

# Tudor Life

The Tudor Society Magazine

THE  
TUDOR  
SOCIETY

Members Only

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February 2015

The life  
of a  
nun

LA VOLTA  
THE DANCE  
THAT  
SHOCKED  
SOCIETY

Fifty Shades  
of Henry VII

THE ART OF  
FRANCIS I

Lady  
Jane Grey



# Welcome!

February 2015

## Get ready for our Lady Jane Grey Feature Edition...

LADY JANE GREY - just the name evokes many images. Tragic heroine, strong woman, puppet, highly intelligent, just unlucky - whatever you think about



her, she is a fascinating Tudor character. But, as you'll discover in this edition, we don't actually know what she looked like, or even her date of birth. Known as the "Nine Days Queen", she has lodged in our collective imagination and her story is told again and again. Do we *really* know her?

We've had a lot of new members into the Tudor Society, and we'd like to welcome you all. This is a great time to have joined fellow Tudor experts, fans and history lovers and I hope you enjoy this wonderful, fact-packed edition...

*Chère*

*Paris Meet*

Latest news on the Paris Meet-up  
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NEW LOOK  
COVER**



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SPECIAL EDITION: LADY JANE GREY

COVER IMAGE: The Soule Portrait, dated to 1560-65, possibly depicting Katherine Grey Seymour, younger sister of Jane Grey. Image © 2015 J. Stephan Edwards

# HENRY VII AND ELIZABETH OF YORK

## WHILE THE WORLD SHALL ENDURE

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Join *Olga Huges* as she looks at the  
end of Elizabeth's fascinating life

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**A**FTER SIXTEEN years of a happy marriage a terrible tragedy befell Henry VII and Elizabeth of York. The boy that was the symbol of their dynasty, the proof that their union was blessed by God, died

unexpectedly on the 2nd April 1502. Prince Arthur was only sixteen years old and newly-wed to Katherine of Aragon. His death affected the entire kingdom. It was Henry's confessor that was left to break the tragic news:

“When his Grace understood that sorrowful heavy tidings, he sent for the Queen, saying that he and his Queen would take the painful sorrows together. After that she was come and saw the King her lord, and that natural and painful sorrow, as I have heard say, she, with full great and constant comfortable words besought his Grace that he would first after God remember the weal of his own noble person, the comfort of his realm, and of her. She then said, that my lady, his mother, had never no more children but him only, and that God by his grace had ever preserved him, and brought him where that he was. Over that, how that God had left him yet a fair prince, two fair princesses; and that God is where he was, and we are both young enough; and that the prudence and wisdom of his Grace sprung over all Christendom, so that it should please him to take this according thereunto. Then the King thanked her of her good comfort. After that she was departed and come to her own chamber, natural and motherly remembrance of that great loss smote her so sorrowful to the heart, that those that were about her were fain to send for the King to comfort her. Then his Grace, of true, gentle, and faithful love, in good haste came and relieved her, and showed her how wise counsel she had given him before; and he, for his part, would thank God for his son, and would she should do in like wise.”

Elizabeth of York was a Queen to her last breath. She died in the Tower of London on the 11th of February 1503, her birthday, trying to give her husband another son. Henry and Elizabeth's last child, Katherine Tudor, would

follow her mother into death just a week later.

The bells of St. Paul's Cathedral echoed across London, the mournful toll plunging the entire nation into grief. Her departing *was as heavy and dolorous as to the King's Highness as*



*hath been seen or heard of.* Solemn dirges and Requiem masses were heard. Henry ordered 636 masses to be offered for her soul in London alone on the day after her death. He ordered clothing

in blue and black, blue being the Tudor royal colour of mourning, and even had his books bound in blue velvet. He then instructed his council to prepare the Queen's funeral and went

into seclusion.

Elizabeth's state funeral was one of the most lavish ever seen. Her embalmed body was wrapped in forty ells of Holland linen, encased in a lead coffin and placed in a wooden coffin covered with a cloth of black velvet with a cloth-of-gold cross. For nine nights her body lay in state, with four gentlewomen, two officers of Arms and seven yeoman and grooms watching over her. Six ladies knelt continually around her. The king's chaplain supervised the daily masses. Elizabeth's sister Lady Katherine served as chief mourner accompanied by the earl of Surrey, the earl of Essex and Lady Elizabeth Stafford.

After mass on the tenth day Elizabeth's coffin was placed on a bier for the slow procession to Westminster. Six matched horses trapped in black velvet drew the bier, also covered in black

velvet and a white cloth-of-gold cross. An effigy of the queen dressed in robes of estate was adorned with a crown, hair about the shoulders, bearing Elizabeth's sceptre and the fingers dressed with costly jewellery. A gentleman usher knelt at each end of the bier for the duration of the procession; the horses ridden by four henchman and two 'chariot men' wearing black gowns. A man of honour wearing a mourning hood walked beside each horse.

Following the bier were noblewomen on horseback and in chariots, followed by hundreds of people on horseback; members of the nobility, the king's



servants and the citizens of London. Thomas Stanley, Margaret Beaufort's husband, led Elizabeth's chariot on horseback. At the front of the procession the Mayor of London, the queen's chamberlain, her confessor and her almoner were flanked by the children of the King's chapel, the choir of St. Paul's, the Augustine and Dominican friars, 200 poor men in mourning habits bearing torches, lords of the Estates, the Chief Judges, Master of the Rolls, knights of the Garter, chaplains, deans, aldermen of London, knights, squires for the body, gentlemen and representatives of foreign governments. Minstrels, trumpeters (without their instruments) and messengers led the solemn procession to Westminster.

Five thousand torches burned along one side of the street to Temple Bar, carried by bearers wearing white woollen gowns and hoods. The mayor's wife had stationed thirty-seven virgins - one for each year of Elizabeth's life - holding burning candles alongside the London citizens lining Cheap Street. Spain and Venice were represented by 24 torch-bearers displaying their country's arms, France represented by 12. The London craft guilds were represented by members wearing black or white robes, bearing torches beneath the Eleanor Cross at Charring Cross. And at the bridge next to Charring Cross waited the abbot of Westminster and the abbot of Bermondsey to accompany Elizabeth's coffin into St. Margaret's. After the service 24 torch-bearers along with ladies, gentlewomen, squires, officers of Arms and yeomen kept vigil all night.

The requiem masses were performed the next morning and 37 palls were laid across the Queen's effigy. Elizabeth's chamberlain and ushers broke their staves and cast them into the

grave, symbolising the end of their service to their beloved Queen Elizabeth of York.

Henry stayed seclusion for six weeks and fell so ill he was close to death. His mother Margaret Beaufort insisted on nursing him herself. After the death of his queen Henry was a changed man. The Tower of London was abandoned as a royal residence. The Vaux Passional, only recently discovered, contains an illumination of Henry VII and his children in mourning. Henry sits on the throne, black clothing worn beneath his dark blue robe of estate. His daughters wear black headdresses. A lone boy with reddish hair, a young Henry VIII, sobs into his arms over an empty bed.

Gone was Elizabeth of York, the heart of the Tudor family, and gone was her gentling influence on her husband. Francis Bacon's 'dark prince' would emerge. Perhaps the most poignant tribute to a cherished wife was Henry retaining the services of Elizabeth's minstrels. They played for him at every single New Year celebration up to his death.

In November of 1504, Henry settled an annual payment on the University of Cambridge for holding an annual requiem service for Elizabeth on the anniversary of her death. For Henry and Elizabeth's tomb a bequest was made to Westminster for a *perpetual memory there to remain while the world shall endure*. Henry still lies with his beloved Elizabeth in Westminster Abbey.

**OLGA HUGHES.**

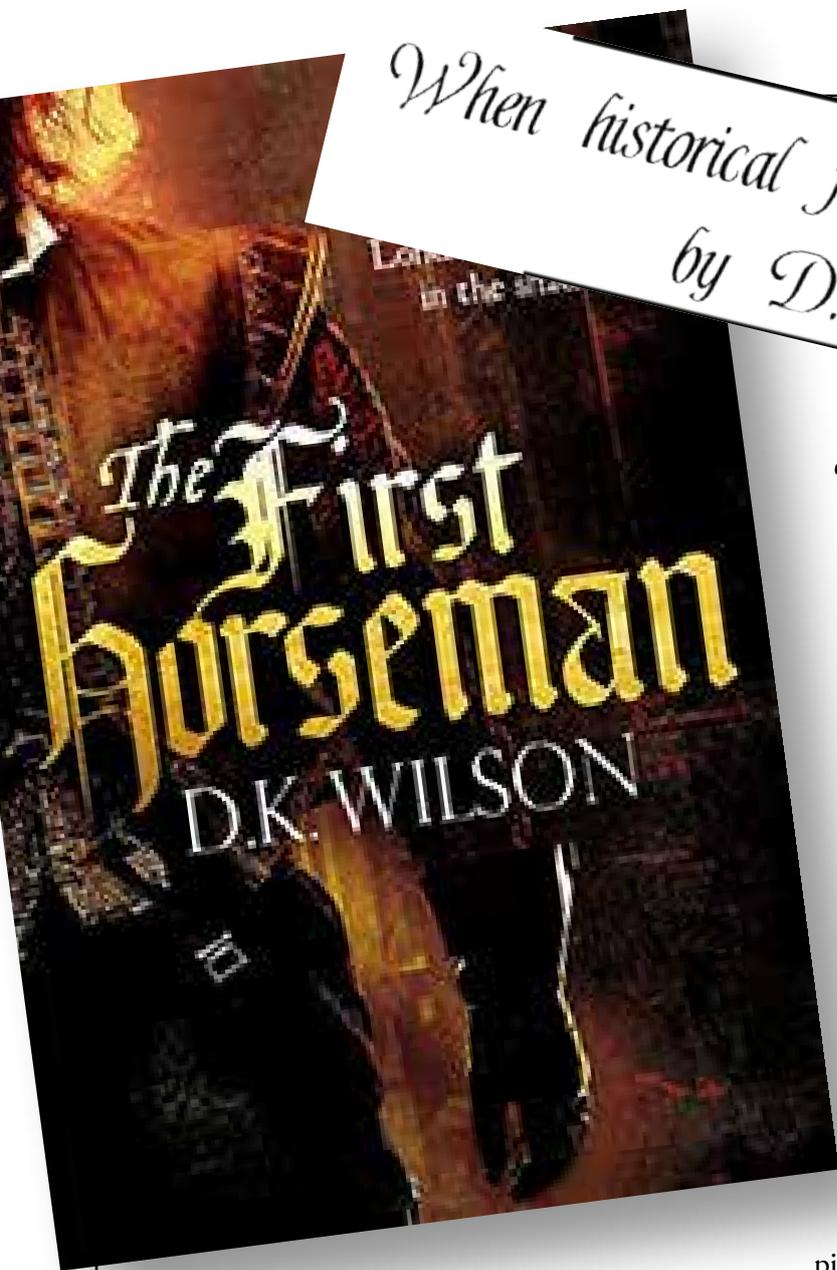
## **FURTHER READING**

Elizabeth of York *by* Arlene Okerlund

Olga Hughes has a BA in Fine Art and is currently studying Literature. She runs the fascinating website "Nerdalicious.com.au" which is an online magazine covering pop culture, movies, history, TV, science and more. The site has the catchphrase "Everything to feed your inner nerd" and you'll find that one you visit the site you'll be sucked into a fascinating world...



When historical fact meets historical fiction  
by D.K. Wilson



**H**aving been asked to tell you something about my recently-published novel, *The First Horseman*, I don't want to get all high-falutin' and make extravagant claims for it.

especially horrifying was that the hit-man had used a *handgun*. All the contemporary accounts make particular mention of this fact. Why? Because it had never happened before. Not in England. The wheellock pistol which was used for the crime was a recent Italian invention and one denounced by all right-thinking people as a diabolical device. Unlike the cumbersome arquebus, it was short, could be operated with one hand and did not rely on a pre-lit match to ignite the powder. Its potential to raise to new levels the threat of political assassination was recognised in all the chancelleries of Europe. Emperor Maximilian I had outlawed the weapon throughout his extensive dominions.

The questions 'Who' and 'Why' were on everyone's lips. They were never officially answered. No-one was brought to trial for this sensational crime. The 'strange death of Robert Packington' remains a mystery – a gap in the record and, therefore, one waiting to be imaginatively filled by a fictioneers.

The 'detective' I chose to investigate this Tudor whodunit was Thomas Treviot, a young London goldsmith. He has problems enough

The book was written as a rattling good yarn and it stands or falls for the reader on the basis of whether it delivers on that promise. It's a hybrid creature – a fictional adventure grounded in fact; a whodunit based on a true crime; an exploration of challenging new religious ideas in the down-to-earth lives of ordinary people. I hope it will entertain, intrigue and, perhaps even move those who read it. But I have set myself one goal beyond offering a few hours of pleasurable escapism. My book is undergirded by a mission statement. But more of that anon.

