harman's pamphlet about beggars and con-men [1567]


A Caueat or Warening,
FOR COMMEN CVRSE-
TORS VVLGARELY CALLED
Vagabones, set forth by Thomas harman.
Esquiere, for the vtilite and proffyt of his naturall
Cuntrey. Augmented and inlarged by the fyrst author here of.
Anno Domini. M. D. LXVII.

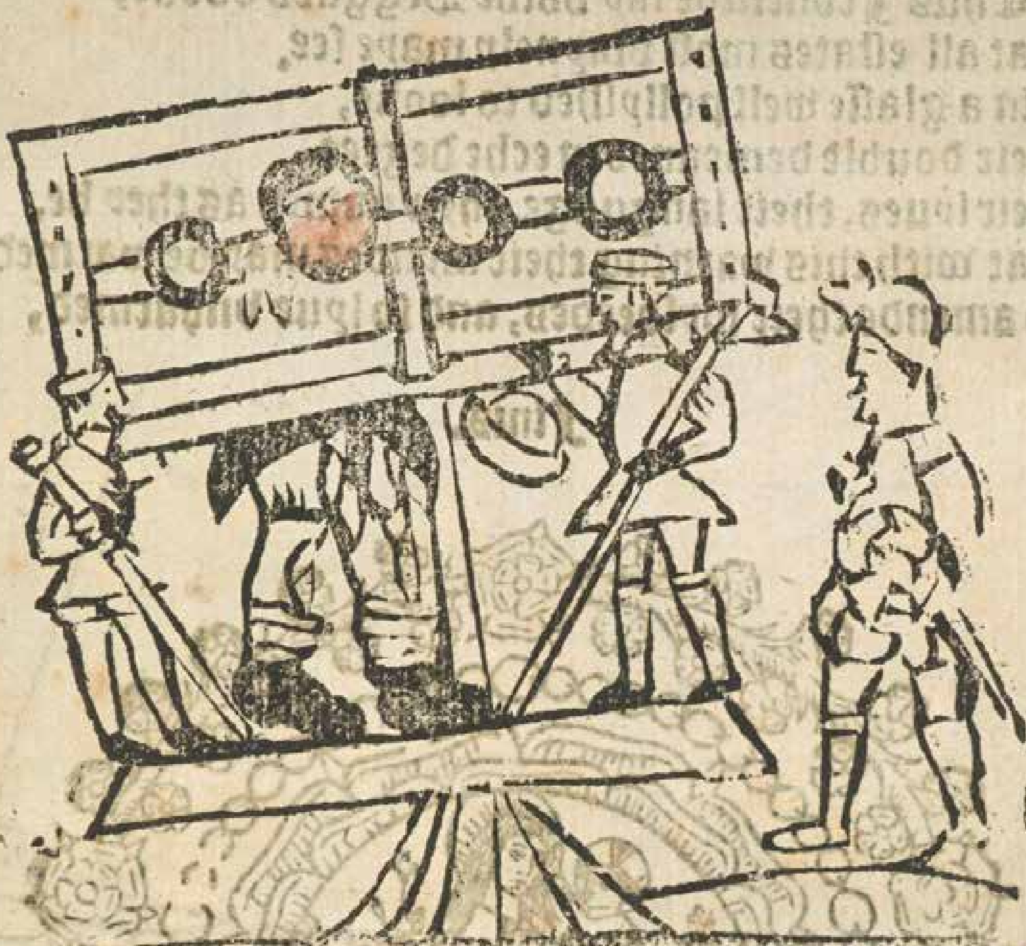
Vewed, examined and allowed, according vnto the
Queenes Maiestyes Iniunccions.

Imprinted at London in Fletestrete at the signe of the
Falcon, by Wylliam Gryffith, and are to be sold at his shoppe in
Saynt Dunstones Churche yarde. in the West.
Anno Domini. 1567.

Act of 1494, in the reign of Henry VII, listed the restrictions on beggars and the punishments due for offenders. In the 1530s and 1540s, as Henry VIII closed the monasteries in England, reducing care and charity available to the poor, magistrates were made responsible for issuing licenses to those unable to work and, therefore, making it a criminal offence for anyone capable of employment to beg. Unfortunately, the law took no account of those willing to work but unable to find a job and lumped them in the same category. The authorities believed that people who did not work should be punished for their idleness.

Unsurprisingly, certain enterprising but unscrupulous sturdy beggars attempted to con people into believing they were disabled in some way and thus due benevolent acts of charity. There was a lengthy list of slang terms used to

A counterfeit-crank in the pillory



This counterfet Cranke, nowe vew and beholde,
Placed in pyllory as all maye well se,
This was he as you haue hard the tale tolde,
before recorded with great suerlyte,
Abused manye with his inpiete,
his lost some attyre in most vgly manner,
Was through London carted with dysplayd banner.

describe particular fraudulent methods of persuading Christian folk to give money. 'Averers' were 'avering' to be something they were not, taking off their clothes and hiding them, then claiming to have been robbed or 'garrotted' on the street. Garrotting didn't have its modern meaning of strangulation but meant what we would term 'mugging'. Then there were bristlers who cheated at dice games, using loaded dice to make a living and dummerers who pretended to be deaf and dumb.