*The First Horseman* begins with a recorded historical fact. One dark and misty pre-dawn in November 1536, a prominent London merchant and member of parliament was murdered as he crossed Cheapside on the way to early mass in the Mercers' Chapel. The atrocity shocked the capital. What was considered

of his own but they pale into insignificance as he becomes involved in the dangerous political and religious conflicts which lie behind his friend's murder. Making the main character and his milieu authentic involved research into daily life in London and into the workings of the Goldsmiths' Company. In any crime story the sleuth needs 'sidekicks', people with whom he can discuss the case and with whom he can interact to reveal various aspects of his character. Thomas Treviot's associates include an ex-monk, a prostitute and a renegade apprentice. To write convincingly about them it was necessary to know something of life in the Southwark 'Stews', the regulations governing trade apprenticeships and the process of the dissolution of the monasteries.

So much for the 'good guys'. What about the thieves, thugs, highway robbers and con-men of Tudor England? How did the criminal underworld work? Treviot's investigations would inevitably involve dealings with cutpurses, gang bosses and hired hit-men. I had to know something about the villains of Tudor society and the rickety systems of justice and law enforcement ranged against them.

The story moves from the dark, dangerous hovels of Henry VIII's realm to the sumptuous but still more perilous courts of the rich and powerful. The origins of the plot against Packington is to be found among the kingdom's political wheelers and dealers. This is where *The First Horseman* takes the reader into more familiar territory. 1536 was a key date in English history. It was the year in which monumental change broke over the nation like a tsunami. In January Catherine of Aragon died. In May Anne Boleyn was judicially murdered. Throughout the summer, Thomas Cromwell, Henry's current Mister Fix-it, began the dismantling of the monastic system. For the first time the implications of the Reformation were *felt* at every level of society. The realm was split between tenacious traditionalists clinging to the old ways and radicals determined to take England's religious life into exciting and

unexplored new directions. Preachers thundered from rival pulpits. Court factions grappled to get their hands on the tiller of royal policy. Printing houses flooded the bookstalls with religious pamphlets. The resentment of the common people boiled over into open rebellion in October, when first Lincolnshire, then the northern counties erupted into what came to be known as the Pilgrimage of Grace.

Amidst all this Treviot's investigation twists and turns its way through the mercantile life of the capital, the introverted rural preoccupations of the southern shires and even ventures to the commercial entrepôt of Antwerp. The narrative moves rapidly wantonly scattering clues and red herrings and offering moments of heart-stopping suspense. But I did hint above at a 'mission statement'. What did I mean?

I meant that there is something I hope readers will get from *The First Horseman* as well as an exciting and intriguing crime mystery. What I want to convey is something of what it may have *felt* like to live through these tumultuous months in the country's history – months that changed England and began to hammer a new national identity on the anvil of violent conflict. This is, probably, something that only novels can attempt. I have shelves full of historical non-fiction, all of which I value enormously, but I can number on the fingers of one hand those books that have held me spellbound from beginning to end (C.V. Wedgwood's *Thirty Years War* and John Guy's *My Heart is My Own* spring to mind) and made me feel that I had 'been there'. The Reformation, which has been my passionate study for more than half a century, was a movement of profound importance and should not be underestimated in our own secular age. Members of the Tudor Society will need no convincing of this. One of the reasons we love the 16<sup>th</sup> century is because we know how important it was. Perhaps *The First Horseman* may help to persuade a few others to share our passion.

**D.K.WILSON**

The First Horseman by D.K.Wilson is available NOW  
from Amazon and all good bookstores

# QUEEN JANE, WHERE ARE YOU?



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**J. Stephan Edwards PhD** takes an in-depth look at portraits of Lady Jane Grey. Are any the “real” image?

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**A**mong portraits of the many kings and queens of England and Great Britain, those of the Tudor monarchs are arguably some of the most readily recognized. Henry VIII’s portrait by Holbein, with its confident visage, assertive hands-on-hips pose, and bold stance, is essentially iconic for the Tudor period as a whole, for example. Yet one Tudor monarch remains entirely absent from the pictorial record: Jane Grey Dudley, the ‘Nine-Days Queen’ of 1553.

No reliably authentic portrait of Queen Jane has yet been identified, despite dozens of portraits from the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries having been put forward over the past four and half centuries. Most recently, the acquisition in 2006 by the National Portrait Gallery of the so-called Streatham Portrait was heralded by significant international publicity. That portrait ultimately proved to date to at least four decades after Jane’s death, however, and the authenticity of the likeness remains dubious. Similarly, the Wrest Park Portrait exhibited in 2007 by Philip Mould Gallery as a posthumous historical portrait of Jane has since been shown to be an early life portrait of Mary Neville Fiennes, Lady Dacre.<sup>1</sup> And the presentation in the same Mould exhibition of the Yale Miniature as a life portrait of Queen Jane has

failed to garner support from any other authority. Each new announcement has been greeted by a flurry of media attention, but each painting has subsequently slipped quietly into the background upon more careful investigation. Even my own early study of the Fitzwilliam Portrait in 2005 suffered the same ignominious fate, and rightly so.<sup>2</sup>

The question therefore arises as to why no portrait of Queen Jane seems to have survived. She remains, after all, one of the most popular female figures from sixteenth-century Britain, after Elizabeth I, Anne Boleyn, and Mary Stuart. She was celebrated across Europe during her own lifetime as a superior intellect and popularized immediately following her execution in 1554 for the admirable way in which she met death. Her younger sisters gained widespread support

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1 J. Stephan Edwards, “Framing a Life in Portraits: A ‘New’ Portrait of Mary Nevill Fiennes, Lady Dacre,” *British Art Journal* XIV:2 (Autumn 2013), 14–20.

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2 J. Stephan Edwards, “A New Face for the Lady,” *History Today* 55:12 (December 2005): 44–45.



IANA GRAYA

Regia stirps tristi cinxi diademate crines  
Regna sed omnipotens hinc meliora dedit

The Van de Passe Engraved Portrait. Engraved by Willem and Magdalene van de Passe and first published in 1620.  
It was probably based on the Hastings Portrait but actually depicts Katherine Parr.



The Northwick Portrait. By an unknown artist. In 1590, it was in the collection of John Lumley, Baron Lumley. It is now in a private collection in the UK. Only since 1965 has it been said to depict Jane Grey. It actually depicts Katherine Parr. It has never before been published in full color, and was virtually unseen since 1965. It took Stephan over a year to track down and then to convince the owner to let him see it.

as successors to the childless Elizabeth I, until Katherine Grey's death in 1568 and Mary Grey's death in 1578, keeping Jane indirectly in the public eye throughout that period. At least one modern historian has cited an "intense obsession" with Jane among the British early in the eighteenth century.<sup>3</sup> And Jane became something of a darling among writers in the nineteenth century owing to a perception that she personified Victorian feminine ideals. So if multiple authentic portraits of Jane's sister Katherine have survived, and at least one probably-authentic portrait of her sister Mary, why have no authentic portraits of Jane herself survived? The answer lies in the complex intersection of the relative ages of the sisters at their respective deaths, the disposition of the Grey family estate, the politics of the era, and the vicissitudes of portrait collecting across more than four centuries.

Most students of Tudor history are aware that Jane Grey Dudley died at barely seventeen years of age. As a result, there was little opportunity for production of a painted likeness. Portraiture of living persons was still a relatively new cultural phenomenon in England in the sixteenth century, though its popularity there was expanding very rapidly. But they were not often commissioned for sentimental reasons or in any effort to create a remembrance of a beloved relative. Paintings of quality usually cost significant sums of money and thus were largely limited instead to expressions of individual status within some larger social structure beyond the family.

Portraits of men of the sixteenth century can often be shown to coincide with elevation to a new political office or title of nobility or to mark participation in some significant public event, such as a military battle. Women's portraits can similarly often be associated with their marriage or their safe delivery of a male heir into the family. Women and children were seldom recognized as having individual status but were instead subsumed under that of their family. As an illustration of this, we might consider the scarcity of portraits of children from Tudor England. Very few portraits of individual children are known

to have been produced, and few such portraits have survived. The exceptions are almost always minor children of the reigning monarch, such as Holbein's portrait of the future Edward VI as an infant or William Scrot's portrait of Princess Elizabeth from the 1540s. Since Jane was not the child of any reigning monarch, nor even the grandchild of one, we cannot today expect that any portrait of her would have been produced prior to her reaching the age of eligibility for marriage. For Jane, this did not occur until the winter or spring of 1552-1553, when she reached the age of sixteen.<sup>4</sup> And while Jane may have been viewed at that time by her family and its allies as a potential bride for Edward VI, the king was instead negotiating for a match with Elizabeth of France.

Jane did not become a serious candidate for marriage until May of 1553, when John Dudley began promoting her as a successor to the dying Edward. Further, it took some time for an artist to be selected, one or more sittings to occur, and the actual paint-work to be completed. The span between Jane's marriage in May and her imprisonment in mid July was a very brief one crowded with other concerns that may well have left insufficient time to plan and to create a portrait of her. And it is perhaps noteworthy that every authentic portrait of Jane's sisters Katherine and Mary actually post-date their own respective marriages by two or more years.<sup>5</sup> There was precious little opportunity for any portrait of Jane to have been produced prior to July 1553, and probably no opportunity whatsoever thereafter.

Yet we have reliable documentation that at least one portrait of Queen Jane was produced before 1559, and it is altogether probable that

3 Jean I. Marsden, *Fatal Desire: Women, Sexuality, and the English Stage, 1660-1720* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2006), 171.

4 J. Stephan Edwards, "On the Birth Date of Lady Jane Grey," *Notes and Queries* 54:3 (Sept. 2007), 240-242; "A Further Note on the Date of Birth of Lady Jane Grey," *Notes and Queries* 55:2 (June 2008), 146-148.

5 The best known portrait of Katherine Grey, a miniature now at Belvoir Castle, dates to no earlier than the winter of 1562-1563, two years after her marriage to Edward Seymour and one year after the birth of her first son. A second miniature now in the Victoria and Albert Museum is inscribed 'wife of the Earl of Hertford,' indicating that it too probably post-dates her marriage. The single known portrait of Mary Grey is inscribed '1571,' six years after her marriage to Thomas Keyes.

that portrait was an authentic likeness, even if it was not taken from a life sitting. The portrait was owned by Elizabeth Cavendish, known to history as Bess of Hardwick, a close friend of the Grey family. Bess had served as a lady in waiting to Jane's mother Frances during the 1540s and had wed her second husband in the Grey family chapel at Bradgate in 1547. Jane herself even stood godmother to Bess's daughter Temperance in 1549. An inventory of Bess's possessions taken in relation to her third marriage to William St Loe in 1559 revealed that Bess displayed a portrait of Queen Jane in the very private space of her personal bedchamber.<sup>6</sup> It seems exceedingly unlikely that Bess would have held a portrait of Jane so closely were it not an authentic likeness. Sadly, that portrait largely disappeared from the historical record after 1560, and its current whereabouts are entirely unknown. Recent research suggests that it became severely damaged and may have been deliberately destroyed early in the nineteenth century.

Any portrait of Jane owned by the Grey family itself may likewise have become severely damaged and been destroyed. Jane's father Henry Grey was attainted of treason early in 1554 and his estates, including the family seat of Bradgate in Leicestershire and their London residence of Sheen Priory, were seized by the Crown. Sheen was restored as a Carthusian monastery under Mary I, and it is rather doubtful that the monks would have preserved any portrait of Protestant Jane. Bradgate was eventually returned to Jane's uncle, John Grey, but he and his heirs preferred Pirgo Palace in Essex and Enville Hall in Staffordshire. Bradgate was little used and poorly maintained, eventually falling to ruin by the beginning of the eighteenth century. And while Jane's mother Frances did recover some few minor estates after 1554, she left virtually all of her property to her second husband Adrian Stokes, who sold everything off to pay his own enormous

debts.<sup>7</sup> Jane's sisters Katherine and Mary Grey are not documented as having inherited or having possessed any portraits of Jane. Thus by the time of Mary Grey's death in 1578, no close adult member of the immediate Grey family remained alive with an active interest in preserving a portrait of Jane Grey Dudley.<sup>8</sup>

Succession politics of the sixteenth century also had an effect on interest in preserving any portrait of Jane. Elizabeth I is known to have expressed a distaste for Jane Grey, viewing her as a treasonous usurper of the Tudor crown. Anyone keeping a portrait of Jane was therefore at risk of being perceived by the Queen as supporting the claims of Katherine and Mary Grey to succeed the unmarried and childless Elizabeth and thereby at further risk of incurring the Queen's displeasure. Certainly at least two portraits of Jane did nonetheless survive, the first being the one owned by Bess of Hardwick in 1559 and the second documented in the collection of John Lumley, Baron Lumley in 1590.<sup>9</sup> Neither of those two portraits can be located today, however. Most of the other surviving portraits said to depict Jane Grey can today be shown either to be portraits of other persons misidentified at or after the end of the sixteenth century or to have been originally created in or after that same period. These include the Glendon Hall, Hastings, Jersey, Northwick, and van de Passe Engraved Portraits, as well as the Streatham, Houghton, and Norris Portraits, among many others. In short, no portraits of Jane Grey are known to have been created or newly identified in the period between Elizabeth's accession in 1558 and the last decade of her reign,

6 Chatsworth Devonshire MSS, Hardwick Hall Drawers H/143/6, f.3v; Gillian White, *'That whyche ys nedefoulle and nesary': The Nature and Purpose of the Original Furnishings and Decoration of Hardwick Hall, Derbyshire* (Ph.D. diss., University of Warwick, 2005), II: 389-415.