Another trick was to fake a horrible illness, sticking on boils made of wax, or tumours of raw butcher's offal. The Tom o' Bedlam or Abraham-man would pretend to be patients lately discharged from the Abraham ward at Bedlam Hospital, an asylum in London for the insane. They made a habit of following people around, pestering them until they were given money to go away. The phrase 'Abraham-men' is mentioned, suggested as a means of disguise for Edgar, in Shakespeare's play, King Lear [1604-05].

Bedlam – the Hospital of St Mary of Bethlehem – had specialised in the care of mental illness since 1403, and remained the only such hospital in England until the seventeenth century. But there were never many genuinely discharged patients because once there, they tended to stay indefinitely. In 1598 there were only twenty patients in Bedlam, one of whom had been there for more than twenty-five years and the others were also long-term, having been there for several years.

Counterfeit-cranks were another type of con-artists who used soap in order to fake foaming at the mouth, pretending to suffer violent fits of the 'falling sickness' – epilepsy, as we call it. Clapperdudgeons did even worse, causing themselves injuries and cuts, covering them with soiled rags so they became infected and inflamed with the risk of suffering sepsis and dying. Apparently, the money earned must have made the pain and risk worthwhile. But there was a rank of palliards – evil people – who would deliberately mutilate children, instead of themselves because a sick or injured child earned more sympathy from passersby and attracted bigger donations. There were recipes available for herbal mixtures that would create gruesome sores.

A more active form of trickery was practised by hookers. These weren't sex-workers but thieves. They would visit houses during the day, innocently asking directions or begging a morsel but actually looking out for items to steal. After dark, they would return with a hook on a long pole and help themselves to valuables, usually items of clothing, through the windows. They probably had more success on warm summer nights when windows were left open. Female beggars had other means. Bare-top tricksters, as they were known, would flaunt themselves in the street and entice unwary men into dark alleyways or empty buildings with the promise of sex. However, the trickster's burly accomplices would be waiting there to rob the victim at his most vulnerable. For Thomas Harman's dictionary of terms for rogues see https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/A_Caveat_or_Warning_for_Common_Cursitors

Sturdy beggars became a growing problem in Tudor times as ex-soldiers, unemployed agricultural workers,

women, children, the old and sick joined the ranks of the homeless and vagrant, perhaps as many as 30,000 in a population of around 3 million in England. The Vagrancy Act of 1547 stated that any able-bodied person who had not worked should be branded with a 'V' and sold into slavery for two years. Child beggars were forced into service. Other laws said that vagrants should be whipped and sent back to their place of birth. This often made the problem worse. If someone had left home to seek employment elsewhere because there was no longer any work available there, sending them back didn't help but it was often a case of wanting beggars to be someone else's responsibility, rather than helping the individual.

Successive Tudor governments regarded beggars as threats to public order, especially returned soldiers who might organise themselves into bands and rob travellers on the road. By the end of the sixteenth century, new poor laws made parishes provide work for the genuinely unemployed, while 'incorrigible rogues' were to be whipped, returned to the parishes whence they had come, or even banished overseas for persistent offences.

Thomas Harman was a Kentish gentleman who served as a magistrate, responsible for implementing the new laws against beggary enacted by Henry VIII, before becoming unwell and retiring to his estate at Crayford in north-west Kent in 1547. His house stood beside Watling Street, the main road between London and Dover, and numerous beggars travelled along that route, plying their trade in various ways. Harman interviewed many of them, as he said, by 'using fair flattering words, money and good cheer', an exercise that resulted in his 'taxonomy of rogues', or dictionary of beggary.

As a magistrate, Harman was familiar with the documents that gave license to beg and on an occasion in nearby Dartford, when he spotted a dummerer, he demanded to be shown the fellow's licence. Harman recognised it as a forgery but told the beggar to call at his Crayford house. No doubt expecting a handout, the fellow stopped by but was confronted by Harman and a surgeon. The surgeon checked and the beggar's tongue was whole, though he refused to speak, so they hung him by his wrists from a roof beam. He soon found his voice, pleading to be cut loose. Harman obliged but took all his ill-gotten money and gave it to the poor of the parish. The beggar was whipped and spent time in the pillory, to be pelted with dung and rubbish by the locals.

Harman often visited London, gathering further information on the ways in which beggars and rogues operated, putting together a treatise on the 'unruly rabblement of rascals' and naming the worst offenders in *A Caveat or Warning for Common Cursitors,* published in London in 1566-67. He dedicated his ten-page pamphlet to his neighbour, Elizabeth, Countess of Shrewsbury, who held the manor of Erith, not far from Crayford. It contains twenty-four descriptions of various kinds of rogues and some of their canting vocabulary, illustrated with woodcuts.

While in London, Harman met a young fellow, Nicholas Jennings [Genynges above] who claimed to suffer

These two pyctures, lyuely set out,
One bodye and soule, god send him more grace:
This mounstrous desembelar, a Cranke all about.
Uncomly couetinge, of eche to imbrace,
Money or wares, as he made his race,
And sometyme a marynar, and a saruinge man:
Or els an artificer, as he would fayne than.
Such shyftes he used, beinge well tryed,
A bandoninge labour, tyll he was espyed.
Conding punishment, for his dissimulation,
He sewerly receaued with much declination.

Nicholas Blunt as an upright-man [left] & in his guise as a counterfeit-crank, Nicholas Jennings [right]

from epilepsy and to have been recently discharged from Bedlam. Harman, suspicious that Jennings was a counterfeit-crank, sent word to the hospital. The keeper of Bedlam had never heard of Jennings, so Harman had him followed by two of his printer's servants. Jennings spent the day begging most successfully but was seen renewing the blood on his head bandages from a bladder he concealed under his rags.

That evening, the servants continued to follow him when he paid for a boatman to ferry him across the Thames to Newington, to a nice house where he lived with his wife. A constable was summoned to arrest him. When Jennings was stripped and searched at the constable's house, he had 13 shillings and 3½d on his person – better than the average daily labourer's wage. However, he tricked the constable's wife and made his escape, naked, across the fields in the dark. As usual, Harman managed to persuade the authorities to give Jennings' money to the poor of the parish.

But that wasn't the end of Jennings' story. It turned out that his real name was Nicholas Blunt, an upright-man, running a gang of thieves and beggars. He resumed his career, posing as either a sailor whose ship was lost at sea – such a trickster was known as a 'whipjack' or 'freshwater mariner' – or a hat-maker from Leicester, come to London in search of work. He might have continued in his wicked ways indefinitely but his luck ran out on New Year's Day 1567 when he attempted to 'gull' a printer. William Griffith – the same man who printed Harman's pamphlet at the Sign of the Falcon in Fleet Street and supplied the men to follow Jennings – recognised him and had him arrested once more. This time, Blunt/Jennings was sent to Bridewell, a prison-cum-workhouse for beggarly rascals as well as respectable poor folk in need of employment. But his punishment went further, being whipped through the city streets and then put in the pillory in Cheapside, one of London's busiest market streets, to suffer ridicule and humiliation.

Rogue literature, like Harman's *Caveat*, was printed in pamphlet form, quick and cheap to produce. The stories were often shocking or sensational and appealed to a wide readership; the Elizabethan equivalent of modern tabloid newspapers. Harman's investigative techniques used to gather information for *A Caveat* were highly original and surprisingly modern. His research and interview-style transcripts of his conversations with beggars were not unlike police methods today. However, critics debate how far Harman gives a fair picture of Tudor poverty but, despite some element of exaggeration and possible inventions to create a compelling read for his audience, many of the incidents he describes are supported by factual authoritative records. Harman was no more untruthful than many investigative journalists of the twenty-first century. When *A Caveat* was first published in 1566 – although no copies of that edition survive – it proved extremely popular, so much so that two other printers were punished by the Stationers' Company in 1567 for creating and selling pirated editions of Harman's work without his permission. Two further licensed editions

were published in 1568 and a revised edition in 1573.

What with journalistic techniques and pirated copies, our modern society has nothing new on Elizabethan times. Another con-trick mentioned elsewhere but not by Harman was the 'ring-faller'. In this case, a cheap brass ring would be dropped surreptitiously in the street, awaiting an innocent passerby. Just as the victim arrived, the ring-faller would make much of finding this supposedly valuable object and offer to split the profits with the passerby. After some good-natured exchange as to who should pay whom for their half share, the victim would be persuaded to pay the trickster half the value, take the ring to a jeweller and sell it for a profit – only to discover it was worthless. In 2013, a scam being perpetrated on London streets by a criminal gang involved a gang member finding a shiny ring on the ground and offering to split the profits with a passerby... I expect you can guess the rest of the story.

For readers who want to know more, a good book on the subject is *Beggars, Cheats and Forgers – A history of frauds through the ages* by David Thomas [Pen & Sword, 2014]. The British Library website has the complete digitised version of Thomas Harman's *A Caveat* pamphlet at https://www.bl.uk/collection-items/a-caveat-for-common-cursetors-1567#

TONI MOUNT

QUIZ ANSWERS

How did you do with this month's quiz? You get one point for each person and one for each date, with a total of 24 points available! Why not post how you did in the comments on the website under the magazine?!