7 National Archives, PROB 11/42B, Will of Lady Frances, Duchess of Suffolk, dated 9 November 1559.

8 Jane Grey had no surviving issue. Her father died in 1554, her mother in 1558. Her sister Katherine Grey Seymour's eldest son Edward was not yet seven years old when his mother died in 1568. Edward survived until 1612 but is not known to have possessed any portrait of his aunt. Jane's youngest sister Mary Grey Keyes died without issue in 1578.

9 Lionel Cust, "The Lumley Inventories," *The Sixth Volume of the Walpole Society* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1918), 25; Catharine MacLeod, Tarnya Cooper, and Margaret Zoller, "A List of Portraits in the Lumley Inventory," in *The Lumley Inventory: Art Collecting and Lineage in the Elizabethan Age*, edited by Mark Evans (London: The Roxburghe Club, 2010), Appendix Three.



The Huntington Portrait was virtually unknown to art historians until Stephan “discovered” it in 2014. It hangs in an administrative office in the Huntington Museum in San Marino, California. It is inscribed halfway down the right-hand side “Lady Jane Grey.” The sitter is, however, an unknown Dutch woman of the second quarter of the 17th century, painted by an unknown Dutch artist.



The Klabin Portrait. Virtually unknown to any art historian prior to Stephan uncovering it in 2014 in a small private museum in Rio de Janeiro. It has never before been published. It is inscribed "Iane Grey/ An[n]o Dom[ini] 1553/ Aetatis 16", but the inscription was added long after the painting was created. It is French, late 16th century, and depicts an unknown French woman.

by which time it had become certain that she would have no issue of her own to succeed her. After James VI of Scotland had been crowned James I of England in 1603, it then became less politically disadvantageous to own portraits of Jane. Numerous portraits of other persons were thereafter relabeled to stand proxy for Jane, some of which continue to bear her name today. But none are authentic likenesses of Queen Jane.

As noted, the only two portraits of Jane documented in the sixteenth century, those owned by Bess of Hardwick and John Lumley, both disappeared at some point over the past four and half centuries. Each illustrates one of the two principal reasons why identifiable authentic portraits of Jane have failed to survive. In the instance of the Chatsworth Portrait owned by Bess of Hardwick in 1559, the evidence suggests that the portrait suffered significant decay over time, either through conscious neglect or natural processes. Most habitable rooms in pre-modern houses included a fireplace, and those fireplaces often discharged some measure of smoke into the room itself. As is the case with modern households in which the residents smoke tobacco products, smoke residue could and did accumulate over time, eventually obscuring the image. Inventories taken in the nineteenth century at the houses of Bess's descendants, Chatsworth House and Hardwick Hall, revealed over two dozen portraits in which the image was entirely obscured by soot and dirt.<sup>10</sup> That soot and dirt also often caused chemical reactions in the protective varnish, the paintwork itself, or even the supporting wood panel, especially in those instances when the panel became wet for some reason, e.g.: 'rising damp,' flooding, leaking roofs. Panels became warped, split, or riddled with wood worm. Rather than attempt to repair the damage, owners too frequently simply disposed of the paintings in order to make way for new acquisitions that more nearly accorded with current aesthetics. In more extreme instances, paintings were lost through failure to maintain the houses in which they were held (e.g.: Bradgate) or through destruction of the entire house as a result of fire or war. Innumerable paintings from the sixteenth century are known to have been lost through these forms of neglect and accident.

Even among those sixteenth-century portraits that survive today, many of the sitters cannot be identified for a variety of reasons. It was relatively uncommon for portraits to be labeled with the sitter's name, for example. Over time, as a portrait passed from one generation to the next, there were fewer and fewer people remaining alive to attest to the identity of the person depicted, as was the case with the Wrest Park Portrait.

By 1675, that 125-year-old portrait had entirely lost its identity even though it was still in the possession of the sitter's direct lineal descendants. The situation is directly comparable to finding today a box of 75- or 100-year-old unlabeled family photographs in an attic. Though those photographs depict your own ancestors, how do you go about identifying them if there is no one left alive to offer adequate clues? Since none of Jane's immediate family members were left alive after 1578, it is perhaps understandable that any surviving authentic portrait of her might have lost its identity. Even when portraits were labeled, those labels were usually added many years or even decades after the fact and were not always correct. John Lumley famously added painted labels to the surfaces of many of the portraits in his collection, and while most of the surviving labels do seem to have been accurate, others became decayed and are thus no longer legible. Such is the case with the Northwick Portrait, which originated in the Lumley collection and was sometimes said to depict Jane Grey. The Lumley label or *cartellino* had become entirely illegible by the end of the eighteenth century, so that we cannot today rely on it for identifying the sitter depicted. The labels were ordinarily added atop the layers of protective varnish, and as the organic compounds in the varnish deteriorated, the uppermost layers sloughed off, taking the painted label with it. That process is best illustrated by the Soule Portrait. Photographs taken of it in 1937 and again in 1954 reveal the presence of an inscription added atop the varnish sometime after 1602. Today, just sixty years since the last photograph, the inscription is entirely gone, carried away by flaking varnish. Thus even when a portrait has survived the ravages of time and neglect, it was rare that later owners could still correctly identify non-labeled portraits, rarer still that portraits actually bore an accurate label, and even more rare that such labels themselves survived.

Instead, we rely today on surviving written documentation combined with provenance, or ownership history, of the painting to aid in attempting to identify otherwise unidentified sitters in sixteenth-century portraits. Household inventories and wills are both valuable tools in this process. When widows remarried, or when a householder died, inventories of the household goods were very often taken to meet various legal requirements. Sometimes those inventories are exceedingly detailed and describe individual paintings by size, content, and even artist attribution, as is the case with the Lumley Inventories. At other times, they are frustratingly vague and focus only on collective financial values. Many of the sixteenth- and seventeenth-century inventories of Chatsworth House and Hardwick Hall, for example, reveal only the total number of paintings

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10 Devonshire MSS CH36/7/1A; CH36/7/2, 90-91 and 137-140.



The Soule Portrait. Another image that had not been examined by any art historian since the 1950s and that took Stephan several months to track down. This painting is unusual in that the sitter was entirely unidentified until 1954, when she became known as "Elizabeth I When Princess". It has recently been firmly dated to 1560-65. I believe it to depict Katherine Grey Seymour, younger sister of Jane Grey.

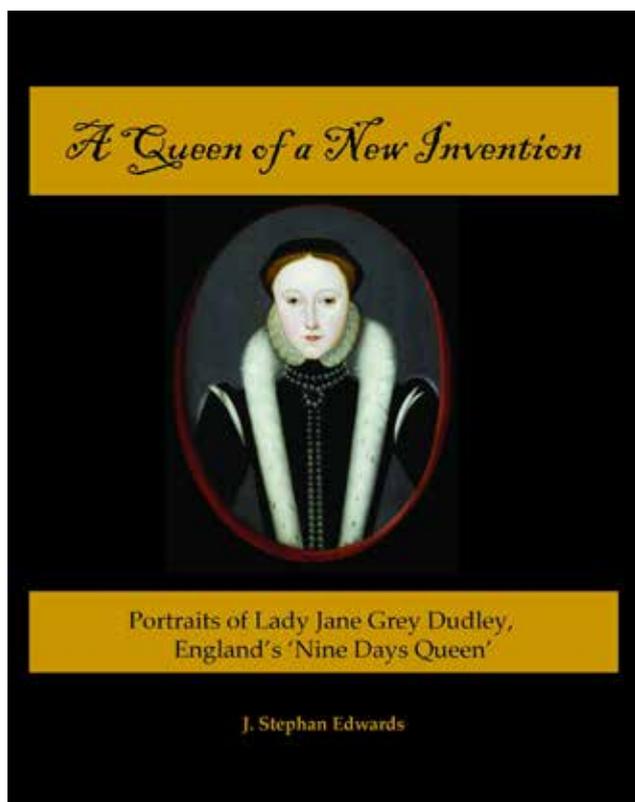
## FEATURE SECTION: LADY JANE GREY

in a given room of the house and their total appraised value, with no mention whatsoever regarding subject content or physical size. Alternatively, owners sometimes named and described individual heirloom portraits in their wills when bequeathing them to specific heirs. Such was the case with the Syon Portrait, which can be traced through a series of wills from its original owner early in the seventeenth century down to 1748, and from there through household inventories to the present. But such convenient conjunctions of wills, inventories, and provenances that allow tracking a painting across four centuries are extremely rare. In the vast majority of cases, the best we have is a provenance for the past century only, or a single mention in an ancient will, or a vague description in a single inventory from the very distant past. Absent the complete documentary trail or any reliable name inscription applied to the painting by the original artist, portraits commonly became

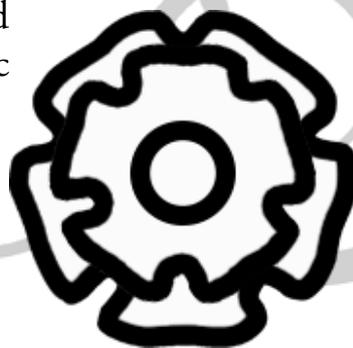
misidentified, leaving the sitter without a name today.

Owing therefore to the apparent loss of the Chatsworth Portrait through damage and destruction, to the decay of the label on the Lumley Portrait, to the lack of any long-surviving immediate family members with an interest in preserving the Grey domestic estates and the objects they held, to the Elizabethan perception that Jane was an enemy of the Crown, and to the absence of an adequate written record to aid in locating lost or misidentified portraits, it seems unlikely that any portrait of Jane painted from the life has survived and can be identified today. The greatest prospect for 'seeing' Queen Jane may instead lie in identifying some posthumous portrait with sufficient direct connections to Jane and her family to allow judging it a reasonably authentic likeness.

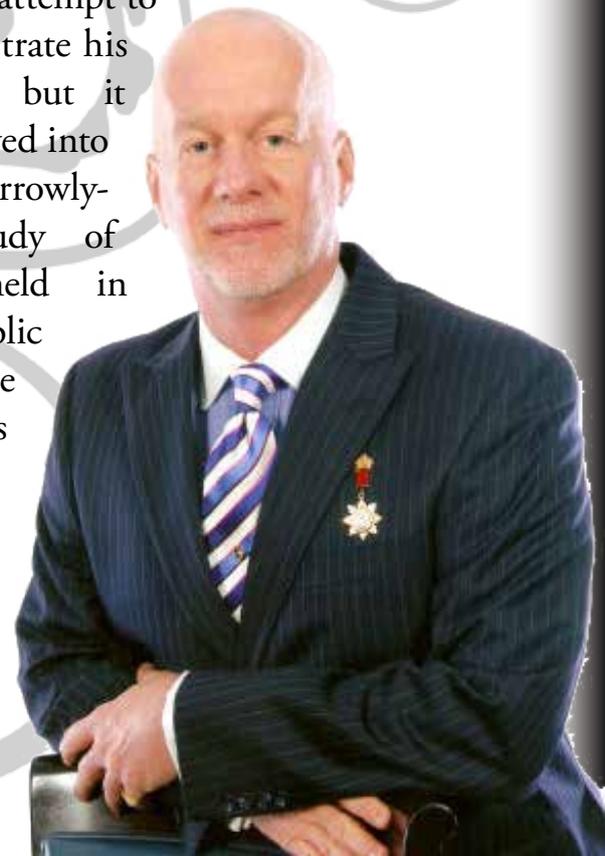
**J. STEPHAN EDWARDS**



collections on three continents. Select portions of his research and findings on the subject of Jane Grey Dudley have previously been published by both popular and academic presses.



**J. Stephan Edwards** holds a Ph.D. in Early Modern British History from the University of Colorado at Boulder. His Ph.D. dissertation was a biographical study of Jane Grey Dudley that situated her in the rapidly-changing social, cultural, political, and religious milieu of the sixteenth century. His investigation of the iconography of Jane began as an attempt to suitably illustrate his dissertation, but it rapidly evolved into a separate narrowly-focused study of portraits held in both public and private



# FRANCES GREY'S MASTER OF HORSE: THE REAL ADRIAN STOKES



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Author of Historical Fiction and  
Non-fiction books,  
**Susan Higginbotham**  
tells us of the fascinating life of  
Lady Jane Grey's mother...

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**F**OLLOWING the execution of her first husband, Frances Grey, Duchess of Suffolk, married a commoner, Adrian Stokes. Stokes has usually been depicted in nonfiction and fiction as a poorly educated boy-toy, who disappeared into obscurity following the death of his wife. The real Adrian Stokes, however, was quite different.