1st October: Stephen Gardiner, 1553
2nd October: Catherine of Aragon, 1501
4th October: Anne of Cleves, 1539
6th October: William Tyndale, 1536
8th October: Countess of Lennox, 1515
9th October: 34 years, 1514
11th October: Defender of the Faith, 1521
12th October: St Edward's Day, 1537
18th October: Writ of praemunire, 1529
24th October: Chapel Royal at Hampton Court Palace, 1537
26th October: Sir Thomas More, 1529
30th October: Battle of Bosworth, 1485

TL

Charlie on Books

THE MAN BEHIND THE TUDORS

Kirsten Claiden-Yardley

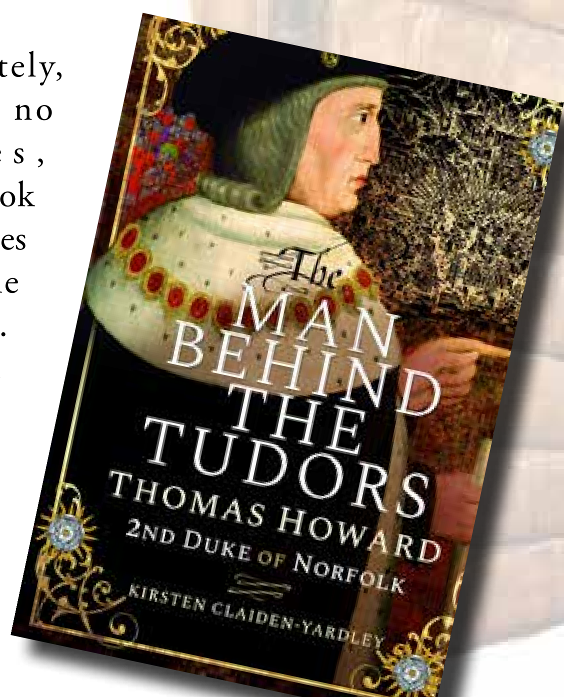
There have been many books released on the men surrounding the Tudor monarchs in recent years, mainly those around Henry VIII, including the likes of Thomas Cromwell, Charles Brandon and Thomas Howard, the third duke of Norfolk. However, there has been little look at the men who served the first Tudor monarch, Henry VII. One such man was the third duke of Norfolk's father, also called Thomas Howard. This Thomas served Edward IV, Richard III and Henry VII and is finally getting the recognition he deserves in Kirsten Claiden-Yardley's new book *The Man Behind the Tudors*.

The book starts by going over Thomas' ancestry, providing some context to what kind of world he was brought up in and what his childhood would have been like. It soon goes into his married life, telling us that he had ten children, although five died at a young age. The author makes some good observations, including one about why he suddenly left the court of Edward IV for no apparent reason, at least at the time:

> *'Thomas offered no explanation in his epitaph as to why he had suddenly decided to abandon his apparently promising career at the royal court. Given the ultimately extensive number of children that he fathered in his lifetime, it is possible that, as well as soldier and courtier, he was also a family man who wished to spend more time with his wife and young child. It is probably no coincidence that Thomas retired from court after his father-in-law's death in 1475 when Elizabeth inherited the manor at Ashwellthorpe, providing them with a home in which to set up their household.'*

This is a compelling conclusion and gives us a new personal dimension to Thomas' character. This, along with the author's research into how Thomas worked to gain Henry VII's trust over the years after he supported Richard III at the Battle of Bosworth, makes his character all the more interesting. She also examines the claim that Thomas and his father murdered the Princes in the Tower, which has been suggested in the past, but not as much as people like Richard III or James Tyrrell on his orders.

Unfortunately, there are no references, despite the book including quotes from multiple primary sources. There is just a bibliography at the back. There are



however several family trees included, which is useful as the Howard family is a complicated one with a lot of people with the same name.

The Man Behind the Tudors is a short work but that is good as it means there is less padding, especially as it is hard to know what he did at certain times as he wasn't the most important figures. I would argue that Thomas wasn't really the 'man behind the Tudors' but it is still a great book nonetheless. I would recommend this book to anyone interested in the Howard family and how the nobility coped with the transition from the Yorkist to the Tudor monarchy.

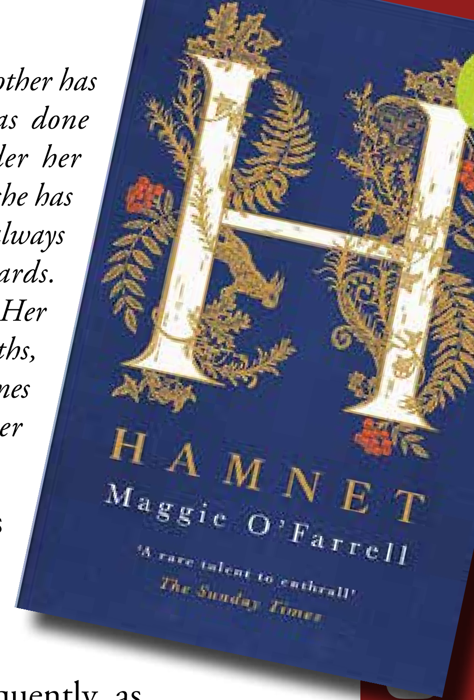
HAMNET

Maggie O'Farrell

William Shakespeare's play Hamlet is known by many, but fewer people know about Shakespeare's only son, Hamnet, who probably had at least some influence on the play. In Maggie O'Farrell's new novel *Hamnet* is a brilliant look at what the family of Shakespeare's life may have been like around the time of his son's death.

Hamnet is beautifully written and it is nice to have a book that focuses on Shakespeare's family rather than the man himself. In fact, William Shakespeare himself is never directly named, instead referred to variously as 'the tutor', 'the father', 'the son', and 'the husband'. This brings a sense of remoteness, as he is often away in London. He is away to the point that one of his daughters wishes for the plague as it will bring him back home to them, a bad omen for what is to come:

> *'If the plague comes to London, he can be back with them for months. The playhouses are all shut, by order of the Queen, and no one is allowed to gather in public. It is wrong to wish for plague, her mother has said, but Susanna has done this a few times under her breath, at night, after she has said her prayers. She always crosses herself afterwards. But still she wishes it. Her father home, for months, with them. She sometimes wonders if her mother secretly wishes it too.'*



The book does require some concentration to read, as it goes back and forth in time frequently, as well as the fact that the writing style is different than other novels. However, it is engaging enough that this is no real issue. The writing style draws you in, making you feel like you are there, it is absorbing and shows real talent on the author's part.

Hamnet is well-researched and this comes across in some of the remedies Shakespeare's wife comes up with. She receives backlash from some of the community as she disagrees with some of the older remedies and relies more on herbal ones:

> *'"Madam," the physician says, and again his beak swings towards them, "you may trust that I know much more about these matters than you do. A dried toad, applied to the abdomen for several days, has proven to have great efficacy in cases such as these."'*

We can see some of the thoughts of the period come through too, with many also disagreeing with her remedies because she is a woman, unlike the male physicians.

Hamnet is an amazing book, full of so many different emotions and one that is hard to put down once started. As much as it is about Shakespeare's family, we can see a lot about what ordinary life was like back then and so it would interest anyone into historical fiction set during that time, whether they know much about Shakespeare or not.

CHARLIE FENTON

WENDY J. DUNN
ON WRITING

THE HERO'S JOURNEY

'I was trying to be faithful to the shape of the historical record and the meaning of all these events that historians had written about. What I was writing was not real nut it was as true as I could make it (Greville cited by Lynch 2009).

"Writing engages me in my own personal hero's journey", I wrote in my PhD journal years ago. Reading that back, I just had to deepen my knowledge about what the hero's journey actually means for writers and writing. I added to my home library Murdock's The Heroine's Journey (1990), Campbell's The Hero with a thousand faces (2008), Volger's classic's work The Writer's Journey (2007). And I found time to read them. To my surprise, I discovered many of the steps of the hero's journey connected to my own writing process – indeed, to my core beliefs about life itself. From childhood, I have viewed life as a journey – a journey to learn from – to grow from. Committing to a writer's life is also a commitment to a journey to learn from, and grow from.

Embarking on a creative PhD was part of this 'learning' journey. My artefact for my PhD was The Light in the Labyrinth. This work targets young adults. But I wrote it with the hope that it could be a crossover novel – a novel that would be read by both young adults and adults. The hero's journey has strong connections to the young adult genre with its usual quest for identity (Nilsen and Donelson 2009). I wondered if I could use the twelve major steps of the hero's journey to map out and help develop The Light in the Labyrinth. So I used Vogler's outline (Vogler 2007) as my model, and set out the hero's journey of Kate Carey, my main character in my writing journal at the start of my PhD journey? OMG - was it really in November, 2010?

As you can see below, each step helped me to not only mapping out the plot of my story but offered inciting events for the development of my

Photo Copyright © Ricardo Cruz

story.

» ORDINARY WORLD:
Introduce reader to Kate and her world.

» CALL TO ADVENTURE
Kate goes to court.

» REFUSAL OF THE CALL
Kate discovers and denies her true parentage. She asks, 'Who am I?'.

» MEETING THE MENTOR
The older Kate Willoughby mentors the younger Kate. She provides Kate with critical knowledge to help her survive.

» CROSSING THE THRESHOLD
Kate steps towards accepting that she is the daughter of the King. She becomes aware of the plots to bring Anne Boleyn down.

» TESTS, ALLIES, ENEMIES
Now more settled into her life at court, Kate faces that there are few she can trust. She fears for her aunt but has no power to help her. But she helps her by her support and love.

» APPROACHING THE INMOST CAVE
The plots continue. Kate learns even more about those who live their lives at court.