To begin with, it is a myth that Adrian was much younger than Frances: a friend of his, the antiquary Lawrence Nowell, recorded his date of birth to the hour: 8 p.m. on March 4, 1519. This makes him less than two years younger than his bride, born on July 16, 1517. The entry for him on the History of Parliament site suggests that he was a son of Robert Stokes of Prestwold. He had two known brothers, William and Anthony Stokes, and named a Robert Price (or Aprice) as his cousin and a John and Francis Gates as his kinsmen.

By 1547, Adrian was serving in France at the garrison of Newhaven in the Pale of Calais. He was the marshal of Newhaven and, along with William, Lord Stourton, and Sir Richard Cavendish was a member of the council there. In August 1549, Newhaven fell to the French. The king's council ordered in January 1550 that Adrian and the ten men who had served under him receive their wages.

John Gray, a younger brother of Henry Grey, Marquis of Dorset (later Duke of Suffolk), had been the deputy

of Newhaven, and it may have been this connection that brought Adrian into the marquis's household—assuming that he was in it at all, for his exact position is murky. Elizabeth I's biographer William Camden simply described him as a "mean gentleman," whom Frances married "to her dishonor, but yet for her security," but does not name him as holding any particular role in the Suffolk household. Elizabeth herself once asked Bishop de Quadra what King Philip would think if she married one of her "servitors," as the Duchess of Suffolk and the Duchess of Somerset had done, but as Katherine Brandon, Duchess of Suffolk, had also married a member of her household, it is unclear whether Elizabeth was referring to Frances or to Katherine. Leicester's Commonwealth, the anonymous libel against Robert Dudley, Earl of Leicester, does expressly identify Adrian as Frances's horse-keeper, and it may be accurate on this point.

Nothing else is heard of Adrian until he married Frances Grey, Duchess of Suffolk, whose husband had been executed on February 23, 1554. According to a post-mortem inquisition for Frances taken in 1560, Adrian and Frances married on March 9, 1554, at "Kayhoe [Kew] in the county of Surrey." The date has recently been called into question, but given the preciseness of the information contained in the inquisition, and the other dates it supplies, it seems more likely than not that the 1554 date was correct, especially since the information could have easily have come from Adrian

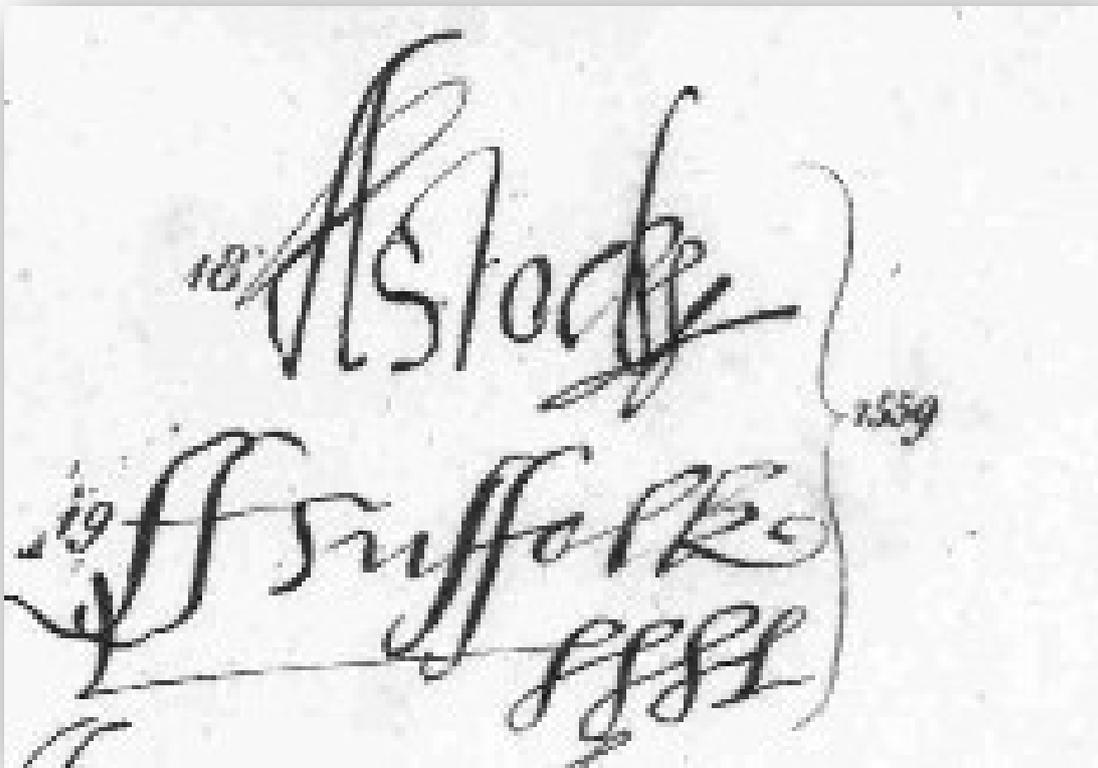
## FEATURE SECTION: LADY JANE GREY

himself. Interestingly, Frances's stepmother, Katherine, Duchess of Suffolk, held a life interest in a house at "Kayho," yet another variation on the spelling of "Kew." Perhaps Katherine, who herself had married one of her servants, Richard Bertie, had had a hand in Frances's marriage, and had offered her home for the ceremony?

What motivated the couple to marry is unknown. William Camden commented that the marriage was "to [Frances's] dishonor, but yet for her security," and it is quite possible that the duchess married beneath her in order to distance herself from the throne. Adrian's motives might be dismissed as mercenary, since he gained a titled, wealthy wife, but it should be remembered that in March 1554, just weeks after the deaths of Frances's daughter Jane and her husband, Frances's

Frances gave birth to a daughter, Elizabeth, who died that same day. Strickland cites no source for this claim, and I have not found anything to corroborate it. Frances's postmortem inquisition does state that she and Adrian had a daughter named Elizabeth, but it says that the child was born at Knebworth on July 16, 1555, and that she died on February 6, 1556. The inquisition indicates that the couple had "others lawfully begotten" as well, but gives no particulars. If there were other children besides Elizabeth, none survived the marriage.

Contrary to legend, there is no record of Queen Mary objecting to Adrian and Frances's marriage or of her deeming Frances unfit to raise her daughters, though Frances does seem to have spent little time at court after her marriage. If one of Frances's motives in mar-



position was precarious. She could not be certain that she herself would not be implicated in her husband's treason or that she would be allowed to retain any of her property. Thus, she was not the most desirable of brides at the time. Perhaps Adrian married her because he believed she needed a protector.

It is possible that Frances and Adrian kept their marriage secret for a while, since a grant of land from the queen in May 1554 mentions only Frances, not Adrian, and the imperial ambassador wrote in April 1555 that it had been suggested that Frances marry the Earl of Devon. In any case, by at least July 1557, the couple was known to be married, as they were mentioned together in grants of land.

Agnes Strickland writes that on November 20, 1554,

rying Adrian was to demonstrate her lack of ambition for the crown, it would be hardly surprising if Frances chose to avoid the court. Her daughter Katherine Grey, however, did at some point become one of Mary's ladies, and Frances was successful in introducing her first husband's niece, Margaret Willoughby, at court. Mary eventually found a place for Margaret in Elizabeth's household.

On November 17, 1558, Mary died, leaving the throne to her sister Elizabeth. When the new queen opened her first Parliament on January 12, 1559, Adrian was a member of the House of Commons, representing Leicestershire. The records of the 1559 Parliament, which are described on the History of Parliament website as defective, do not indicate on what

# FEATURE SECTION: LADY JANE GREY

committees he served.

Sadly, while Adrian's prestige was increasing, his wife's health was failing. By early November 1559, Frances was setting her affairs in order. On November 9, 1559, she executed her will, which left all of her property in Adrian's hands and appointed him her sole executor. She died on November 21, 1559, and was buried at Westminster Abbey on December 5, 1559. In 1563, Adrian erected a tomb to her memory. Its Latin inscription reads, as translated by the Westminster Abbey site, "Dirge for the most noble Lady Frances, onetime Duchess of Suffolk: naught avails glory or splendour, naught avail titles of kings; naught profits a magnificent abode, resplendent with wealth. All, all are passed away: the glory of virtue alone remained, impervious to the funeral pyres of Tartarus [part of Hades or the Underworld]. She was married first to the Duke, and after was wife to Mr Stock, Esq. Now, in death, may you fare well, united to God." If Adrian composed the inscription himself, as seems quite likely, he had plainly been educated in the classics.

Meanwhile, while serving Mary, Katherine Grey had fallen in love with Edward Seymour, the young Earl of Hertford. About a year after Frances's death, Katherine and Hertford secretly married. When the heavily pregnant Katherine revealed the couple's secret, the outraged Queen Elizabeth ordered her to be imprisoned in the Tower. In the investigation that followed, Adrian Stokes was one of those called upon to give depositions. According to Adrian, he and Frances had discussed the possibility of the couple marrying, after which Adrian approached Hertford and advised him to talk with members of the queen's council who could intervene on his behalf. Frances, meanwhile, had Adrian draft a letter to the queen in which Frances stated that the marriage was the only thing she desired before her death and that it would be an occasion for her to die the more quietly. Katherine Grey testified that Adrian advised Frances to write to the queen but that Frances was so sick that she never wrote the letter and died soon thereafter. One wonders if Frances would have been able to persuade the queen to allow the couple to marry had she lived a little longer.

The imprudent behavior of his stepdaughter did not harm Adrian's standing with the queen. In 1563 he was allowed to continue leasing Beaumanor, where he and Frances had spent part of their married life. Through the law of tenancy by curtesy, he also held a life interest in Frances's estates in Lincolnshire, Warwickshire, and Somerset.

As the owner of the manor of Astley in Warwickshire, Adrian pulled the spire off Astley's church for its lead, to the dismay of the inhabitants, who complained that

"he had caused the tall and costly spire of their church, made of timber, together with the battlements, all covered with lead, to be pulled down, being a landmark so eminent in that part of the woodland, where the ways are not easy to hit, that it was called the Lanthorn of Arden; as also of the two fair aisles, and a goodly chapel called St. Anne's chapel adjoining, the roofs of which were also leaded, by reason of which sacrilegious action, the steeple, standing in the midst, took wet, and decayed (and afterwards fell to the ground)."

In 1565, Adrian's other stepdaughter, Mary Grey, followed her older sister's example and married without the queen's permission. Since Mary's choice of husband, Thomas Keys, sergeant porter to the queen, was well beneath her in rank, Mary might have thought that the marriage, like that of her mother to Adrian, would not provoke the queen. Unfortunately, she guessed wrong, and she and her husband were both imprisoned, Thomas in the Fleet and Mary in various private houses.

Adrian now had two stepdaughters in royal custody for marrying without royal permission. There is no indication that he petitioned for their release, but it is very unlikely that he would have succeeded. Katherine Grey died in 1568, a captive to the end of her life.

Throughout the 1560's, Adrian served on various commissions in Leicestershire. In 1571 he was again elected to Parliament for Leicester. He served on committees on religion and church government, treasons, abuses in conveyancing, the order of business, respite of homage and church attendance, apparel, and corrupt presentations.

On April 10, 1572, Adrian received a general license to marry Anne Throckmorton, the widow of Sir Nicholas Throckmorton and the daughter of Sir Nicholas Carew. Like that of Frances, Anne's family was tainted with treason. Her father had been executed during Henry VIII's reign for his suspected involvement in the Exeter conspiracy, and her husband Nicholas Throckmorton had spent some time under house arrest for supposedly encouraging Mary, Queen of Scots to marry the Duke of Norfolk. Nicholas had died the previous year when he fell ill while visiting Robert Dudley, the Earl of Leicester. Anne Throckmorton was left with six sons, the eldest of whom was not of sound mind, and one daughter, Elizabeth. While Adrian Stokes was her social inferior, the match was a good one for the widowed Anne in material terms. She and Adrian probably had known each other for many years, as Anne had served as Jane Grey's proxy at the christening of Guildford Underhill on the last day of Jane's brief reign as queen.

Soon after Adrian's remarriage, Mary Grey, whose

husband had died, was allowed to go free. For a few months, she lived with Adrian and his new family before settling into her own house in London. Mary died in April 1578. In her will, she left Adrian's wife a silver gilt bowl with a cover.

In 1573, Walter Devereux, Earl of Essex, prepared to go into Ireland. Stokes wrote from Beaumanor on June 24, 1573, to tell him that he thanked God that the earl was going "because I am fully persuaded your journey shall be greatly to the service of God, for that you shall drive out those which knoweth not God, and plant in those that shall drive out those which knoweth not God, and plant in those that shall live in his fear."

The Gray's Inn Admission Register shows that in 1574, Adrian was one of several men admitted as readers at the request of Sir Christopher Yelverton. Francis Hastings, who was a younger brother of Henry Hastings, Earl of Huntingdon, and who often served with Adrian on local commissions, was also admitted at this time at Yelverton's request.

In 1574, William Lambarde presented Adrian with four maps that had belonged to Adrian's friend Laurence Novell, who had died in 1570.