» THE CRISIS / SUPREME ORDEAL
Her aunt's arrest and trial. Kate's loyalty is tested and found true.

» SEIZING THE REWARD
Kate is no longer a child. She supports her aunt as she waits for her execution.

» THE ROAD BACK
Anne's execution. Kate's mother and grandmother come to bury Anne Boleyn.

» THE CLIMAX / RESURRECTION
Kate realises blood does not make a family but love. She accepts her step-father as a father.

» RETURN WITH THE ELIXIR

Kate returns home a sadder, wiser girl, but now bound to her cousin Elizabeth through her love of Anne Boleyn.

Setting out Kate's hero's journey like this also helped in other ways. It opened my eyes to the similarity to my story to that of the myth of Persephone. The heart of The Light in the Labyrinth is its mother and daughter theme. Kate is Persephone – who enters Hades to her mother's heartache. The Light in the Labyrinth shines a light on how they find their way back to one another. Thinking about my story also helped me identified how my work connected to aspects of the Le bel inconnu, or the Fair Unknown, the Arthurian styled legend of the noble youth raised without knowledge of his true identity (Stewart 1973, p. 569). By this I mean, my Kate is the Fair Unknown who comes to the court of Henry VIII. Her experiences there opens the door to self-knowledge, as well as well the discovery that Henry VIII is her real father.

With use of the hero's journey, I constructed Kate's character by using familiar conflicts found in the young adult genre. Father-less, she yearns for a father's love and protection, but she resents the man who is now married to her mother. By first rejecting her place in her mother's new family, not knowing where she belongs or the direction for her life, my fourteen-year-old character embarks on her own hero(ine) journey through a labyrinth to discover her identity and place in the world.

Remembering how vital that first jotting of the hero's journey in my journal for the writing of The Light in the Labyrinth makes me wonder why I forgot to do it in my new novel – the conclusion of my work imagining the life of Katherine of Aragon. While this work is for an adult readership, the use of the hero's journey – whether deliberate or not – is very common in the construction of a novel. Mapping out Kate's journey in 2010, at the start of writing this work, was vital in keeping me on track for its completion.

As I have already mentioned, it is very common to the life of a writer. I will leave you another of my poems when I mull about the hero's journey of the creator:

Centuries ago Porphyrus wrote:
'A threshold is a sacred thing.'
And I think: the sacredness of the threshold
is the fire of imagination
where a creator is consumed
and surrenders self
to emerge again
reborn.

Each act of creation
is akin to finding courage
to enter Hades
and to find your way
home again
resurrected, alive
bearing the light of
the lantern-bearer. *

WENDY J DUNN

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*First published in The Blue Nib, August, 2020.

Sir Francis Walsingham

Walsingham was the principal secretary to Elizabeth I from 1573 until his death. He is well know as being her spymaster and was involved in uncovering the plots of Francis Throckmorton and Anthony Babington against Elizabeth. His detection of the Babington plot led to the execution of Mary, Queen of Scots.

FROM THE SPICERY

WITH RIOGHNACH

HOW SWEET IT IS - SUGAR CANE

ABOVE: Tacuinum Sanitatis, Beekeeping (originally Taqwin as-Sihha or Maintenance of Health)11th Century

Greetings, and welcome back to Part Two of How Sweet It Is! Today, we don't tend to think twice about the sugar we use in our cooking. However, when returning crusaders brought sugar was brought back to Europe, it wasn't something that everyone had access to. Sugar was considered as a spice and treated accordingly, meaning it was only in the realm of the wealthy. Like spices, sugar was used as both a sweetener and a medicinal, which if you think about medieval medicine, makes sense. We've all seen examples of medieval tonics and cures, so adding some sugar to the mix probably wasn't a bad idea.

Before the Crusades established a healthy trade in thinking and ideas between the Middle East and Europe, sugar was well known within the far and near east. People, as varied as Alexander of Macedonia's admiral, Nearchus, Greek physician and botanist Pedanius Dioscorides, and Pliny the Elder, were all familiar with sugar. This is to say nothing of the ancient cultures of India and China who not only pioneered the method of refining sugar cane juice into sugar but traded it beyond their borders. Pliny the Elder has the following to say about the sweet stuff:

> *Sugar is made in Arabia as well, but Indian sugar is better. It is a kind of honey found in cane, white as gum, and it crunches between the teeth. It comes in lumps the size of a hazelnut. Sugar is used only for medical purposes.*[1]

1 Faas, P. Around the Roman Table: Food and Feasting in Ancient Rome, University of Chicago Press. 2003. Referring to a quotation from Pliny the Elder's work Natural History

Skipping forward a couple of hundred years (as one does), William of Tyre stated that sugar was a most precious product, very necessary for the use and health of mankind[2] while chronicling the Crusades. Modern dentists, dieticians and diabetes specialists would probably disagree with him.

The crucial problem facing medieval sugar production and trade was highly labour-intensive in both growing and processing. It is at this point that the subject of slavery takes away some of sugar's sweetness. Vast amounts of human strength were required to cultivate water-hungry sugar cane and to transform the raw crushed juice into a solid. Anyone familiar with the series The Miniaturist would be familiar with the scene of a sugar cone being carefully shaved and the fine sugar being reverently tasted by a well-to-do Dutch family in 17th century Amsterdam. It is the human cost of medieval sugar production that contributed to its status as an item for the tastebuds of the elite. And like most luxury items, sugar attracted a hefty tax which ensured it would be out of the reach of lesser mortals. In fact, I believe the tax on sugar wasn't repealed until the 19th Century; obviously, governments appreciated the income generated from the trade in sugar too much.

Sugar, being the new must-have status symbol, was sold in cones

2 Barber, M. The Two Cities: Medieval Europe 1050-1320, Routledge, 2004

to those that could afford it. These sugar cones were made by pouring freshly pressed sugar cane juice into a mould and evaporating off the watery component. The finer and paler outer layer of the cone was reserved for the extremely wealthy. This was because it was considered the most pure sugar of all. The darker and more treacly inner sugar was high in molasses as well as impurities from the refining process. Needless to say that this layer was considered fit for the less wealthy and able. When it came time to use the sugar, pieces could be broken away from the cone using specialised scissors, and then ground in a pestle and mortar to the desired consistency. Obviously one would have to be extraordinarily careful when cutting pieces of sugar lest they crumble and go everywhere! For really special occasions (or to just show off to your mates), the expensive outer layer of the cone could be finely planed away and offered up for tastings in ornate spoons to your discerning guests.

So what did our medieval forebears do with this newfound luxury? They ate it, in ever-increasing quantities! Sugar went into wines (replacing the deadly sugars of lead) and medicines, sweetmeats and savoury meat dishes, and moulded sugar sculptures and other sweet subtleties. Who can possibly forget a Tudor-era favourite of a well-sweetened beef bone marrow pie??

Sugar-based delicacies such as sugar plate and sugar glass weren't just designed to appeal to the eye, they were intended to be eaten. They served as an example of the host's wealth. I genuinely pity the artisan who laboured over the sugar delights; all those hours of work gone in seconds!! The image of a pretty bunch of flowers is a beautiful example of the sugar crafters art. I have tried (and failed) several times to make sugar plate. Author Peter Bears calls sugar plate "a remarkably versatile modelling medium, capable of being made into all manner of sweets, models, or even plates and glasses which can be put to practical use."[3] IF you can get it to work!!

For something as diabolical to work with as sugar plate, it is frighteningly simple to make. Thomas Dawson's The Second Part of the Good Hus-wives Jewell[4] contains a good set of instructions for making and moulding the paste. Essentially, gum tragacanth is mixed with rosewater, pure icing sugar, lemon juice and egg white, and worked together to form a pliable and completely smooth paste.[5] The paste as coloured with various spices including saffron, cinnamon and ginger and the resulting dishes worked by hand to incredible thinness of 1/8th of an inch.[6] Examples of this amazing level of craftsmanship can still be found in some museum collections. What astounds me is that these dishes took the place of metal or fine china plates and were used for serving, eating and drinking from.

I'll leave you with a simple recipe for an Arabic sugar candy dating from the 13th Century. It involves cooking fine almond meal, rosewater and sugar together to a soft-ball stage, dredging the result in finely ground sugar (aka pure icing sugar). I'd serve these candies between removes at a feast, along with other sweetmeats and spiced wine.

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3 Wilson, A. Banquetting Stuffe - The Fare and Social Background of the Tudor and Stuart Banquet, Edinburgh University Press, Chapter 4 Rare Conceites and Strange Delightes: The Practical Aspects go Culinary Sculpture.

4 Wilson Ibid, pg 69

5 Ibid

6 Ibid

RIOGHNACH O'GERAGHTY

Khabîs al-lauz.

Take one *ratl* of peeled, ground sweet almonds and three ratls of sugar. Put the sugar in a dish and dissolve, with two uqiya of rosewater. When the sugar is dissolved and has begun to set, add the ground almonds, and stir until done. Serve out, coating under and over with fine-ground sugar. This may also be made with flour: put with the ratl of sugar two uqiya of flour, then proceed as above.[1]

[1] https://coquinaria.nl/en/medieval-arab-candy/

OCTOBER'S "ON THIS

1 October 1553
Mary I was crowned Queen at Westminster Abbey by Stephen Gardiner, the Bishop of Winchester.

2 October 1514
Mary Tudor, sister of Henry VIII, set off from Dover to sail to France to marry King Louis XII.

3 October 1559
Death of Sir William Fitzwilliam, Gentleman of Edward VI's Privy Chamber.

4 October 1539
Signing of the marriage treaty between Henry VIII and Anne of Cleves.

5 October 1553
Parliament repealed the "treason act" of Edward VI's reign and reinstated Mass in Latin.

9 October 1529
A writ of praemunire was filed against Cardinal Thomas Wolsey in the court of King's Bench.

10 October 1562
Elizabeth I was taken ill at Hampton Court Palace, with what was thought to be a bad cold. However, the cold developed into a violent fever, and it became clear that the young queen actually had smallpox. Just seven days later, it was feared that the Queen would die.