Adrian served the crown at the local level in the 1570's and 1580's. In 1576, the queen's privy council directed him and Francis Hastings to inform themselves about the nefarious doings of "one Tomson, professing to be a refiner of gold." In the following year, he was serving as the keeper of the queen's park at Brigstock. When Nicholas Allen, one of Stokes' servants, was awaiting trial for killing one of Lord Mordant's servants, the privy council warned the justices of assizes that if Allen was found guilty, they should not give judgment for his execution until "her Majesty shall signify her further pleasure." Lord Mordant himself, who had been unlawfully hunting in the park, was warned by the privy council not to offer any occasion of quarrel to Stokes, his friends, or his servants.

Walter Mildmay, the Chancellor of the Exchequer, wrote to Adrian on February 6, 1581, asked him to settle a dispute between Adrian Farneham of Quarnodon, a minor, and his tenants in Barrow over common pasturage rights.

Arthur Throckmorton, the second son of Adrian's wife Anne, kept a journal, and it is because of this that we have a glimpse into Adrian's personal life during the period after his second marriage. In 1579, Adrian gave Arthur five pounds, which Arthur spent on fine clothing, including carnation silk stockings. That summer, Adrian served as godfather to Henry Cavendish's son; Arthur acted as his proxy. (Henry Cavendish was the son of Bess of Hardwick, who had been close to Frances.) While Arthur was visiting Beaumanor

that summer, Adrian and Anne received many visitors, including Thomas Wilkes, a clerk of the queen's privy council, and Cavendish. Stokes and his wife visited George Hastings, another younger brother of the Earl of Huntingdon, and went hunting in his park at Gopsall. After Adrian and Anne returned to Beaumanor, they were visited by Lord and Lady Cromwell and their daughter; the couples then went to the Earl of Bedford's on a hunting trip and killed a buck. That October, Arthur recorded that he "fell out" with Adrian, though by the next spring the two were exchanging letters. In September 1582, Arthur, in debt following a tour abroad, received presents from Adrian and his mother. Later that autumn, Arthur stayed at New Wark, a house Adrian owned at Leicester. In March 1583, George Hastings and his wife again visited Beaumanor.

Meanwhile, in 1582, Adrian assigned his interest in the lease of Beaumanor to his brother William and to their cousin, Robert Apyrce, on the condition that after Adrian's death they provide maintenance to John and Francis Gates, two kinsmen of Adrian's who were studying at the university, and to three of Adrian's servants.

Francis Walsingham, Elizabeth's Principal Secretary, wrote a letter to Sir Ralph Sadler on October 6, 1584, advising him that he should keep a watchful eye on Mary, Queen of Scots, and that if his own servants were not well furnished with "dagges" or "petronells," he should procure some from the well-affected gentleman in that county. Walsingham believed that none would better furnish him than Adrian Stokes, but noted that he dwelled somewhat far off.

In April 1585, Arthur Throckmorton was informed by the Earl of Leicester that Adrian was dead. Arthur hurried to Beaumanor only to discover that the report was a false one. Adrian, however, was probably seriously ill, for he made his will on April 15, 1585. On November 2, 1585, he died at age sixty-six.

Adrian asked to be buried in the chapel of Beaumanor without any pomp or solemnity "as it hath been used in the Papists' time." He left Anne his manor and lordship of Langacre in Devonshire, all of the goods and furniture in his houses in London and at Brigstock, the lease and interest in his house at Leicester and the goods there, and those plate and goods at Beaumanor specified in an inventory. To his stepdaughter Elizabeth Throckmorton he left a bed in the duchess's chamber, with the furniture to be given to her on her marriage (Elizabeth would later secretly marry Sir Walter Raleigh, making her the third stepdaughter of Adrian to incur the queen's wrath for marrying on the sly.) He left his horse "Grey Goodyear" to Robert Throck-

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morton and his horse "Grey Babington" to George Hastings. Stokes left the rest of his goods to his brother William, who was sixty. He appointed his friend George Hastings (who became the Earl of Huntingdon a decade later following the death of his childless brother) and Sir Walter Mildmay to be the supervisors of his will.

The goods at Beaumanor left to Anne Throckmorton included 1290 ounces of plate. Adrian's goods at his

London house included a pair of virginals, a picture of a French king, a Book of Martyrs, and portraits of Katherine Parr, Mary I, and the "French Queen" (Frances's mother, Mary Tudor). Perhaps the last lady, who had married once for policy and once for love, might have sympathized with Frances's choice of a second husband.

**SUSAN HIGGINBOTHAM**

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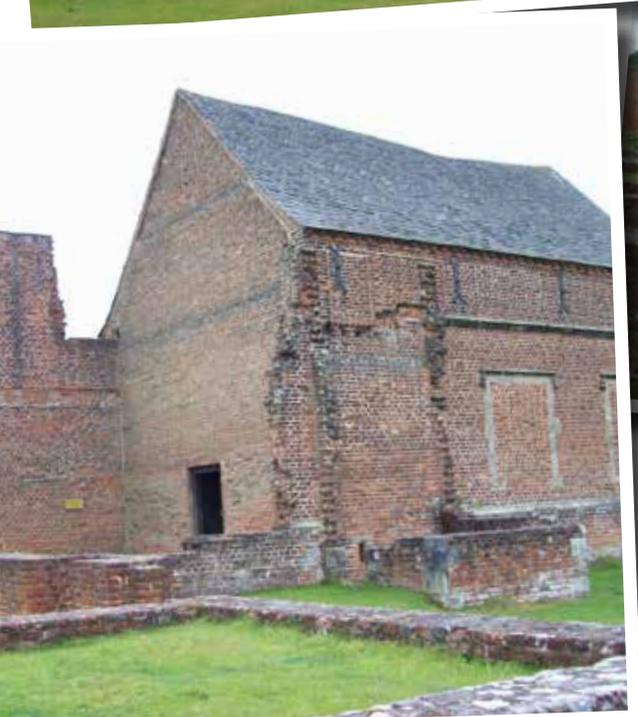
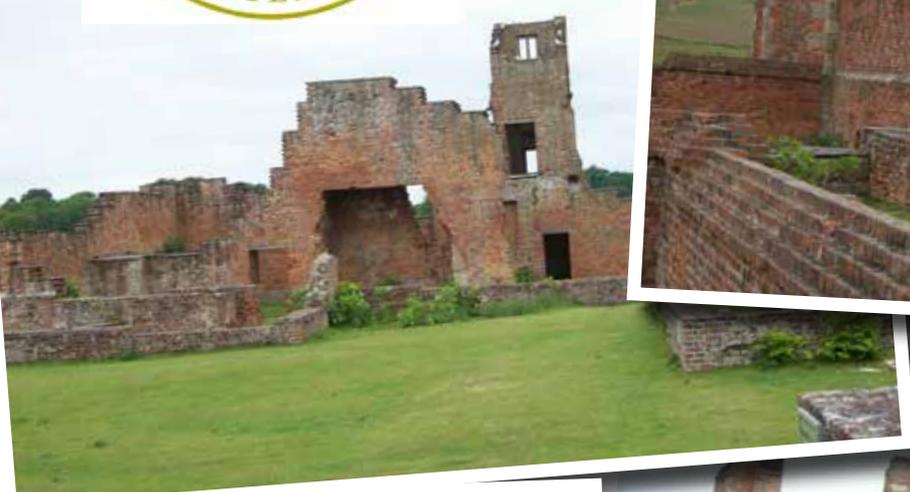
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## Bradgate Park and House

These photos were taken in the ruins of **Bradgate House, Leicestershire**. It is one of the earliest brick-built country houses in England and was the birthplace and childhood home of Lady Jane Grey, Queen of England.

The parkland surrounding the house is both wild and stunning, and is open during daylight hours. The ruins are situated about half way across the park and in the chapel there is often a volunteer expert there to answer your questions.

# LADY JANE GREY'S DEATH AND BURIAL

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**Tamise Hills** discusses Richard Davey  
and the Execution of Lady Jane

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**F**ebruary 12th marks the 461<sup>st</sup> anniversary of the execution of Lady Jane Dudley, who was Queen of England for nine days in 1553. There are various accounts of Jane's death and burial and the anniversary of her execution is a fitting time to revisit these. This article looks at those featured in Richard Davey's 'The Nine Days' Queen: Lady Jane Grey and Her Times.'

Published in 1909, the biography contained the only detailed, contemporary description of Queen Jane's arrival at the Tower of London on 10<sup>th</sup> July 1553. Davey claimed that the description was written in a letter by Baptista Spinola. The authenticity of this letter and its description of Jane have been questioned by historian Leanda de Lisle, since late 2009. De Lisle has concluded that the letter is a fake.<sup>1</sup>

Research into this letter and other claims made by Davey has also been conducted by Dr Stephan Edwards. He writes that, 'Davey published his first version of the letter in 1906 in *The Pageant of London*.'<sup>2</sup> Edwards describes how 'Davey's Nine Days' Queen contains numerous other obvious fabrications to fill the documentary voids.'<sup>3</sup> These include Jane's christening gift from her maternal grandmother and details of how Frances Grey, Jane's mother, is 'described as dining daily in a solitary state.'<sup>4</sup> Edwards points out that 'Jane's birth and christening are entirely undocumented'<sup>5</sup> and that 'there is absolutely no documentation surviving to detail the daily activities of the Grey household.'<sup>6</sup>

Davey's biography of Jane includes an account of her execution. He starts by describing a delay of an hour between Guildford's execution (Jane's husband) and her own. *'The direful procession which was to conduct a young and innocent Princess of the Blood Royal, of barely seventeen summers to the foot of an ignominious scaffold, was formed according to established*

*precedent. But for some unexplained reason, it was nearly an hour late in starting from Patridge's house to the place of execution.'*<sup>7</sup>



Site of Sir Nathaniel Patridge's House

Davey suggests a reason for this. *'The delay may have resulted from the state of nervous prostration into which the unfortunate Princess had been thrown by the sight of her husband's mangled remains. It would have been impossible, even in those hard times, to convey the victim to execution if she had swooned.'*<sup>8</sup>

The first account of Jane's execution in 'The Chronicle of Queen Jane and Two Years of Queen

Mary' does not mention a delay before her execution. *'The saide lady, being nothing at all abashed, neither with feare of her owne deathe, which then approached, neither with the sight of the ded carcase of hir husbunde, when he was brought in to the chappell, came fourthe, the levetenaunt leding hir...'*<sup>9</sup> Davey himself did not mention any delay in his 1906 book, 'The Pageant of London Vol II', where he writes, *'Almost immediately, after Guildford's body had been taken into the chapel, the Lord Lieutenant brought forth the Lady Jane.'*<sup>10</sup>

Davey also describes the procession to the scaffold in great detail. *'First, came a company of two hundred Yeoman of the Guard; then, the executioner, in a tight-fitting scarlet worsted and cloth garment, displaying the swelling muscles of this chest, arms and legs; his face was masked, and his head hooded in scarlet. Beside him marched his assistant, a rough-looking man, who carried the axe over his shoulder; then Sir John Brydges, Lieutenant of the Tower, with Sir Thomas Brydges, Deputy-Lieutenant, and between them Sir John Gage, Constable of the Tower, with two Sheriffs, in their robes of office. Lastly, the young prisoner herself... On her right walked Abbot Feckenham, in his black robe, without a surplice, and carrying a crucifix in his hand. Behind him came the Chaplains attached to the Chapel Royal of the Tower. Lady Jane's ladies, Mrs. Tylney and Mrs. Ellen, and Mrs Sarah; two other women and a man-servant, all in deep mourning, and weeping bitterly, closed the doleful procession.'*<sup>11</sup>

The author of the 'Chronicle of Queen Jane etc' describes a much smaller group accompanying Jane to the scaffold. He writes that Lady Jane *came fourthe, the levetenant leding hir, in the same gown wherein she was arrayed, hir countenance nothing abashed, neither her eyes anything moysted with teares, although her ij. Gentlywomen, mistress Elizabeth Tylney and mistress Eleyne, wonderfully wept...*<sup>12</sup> There is no mention of two hundred yeoman of the Guard, the executioner, his assistant, the chaplains nor Dr Feckenham. There is the possibility that the eye witness left out other members of the group and only mentioned the two weeping gentlewomen to contrast with Jane's composure. However, Davey gives a different description in the 'Pageant of London vol II.' *'...the Lord Lieutenant brought forth the Lady Jane...The 'fair innocent' was assisted by Dr. Feckenham, the last Abbot of Westminster, by her two gentlewomen, Mrs. Elizabeth Tylney and Mrs. Helen, and by her old nurse, all of whom wept bitterly.'*<sup>13</sup>

Davey goes into greater detail about what Lady Jane was wearing at her execution, than was mentioned in a contemporary account. He describes how she was *'dressed as on the occasion of her trial at the Guildhall*

*in the same black cloth dress, edged with black velvet, a Marie Stuart cap of black velvet on her head, with a veil of black cloth hanging to the waist, and a white wimple concealing her throat; her sleeves edged with lawn, neatly plaited round the wrists. Not wearing chopines to increase her height, as on the occasion of her State entry into the Tower, the people who had not seen her since were greatly surprised at her diminutive stature.'*<sup>14</sup>

The author of the 'Chronicle' writes that Jane was *'in the same gown wherein she was arrayed'*<sup>15</sup> and his earlier description of her leaving the Tower for trial at the Guildhall on 13 November 1553, gives the following details, *'The lady Jane was in a blacke gowne of cloth, tourned downe; the cappe lyned with fese velvett, and edget about with the same, in a French hoode, all black, with a black byllyment...'*<sup>16</sup>

In his description, Davey refers to Jane not wearing her 'chopines'.<sup>17</sup> The only mention of Jane wearing 'chopines' is in the Spinola letter. The most we know of Jane in physical terms at her arrival at the Tower, from other contemporary accounts, is that the train of her gown was carried by her mother, the Duchess of Suffolk.<sup>18</sup>

As John Guy has pointed out, the contemporary description of Jane's death in 'The Chronicle of Queen Jane etc' is made up of two different accounts.<sup>19</sup> The first ends with *'wheron she praied all the way till she cam to the saide scaffold, wheron when she was mounted, &...'*<sup>20</sup> And the second begins *'First, when she mounted upon the scaffold, she sayd to the people standing thereabout.'*<sup>21</sup>

Guy writes that *'the original eyewitness description of Jane's execution from the Chronicle was itself corrupted on first publication in 1850, when the text was expanded to incorporate the apocryphal material.'*<sup>22</sup> He continues, *'this occurred because the editor of the Chronicle, the antiquary John Gough Nichols, arbitrarily decided that the extraneous account must have been written by the same chronicler.'*<sup>23</sup> Guy thinks that the second account, entitled *'The Ende of the lady Jane Dudley, daughter of the duke of Suffolk, upon the scaffold, at the houre of her death'* is 'apocryphal'.<sup>24</sup>

Davey's description portrays a vulnerable Jane when he adds details from a 'little known report'<sup>25</sup> by her supposed relative (Philippa de Clifford), to his description of Jane's execution. He explains that *'in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries a sort of fashion was started in England, France, Belgium, Germany, and Italy for the writing of apocryphal memoirs of popular heroes and heroines: and as Lady Jane Grey was a great favourite of the Protestants, both at home and abroad, she has been the heroine of several of these*

# FEATURE SECTION: LADY JANE GREY

volumes.<sup>26</sup> Davey adds in a footnote, ‘That the little volume exists there can be no doubt, as a copy of it was seen by the author at Brussels a few years ago<sup>27</sup> but does state that ‘its authenticity...must be taken with considerable caution.’<sup>28</sup>

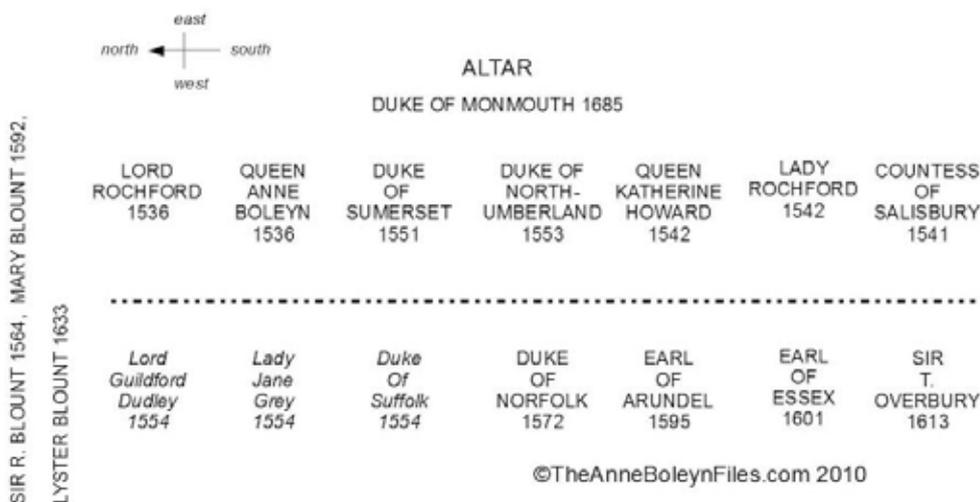
De Clifford’s account adds extra details between Jane’s scaffold speech and her reciting the Miserere. ‘After a pause, and wiping her eyes, she (Jane) said in a firmer voice, ‘Now, good people, Jane Dudley bids you all a long farewell. And may the Almighty preserve you from ever meeting the terrible death which awaits her in a few minutes. Farewell, farewell for ever more.’<sup>29</sup>

In the second account of Jane’s execution in the ‘Chronicle’, there is no gap between the end of her speech and her prayers. ‘And now, good people, while I am alyve, I pray you to assyst me with your prayers.’ And then knelyng downe, she turned to Feckenham saying, “Shall I say this psalme?”<sup>30</sup>

Also, in the account ‘The Lady Jane’s Wordes upon the Scaffold’, part of a publication entitled ‘An Epistle of Ladye Jane, a righte virtuous Woman’ that appeared in 1554, there is no gap between the end of Jane’s speech and her saying the Miserere. ‘And I pray you al to beare me witnesse, that I here dye a true Christian woman, and that I truste to be saved by the bloud of Jesus Christ, and bi none other meanes; and now I pray you al, pray for me, and with me!’ and so saied the Psalm of Miserere mei: that don, she saied, “Lorde save my soule, whyche now I commend into they hands:” and so prepared her selfe meekelie to the blocke.<sup>31</sup>

Lady Jane was buried in the Chapel St Peter ad Vincula, within the grounds of the Tower of London. Davey writes in a footnote that ‘Peter Derenzie states that *‘the corpse was interred in the Chapel-of-St.Peter-ad Vincula within the Tower, close by that of her husband, Lord Guildford Dudley, and between the decapitated bodies of Anne Boleyn and Katherine Howard, without any religious ceremony.’*<sup>32</sup>

However, Chronicle writers, such as Stow and Weever make no mention of Jane’s burial place in the chapel and state that the Dukes of Northumberland and Somerset were buried between the two queens of Henry VIII. Stow wrote ‘Here lieth, before the high altar in St Peter’s church, two Dukes between two Queens, to wit, the Duke of Somerset and the Duke of Northumberland, between Queen Anne and Queen Katherine, all four beheaded.’<sup>33</sup> Weever also wrote that, ‘Between the two Queens, before the high altar, lie buried two Dukes, the Duke of Somerset, Edward Seymour, and the Duke of Northumberland, John Dudley.’<sup>34</sup>



## Plan of the possible burial places in St Peter-ad-Vincula

The Chapel was renovated between 1876 and 1877 by order of Queen Victoria. In ‘Notices of the Historic Persons Buried in the Chapel of St. Peter Ad Vincula in the Tower of London’, Doyne Courtenay Bell writes that ‘There is no record of their burial... (Jane, Guildford, Henry, Duke of Suffolk)... in any particular part of the chapel, but as they were persons of high birth and distinction, the chancel would naturally have been chosen, and commencing on the ‘dexter,’ or north side, they would have been interred.’<sup>35</sup>

Originally it had not been planned to disturb those buried in the chancel but the pavement was discovered to be sinking and therefore during the renovation of the chancel, the remains found were removed and then reburied the top row under the



St Peter Ad Vincula

decorative commemorative tiles that can be viewed today.<sup>36</sup> However, Bell notes that with ‘the lower group’<sup>37</sup>, ‘the original interments on this spot have been too much disturbed to admit of any satisfactory identifications of the remains.’<sup>38</sup>

In his biography, Davey describes in great detail how Jane’s remains were discovered and reburied. He writes that: *‘Many years ago, a very small and broken coffin was discovered in this vault, containing the remains of a female of diminutive stature, with the head severed from the body. The skeleton, which crumbled to ashes*

*immediately it was exposed to the effect of the atmosphere, was surmised to be that of Lady Jane Grey, and the dust was enclosed in an urn and placed immediately under the oval inscription in the chancel above, which records her death.*<sup>39</sup>

There is no mention of any of this in the detailed report of the restoration, which states that *‘the recent examination of the chapel has failed to afford any means of identifying the spot.’*<sup>40</sup> This throws doubt on Davey’s claim. In the chapel today, there is a plaque on the floor of the chancel, which states ‘Near this spot lie the remains of Lord Guildford Dudley 1554, Lady Jane Grey 1554 etc.’ It lies below the commemorative tiles of the first row.

Dr Stephan Edwards writes that ‘repeated and unsupported fabrications reduce *Nine Days’ Queen* from the realm of biography to that of historical fiction.’<sup>41</sup> This would seem to also be true regarding Davey’s account of Jane’s execution, where he weaves details from a contemporary account with those from the Spinola letter. And although he notes that Philippa de Clifford’s account of the execution, *‘must be taken with considerable caution’*<sup>42</sup>, the very act of including it, further blurs the line between fact and fiction regarding what we know of Jane.



Plaque commemorating Jane, Guildford, Henry, Duke of Suffolk and others in St Peter ad Vincula. © Lara Eakins

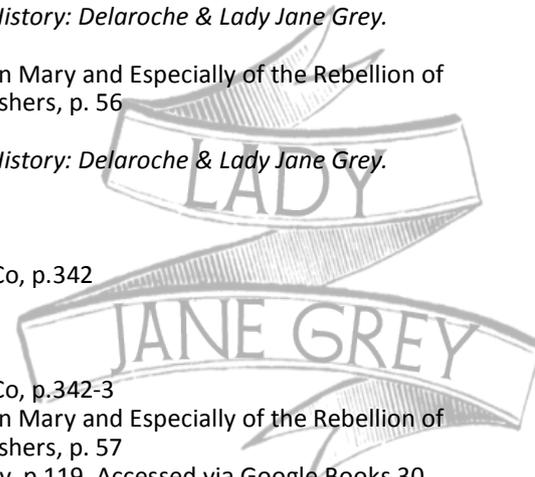
## TAMISE HILLS

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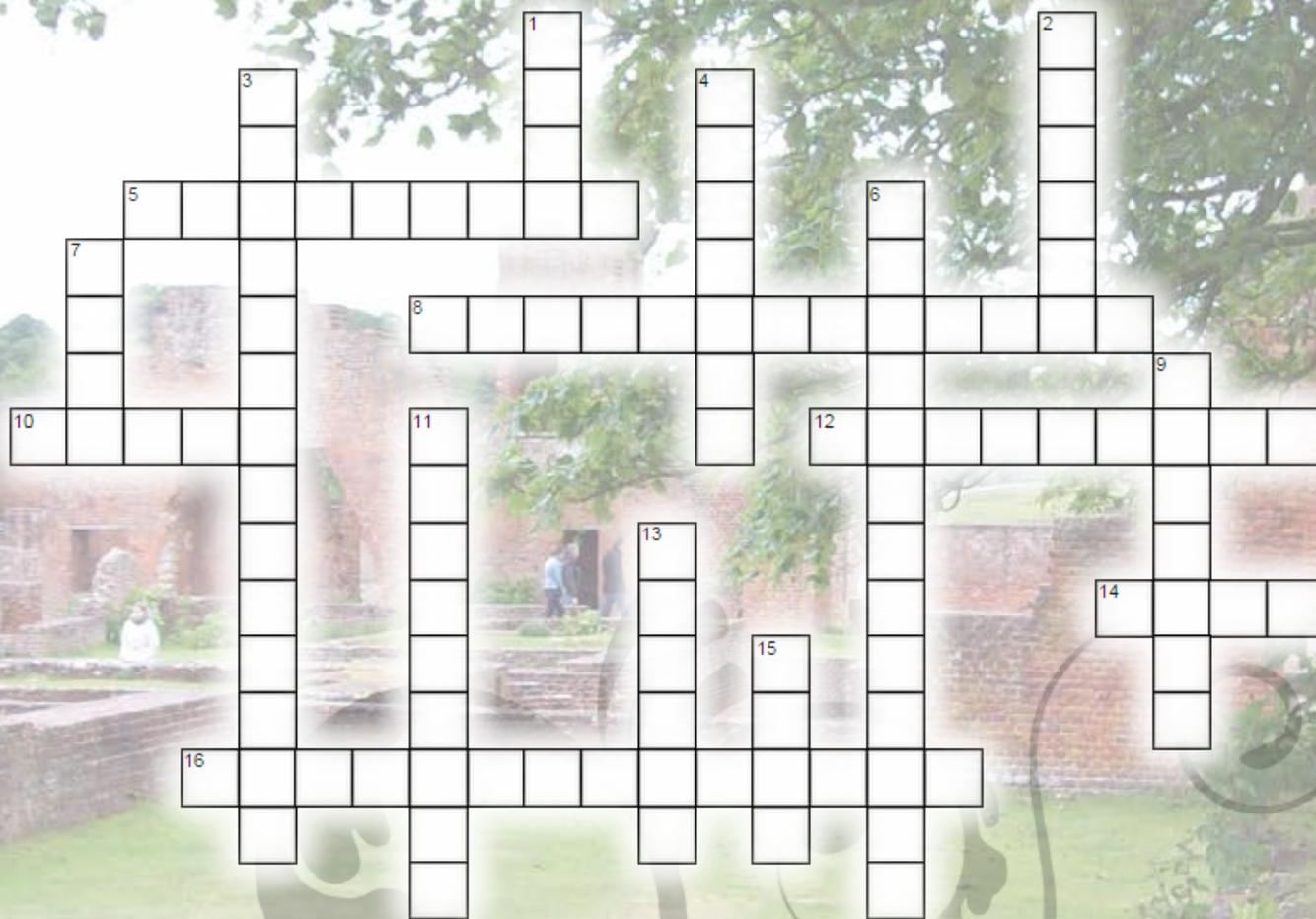
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**Tamise Hills** runs <http://www.ladyjanegrey.info/>, the self titled “Lady Jane Grey Reference Guide”. Her website has been running since September 2001 and since that time she has amassed a huge amount of reference material on all things “Grey”. Tamise has also taken the time to read and review all the books which are out there about Lady Jane Grey, and you’ll find those on her website too.