11 October 1521
The title of *Fidei Defensor*, "Defender of the Faith", was conferred by Pope Leo X on Henry VIII.

12 October 1555
Assassination of Lewis Owen, member of Parliament, on Dugoed Mawddwy, a welsh mountain pass.

15 October 1582
The first day of the Gregorian calendar following the last day of the Julian calendar, 4th October 1582, meaning that the 5th-14th October did not exist in the year 1582 in some countries. However, England did not introduce the Gregorian calendar until 1752!

16 October 1555
The burnings of Hugh Latimer, Bishop of Worcester, and Nicholas Ridley, Bishop of London took place.

17 October 1560
Baptism of Walter Marsh, spy for Elizabeth I and Protestant martyr, at St Stephen's Church, Coleman Street, London.

18 October 1555
Elizabeth Tudor, the future Elizabeth I, was given permission to leave court and travel to her own estate at Hatfield.

21 October 1536
Robert Aske met with Lancaster Herald at Pontefract Castle and refused to allow him to make a proclamation.

22 October 1521
Death of Sir Edward Poynings, soldier and diplomat, at his manor of Westenhanger in Kent.

Pontefract Castle, the site of the execution of Robert Aske

23 October 1545
Death of Sir Humphrey Wingfield, lawyer and patron of humanist education, at Ipswich.

28 October 1571
Death of William Parr, Marquis of Northampton and brother of Queen Catherine Parr, at Thomas Fisher's house in Warwick. He had suffered from severe gout. Parr was laid to rest on 5th December in St Mary's Church, Warwick

29 October 1532
Henry VIII accompanied Francis I to the border between English Calais and France to bid farewell to him.

30 October 1485
Henry Tudor, was crowned King Henry VII at Westminster Abbey.

31 October 1491
Henry VII's son, Henry (the future Henry VIII), was created Duke of York.

Background image: Chester by Mitch Rosen

DAY IN TUDOR HISTORY”

6 October 1557
Death of John Capon (also known as John Salcot), former Benedictine monk and Bishop of Salisbury, probably from influenza. He appeared to have reformist leanings in the reigns of Henry VIII and Edward VI, but became a conservative Catholic again in Mary I’s reign

7 October 1506
Death of Sir Thomas Frowyk, Judge and Chief Justice of the Common Pleas. He was buried with his first wife, Joan, at Finchley Parish Church in Middlesex, on the north side of the chancel.

8 October 1549
Edward Seymour, Duke of Somerset and Lord Protector, was proclaimed a traitor by the Privy Council.

A young Elizabeth Tudor, attributed to William Scrots

13 October 1549
The Council abolished Edward Seymour, Duke of Somerset’s Protectorate, and his membership of the Council.

14 October 1586,
The trial of Mary, Queen of Scots began at Fotheringhay Castle. Francis Walsingham had collected a great deal of evidence against her including correspondence between Mary and Anthony Babington. Mary burst into tears.

19 October 1592
Death of Anthony Browne, 1st Viscount Montagu, member of Parliament, at his manor of West Horsley, Surrey.

20 October 1581
Death of James Blount, 6th Baron Mountjoy, at Hooke in Dorset. Blount was made a Knight of the Bath at Mary I’s coronation, served as a Justice of the Peace, and experimented with alchemy.

24 October 1537
Jane Seymour, died of suspected puerperal fever (childbed fever) at Hampton Court Palace.

25 October 1555
A worn out Charles V abdicated,giving his son Philip control of the Low Countries.

26 October 1529
Thomas More took his oath as Chancellor.

27 October 1532
Anne Boleyn made a dramatic entrance to the great banquet held by Henry VIII in Calais for Francis I.

TUDOR FEAST DAYS

13 October – St Edward the Confessor
18 October – St Luke the Evangelist
25 October – St Crispin
28 October – St Simon and St Jude
31 October – All Hallows Eve

NEXT MONTH IN YOUR REGULAR

Tudor Life

THE BEAUFORTS

KYRA KRAMER
The Alliance of Margaret Beaufort and Wales

ROLAND HUI
Margaret Beaufort as Patroness

LAUREN BROWNE
The Unusual Tripple Tomb of John Beaufort

GARETH RUSSELL
The House of Beaufort Bastardy to Brilliance

SUSAN ABERNETHY
Joan Beaufort

PLUS

Roberto Dudley, Stratford-upon-Avon, Tenby and ... PETS!

THIS MAGAZINE comes out every month for **ALL** MEMBERS.
We hope you enjoy it!

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