# Lady Jane CROSSWORD



ACROSS

- 5 Lady Jane was married to Lord \_\_\_\_\_ Dudley
- 8 Place where Jane was executed (5,2,6)
- 10 This rebellion was one of the factors in Jane's execution
- 12 One of Jane's Younger Sisters (9)
- 14 Month in which Jane became queen
- 16 Jane's mother (7,7)

DOWN

- 1 Jane was chief mourner at the funeral of this queen consort
- 2 Jane's tutor was Michelangelo \_\_\_\_\_
- 3 County containing Bradgate Park
- 4 Lady Jane's father, Henry Grey, was 1st Duke of \_\_\_\_\_
- 6 In early February 1547, Jane was sent to live with this man (6,7)
- 7 One of Jane's Younger Sisters (4)
- 9 Jane is buried in the Chapel of St Peter ad
- 11 Artist who painted "The Execution of Lady Jane Grey"
- 13 Nominated Jane as successor to the Crown
- 15 Often known as the \_\_\_\_\_ day queen

**ANSWERS ON PAGE 79**

## FEATURE SECTION: LADY JANE GREY

### TUDOR BLOOD: MORE CURSE THAN BLESSING

I remember learning about Lady Jane Grey at school. I suspect that these days she has dropped off the curriculum altogether but what I remember is a striking picture in a textbook captioned ‘The Nine Days Queen’ and not quite understanding where this young queen fitted into the Tudor story.

It turned out that even that picture in the textbook was later re attributed as a portrait of Henry’s last queen Katherine Parr. Indeed Jane has become an increasingly obscure figure, there is not a definitive likeness of her, only a number of portraits of young women that may or may not represent Jane Grey, nor is there a contemporary description of her, only an ambassadorial account of her arrival at her coronation that has now been discredited as a fiction.

If we think of that nineteenth century, overly romanticised painting by Delacroix that depicts Jane Grey’s execution. She, blindfolded, glowing like the Virgin Mary in her white satin gown, is a glamorously tragic figure that plays up to her image as the perfect Protestant martyr, silent, biddable and meek – a beguiling victim. Perhaps we have less need for Protestant martyrs now and want women who are characterised by their defiance, women more like Anne Boleyn.

But scratch the surface of Jane Grey’s story and there are glimpses of an extraordinary woman, a woman who faced death with courage, refusing to save herself by denouncing the faith she believed in unwaveringly. You only have to read her letter to her sister on the eve of her execution to understand this about her. In this respect she cannot be cast as entirely a victim, but as someone who took control over her destiny, albeit with very limited choice. Though she had the crown thrust upon her as part of her father in law, Northumberland’s, scheming to place himself as close as possible to the nexus of power, there is the sense that she took her role as Queen with great seriousness. It is thought by some that she had refused to consider her husband’s (Northumberland’s son Guildford Dudley) request for the crown matrimonial, though this is speculative but it is tempting to believe in this version of Jane, a woman who could have become a bold, decisive and deeply religious queen.

It is this Jane that I have depicted in *Sisters of Treason*. The novel opens with her execution and yet she haunts the narrative, influencing the actions of her sisters, Katherine and Mary, whose stories emerge from her shadow. Katherine and Mary Grey are two young girls also perilously close to the throne, blighted by the same Tudor blood as their sister Jane. Their lives are lived in a constant state of fear, negotiating the court of their cousin Mary Tudor, a fanatically Catholic monarch and as much defined by her beliefs as was Jane. Had the Greys triumphed in the struggle for the English succession rather than the Stuarts, then these women’s lives might not have been forgotten. During Elizabeth I’s reign Katherine and Mary were deemed such a great threat to the throne that they were both imprisoned for unsanctioned marriages. Their lives, particularly Katherine’s, the elder of the two, were well documented, indicating their political importance at an unprecedented time when there were no potential male heirs in the succession. But this political importance, defined by their Tudor blood, also meant they were stalked by tragedy.

Enjoy the following excerpt from my book “Sisters of Treason”...

**ELIZABETH FREMANTLE**

**EXCERPT**  
*from*  
**Sisters of Treason**

Jane Grey mounts the few steps and stands before the onlookers to speak. She is close enough that were Levina to reach up she could touch the edge of her skirts, but the wind takes the girl's words and only snippets reach them. 'I do wash my hands thereof in innocency...' She makes the action, rubbing those small hands together. 'I die a true Christian woman and that I do look to be saved by no other mean, but only by the mercy of God.' She is cleaving to the new faith to the last and Levina wishes that she had a pinch of this girl's unassailable fortitude.

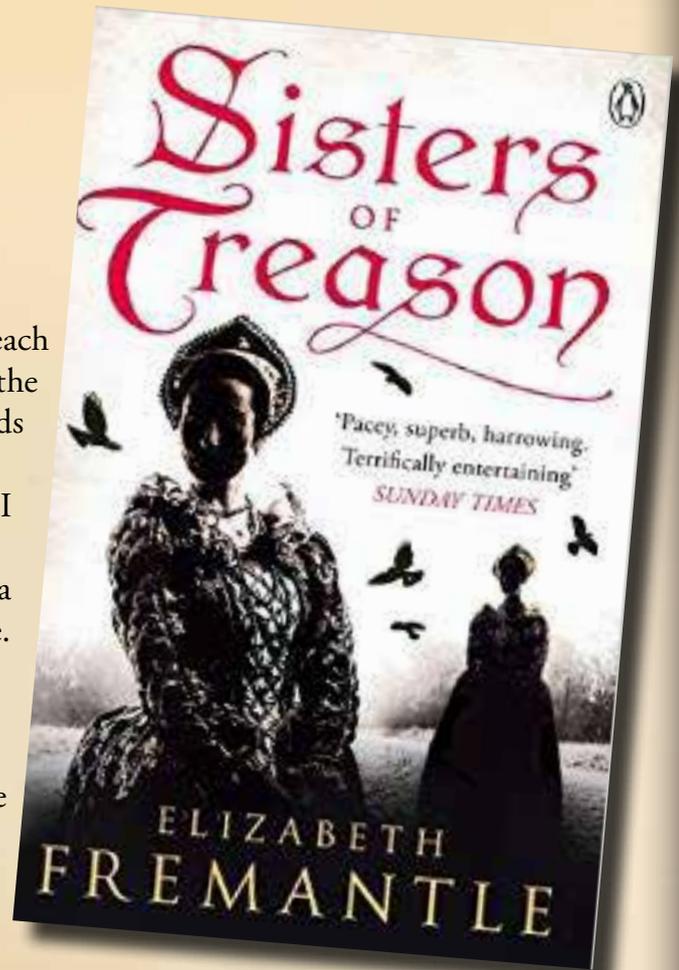
When Jane is done she shrugs off her gown, handing it to her women, and unties her hood. As she pulls it away from her head her hair looses itself from its ribbons and flies up, beautifully, as if it will lift her to the heavens. She turns to the headsman. Levina supposes he is begging her forgiveness; she cannot hear their exchange. But his face is utterly stricken – even the executioner is horrified by this, then. It is only Jane who seems entirely composed.

Jane then takes the blindfold from one of her ladies and, refusing help with a small shake of her head, wraps it about her eyes, then drops to her knees, pressing her hands together swiftly and mouthing out a prayer. All of a sudden, the prayer finished, her composure seems to fall away as she flounders blindly, reaching for the block, unable to find it in her sightless state. Levina is reminded of a newborn animal, eyes still welded shut, seeking, in desperation, its source of succour.

Everybody watches her but nobody moves to help. All are paralysed with horror at the sight of this young girl groping for something solid in a dark world. There is barely a sound; eventhe wind has dropped to a deathly hush, as if Heaven holds its breath. Still Jane seeks for the block, arms flailing now in space. Levina can bear it no longer and scrambles up on to the platform, guiding those cold little hands, a child's hands really, to the place; tears sting at her eyelids as she clammers back down to Frances, who is blanched with shock.

Then it is done, in a flash of steel and a brilliant crimson spurt. Frances collapses into Levina, who holds her upright and covers her eyes for her as the executioner holds up Jane Grey's head by the hair, to prove the job is done. Levina doesn't know why she looks up then, but what she sees when she does is not reality; it is a scene conjured in her imagination: the Queen in the place of that headsman, her fingers twisted through the bloody hair of her young cousin, her face placid, oblivious to the spill of gore over her dress. The gathering is silent, save for the desperate gusting wind, which has started up again as if in protest.

Levina steps to the side and vomits into the gutter.



**Sisters of Treason** is available from Amazon and all good book stores.

You can also read more from Elizabeth Fremantle on her website

<http://www.elizabethfremantle.com/>

# FEBRUARY'S ON THIS

<p><b>1 February</b> 1554 <b>Queen Mary I</b> gave a rousing speech at the Guildhall to rally Londoners to her cause and to oppose Wyatt's rebellion.</p>	<p><b>2 February</b> 1550 Death of <b>Sir Francis Bryan</b>, courtier, diplomat and poet, at Clonmel in Ireland.</p>	<p><b>3 February</b> 1587 <b>Elizabeth I's</b> Privy Council agreed to send <b>Mary, Queen of Scots'</b> signed death warrant to Fotheringhay without Elizabeth's knowledge.</p>	<p><b>4 February</b> 1555 Burning of Protestant martyr, clergyman and Biblical editor, <b>John Rogers</b>, at Smithfield.</p>	<p><b>5 February</b> 1556 Treaty of Vaucelles between <b>Philip II</b> of Spain and <b>Henry II</b> of France.</p>
<p><b>10 February</b> 1567 Murder of <b>Henry Stuart</b>, Lord Darnley and husband of Mary, Queen of Scots, at Kirk o' Field, Edinburgh.</p>	<p><b>11 February</b> 1466 Birth of <b>Elizabeth of York</b>, eldest child of <b>Edward IV</b> and <b>Elizabeth Woodville</b>, and wife of <b>Henry VII</b>. This day was also the day of her death in 1503.</p>	<p><b>12 February</b> 1554 Executions of <b>Lady Jane Grey</b> and her husband <b>Lord Guildford Dudley</b>.</p> 		<p><b>13 February</b> 1542 Executions of <b>Catherine Howard</b>, fifth wife of <b>Henry VIII</b>, and <b>Jane Boleyn</b>, Lady Rochford, at the Tower of London.</p>
<p><b>17 February</b> 1547 <b>Edward Seymour</b>, uncle of <b>Edward VI</b>, was made Duke of Somerset.</p>	<p><b>18 February</b> 1516 Birth of <b>Mary I</b>, daughter of <b>Henry VIII</b> and <b>Catherine of Aragon</b>, at Greenwich Palace.</p>	 <p>Galileo Galilei by Justus Sustermans, 1636</p>		<p><b>19 February</b> 1473 Birth of <b>Nicholas Copernicus</b>, the Renaissance mathematician and astronomer, in Thorn, in the province of Royal Prussia, Poland.</p>
	<p><b>23 February</b> 1554 Execution of <b>Henry Grey</b>, Duke of Suffolk and father of <b>Lady Jane Grey</b>, on Tower Hill.</p>			<p><b>24 February</b> 1500 Birth of <b>Charles V</b>, Holy Roman Emperor, in Ghent. He was the son of <b>Joanna of Castile</b> and <b>Philip I</b> of Castile.</p>
		<p><b>26 February</b> 1564 Baptism of <b>Christopher Marlowe</b>, poet, translator and playwright, at St George's Canterbury.</p>	<p><b>27 February</b> 1545 The English forces were defeated by the Scots at the Battle of Ancrum Moor, near Jedburgh in Scotland.</p>	<p><b>28 February</b> 1551 Death of theologian and Protestant reformer <b>Martin Bucer</b> during the night of 28th February/1st March in Cambridge.</p>

TudorLife

# DAY IN TUDOR HISTORY

**6** February  
1557

The remains of reformers **Martin Bucer** and **Paul Fagius** were exhumed and publicly burned in Cambridge, after being posthumously found guilty of heresy.

**7** February  
1477 or 1478

Traditional birthdate of **Sir Thomas More**, Henry VIII's Lord Chancellor, in Milk Street, London.

**8** February  
1587

Execution of **Mary, Queen of Scots**, at Fotheringhay Castle.

**9** February  
1555

Burnings of Protestant martyrs **John Hooper**, Bishop of Gloucester and Worcester, and **Rowland Taylor**, Rector of Hadleigh, Suffolk.

**14** February  
1556

**Thomas Cranmer** was degraded from his office of Archbishop of Canterbury for heresy.



Thomas More by Hans Holbein the Younger

**15** February  
1564

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

**16** February  
1547

Burial of **Henry VIII** at St George's Chapel, Windsor Castle.

**20** February  
1547

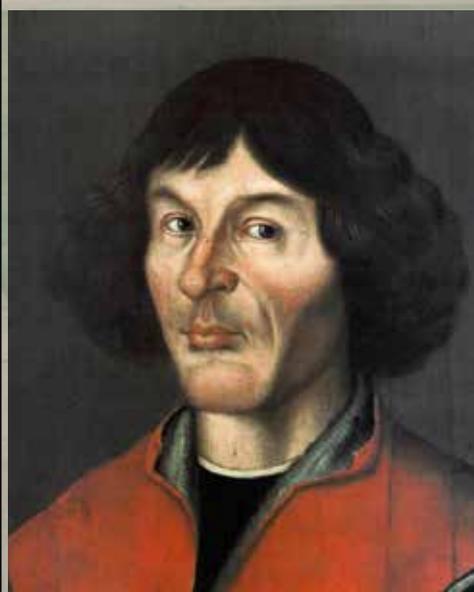
Coronation of **Edward VI** at Westminster Abbey. Edward VI was the first monarch to be anointed as Supreme Head of the English Church.

**21** February  
1590

Death of **Ambrose Dudley**, 3rd Earl of Warwick, Master of the Ordnance and Privy Councillor, at Bedford House on the Strand.

**22** February  
1511

Death of **Henry, Duke of Cornwall**, the fifty-two day old son of **Henry VIII** and **Catherine of Aragon**.



Nicolaus Copernicus  
(Artist unknown)

**25** February  
1570

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

**29** February  
1528

Burning of Patrick Hamilton, theologian and Scotland's first 'Protestant' martyr, at St Salvator's College, St Andrews.



# WHAT WAS IT LIKE TO BE A NUN IN THE 16<sup>TH</sup> CENTURY?

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Sometimes it takes seeing the lives of “ordinary” people to understand the past. **Nancy Bilyeau** uncovers the life of Tudor nuns...

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**W**hen, ten years ago, I decided to write a thriller set in the reign of Henry VIII, I wanted the plot to revolve around a female protagonist. But who? I ruled out a “real” historical person as mystery solver and mulled over what kind of woman would be most interesting to set into motion. I didn’t particularly want to create a Tudor lady-in-waiting, a merchant’s wife or a country maiden. One day a word popped into my head: “nun.”

The prospect was both exciting and scary. What were my qualifications to tell a Tudor nun’s story?

I’d been reading books of European history since I was a teenager, with a special fondness for England in the 16<sup>th</sup> century. I knew that in breaking with the Pope, King Henry VIII made himself head of the Church of England and seized all the abbeys and priories, ejecting the monks, friars and nuns. My impression was that the Protestant reform

and radical changes were necessary, if not inevitable.

But over the next few years, as I dug into the research and thought more about the Dissolution of the Monasteries, some new opinions took hold. “History has been written by the victors,” goes the saying, attributed to everyone from Pliny to Churchill. It was certainly the case with the English Reformation. As I uncovered case after case of indifference to the fate of the nuns, of injustices and even

cruelties, my point of view shifted.

My guiding questions in researching my first book were “What was it like to live as a 16<sup>th</sup> century nun?” and “What happened to the nuns after the Dissolution?” The first question I was able, with enough research, to answer. The second will forever be a mystery. Approximately 1,800 nuns existed at the time of the destruction of the priories, out of 9,300 monastics total. We know of the fates of a few

of them, those considered of enough interest for the statesmen or politicians to write about them. The women left behind a few letters and wills, that's it. The priories themselves are rubble or, at most, fragmented walls and spires of ghostly beauty. "In lone magnificence, a ruin stands," sighs the poem by George Keate, "The Ruins of Netley Abbey."

I created a heroine, Joanna Stafford, who was the daughter of a Spanish maid of honour to Catherine of Aragon and a younger brother of the Duke of Buckingham. Her priory would be real, however. I selected the sole Dominican priory in England, in the town of Dartford, in Kent. I traveled to Dartford to deepen my research in 2011. A small museum devoted to the town's rich history helped a great deal. Walking around, I found echoes of the past: signs for "Priory Road" and "Priory Shopping Centre." On the site of the convent stands a gatehouse and garden built directly after the nuns' time—it's a popular place for wedding receptions, ironically.

All that physically remains of the grand priory buildings themselves is a stretch of low stone wall along a busy road. "What happened here?" I said out loud as I stood on the cracked sidewalk alongside those walls.

The most widely read biographies and studies of the time possess little information about nuns. The book *The Last Divine Office: Henry*

*VIII and the Dissolution of the Monasteries*, by Geoffrey Moorhouse, devotes less than a single page to the women who took the veil. The 736-page *The King's Reformation* by G.W. Bernard devotes space to the experiences of a handful of priories and nuns, with most of the attention given to Sister Elizabeth Barton, who claimed to see visions and publicly insisted that Henry VIII must not marry Anne Boleyn on pain of death. Her activism brought Sister Elizabeth arrest and execution in 1534—though of course Queen Anne would follow.

I eventually found books that gave me more insight into the nuns and their chosen lives: *The Stripping of the Altars: Tradition Religion in England*, by Eamon Duffy; *Poverty and Vagrancy in Tudor England*, by John F. Pound; *Spiritual Economies: Female Monasticism in Later Medieval England*, by Nancy Bradley Warren; *Nunneries, Learning and Spirituality in Late Medieval English Society, the Dominican Priory of Dartford*, by Paul Lee; and *Supremacy and Survival* by Stephanie A. Mann

Of all of the victims in the struggle over religion, the nuns were, as a group, the most tragic, I believe. The displaced monks and friars could serve the new church as chantry priests or hold some other spiritual office. They could become clerks or apothecaries or tutors.

But the displaced nuns had far fewer options. The abbeys

fell in the mid to late 1530s. Many of the prioresses and nuns received pensions but they were small and the inflation of the 1540s and 1550s diminished their value. There were no professions open to unmarried women of the period, apart from court service at one end of the spectrum and prostitution at the other. However, these women could not marry. A law passed Parliament in 1539, the Act of Six Articles, forbidding those who had taken vows of chastity from ever marrying, on pain of death. Introduced by the Duke of Norfolk, the act had the support of the king, who for reasons unknown was intent on ex-monastics being celibate. During the reign of



Edward VI, the law was repealed. But under Mary I, the marriages of ex-nuns was forbidden again—only to be permitted once more by Elizabeth. By that time some of the nuns were dead; the youngest ones at the Dissolution were well into their forties. In all of my research I found only two references in the contemporary records of nuns' marrying.

But in that same research I learned some illuminating details of the stories of women who courageously faced destruction of their way of life in the 1530s. In this article I would like to share two of them. They are not characters in my novels. But their lives haunt me. I think we best understand a period of history not just through the political and theological debates but the stories of ordinary people.

## FLORENCE BONNEWE

The Benedictine convent of Amesbury, in Wiltshire, had been founded before the arrival of William the Conqueror. The historians give the year as 979 and the motive of its creation as guilt over the murder of King Edward the Martyr the previous year.

More than five centuries later, 34 nuns lived at Amesbury. The head of the house was Florence Bonnewe, of whom nothing is known before she leaps into history in 1539 as a woman who stood up to the king.

All of the smaller monasteries and a growing number of the larger ones—possessing vast tracts of land and valuables—had been dissolved already. In most cases the property and buildings were turned over to families loyal to Henry VIII. What the king's commissioners tried to do was persuade the abbots and priors and prioresses to surrender their religious houses to the king. If so, the helpless and frightened monastics living there would receive annual pensions. The grisly fate of those who refused to submit to the king and Thomas Cromwell—not only Sir Thomas More and Cardinal John Fisher but dozens of defiant monks and friars—was instructive. Few refused.

At the end of March three royal commissioners—John Tregonwell, William Petre and John Smyth—arrived at Amesbury with the goal of securing surrender. Florence Bonnewe had other ideas. The men wrote to Cromwell: “We yesterday came and communed with the abess for the accomplishment of the king's highness' commission in like sort. And albeit we have used as many ways with her as our poor wits could attain, yet in the end we could not by any persuasions bring her to any conformity. At all times she resisted and so remaineth in these terms: ‘If the king's highness command me to go from this house I will gladly go, though I beg my bread; and as for pension, I care for none.’ In these terms she was in all her conversation, praying for

us many times to trouble her no further herein, for she had declared her full mind, in the which we might plainly gather of her words she was fully fixed before our coming.”

Months of pressure followed. At some point the most senior commissioner in charge of dissolving nunneries, a priest named John London, entered the picture. It is worth pausing in the story of Florence to consider “Dr. London.” Archbishop Matthew Parker would call Dr. London a “stout and filthy prebendary.” In his visitations to the nunneries he was charged with improper behavior at Chepstow in 1537 and Godstow in 1538. Dr. London was first dean of the Diocese of Oxford in the early 1540s and there forced to perform “open penance” after adultery with an Oxford mother and daughter. He was caught up in a failed conspiracy against Thomas Cranmer in 1543, sent to Fleet Prison and “died of shame and vexation.”

James Gardiner, the 19<sup>th</sup> century editor of the towering *Letters and Papers of the Reign of Henry VIII*, wrote of Dr. London's actions in 1539: “When we think of the shame in which Dr. London ended his days, a few years later, committed to the Fleet for perjury, not to mention other stories against him; and when we consider that Cromwell himself, the year before this, had been obliged to pay some regard to the abess of Godstow's remonstrance against his conduct towards her and her companions, it might

seem strange that the task of suppressing nunneries should have been more specially committed to him than to any other. But perhaps indelicacy was rather a recommendation for the kind of work that was to be done.”

Florence begged to be “left in peace,” but the demands only increased. The royal commissioners secured letters from Cromwell and even Henry VIII insisting that yes, the surrender of the nunnery must take place.

In August 1539 Florence finally submitted the resignation of her position in the following letter to Thomas Cromwell:

“I humbly recommend me unto your good lordship and have received the king’s gracious letters and yours, touching the resignation of my poor office in the monastery of Amesbury....I have resigned my said office into the hands of the king’s noble grace, before the commissioners thereto appointed; trusting that the promises of said commissioners have made unto me for assurance of my living hereafter shall be performed.”

Florence was swiftly replaced by a nun named Joan Darrell who was “very conformable” to Cromwell’s wishes. Dr. London arrived to oversee the official surrender of the convent in 1540. Joan Darrell was awarded an annual pension of one-hundred pounds, the largest amount given to any prioress in the kingdom, even though she’d held the position for a few

months. Florence received absolutely nothing. The commissioners’ promises were broken.

One source writes that she died “almost immediately after.” According to contemporary historian John Stowe, “10,000 people, masters and servants, had lost their livings by the putting down of these houses at that time.” A number of them—no one is sure how many—could find no employment and roamed the country, homeless. Ambassador Eustace Chapuys wrote: “It is a lamentable thing to see a legion of monks and nuns who have been chased from their monasteries wandering miserably hither and thither seeking means to live.” Florence Bonnewe was spared that, at least.

Twenty-one Amesbury nuns were still receiving their pensions as of the year 1556 and one as late as 1605. As for the buildings and land of Amesbury, they were given to Edward Seymour, Earl of Hertford, brother of the king’s third wife. Most of the buildings were ordered demolished, stripped of lead that could be sold. Some of the stone was used to construct a fine manor house. The Seymour family held the Amesbury estate for over a century.

## **ELIZABETH EXMEWE**

Dartford Priory, founded in the 1340s by Edward III, drew women from the gentry and aristocracy, even one

from royalty. Princess Bridget Plantagenet, youngest sister of Elizabeth of York, was promised to Dartford as a child. She lived there until her death in 1517.

Dartford was one of the five most prosperous nunneries in England. Like the other priories, Dartford did not play as large a role in its community as the houses of monks. For instance, in a report defending the existence of Carmarthen Priory in Wales, it was pointed out that people in the surrounding market town ate and drank at the priory. The Augustinian canons offered hospitality to rich and poor—weekly alms were given to 80 of the needy. Nobles lodged at Camarthen overnight when traveling. But it was a key aspect of a nunnery that the women be kept separate from all men and outsiders. Dartford was an “enclosed” house, meaning that at night all its residents were locked in. Still, the priory was still a part of its larger community. Prioress Elizabeth Croessner executed wills for her neighbors and appointed priests to celebrate Mass in the parish church. Alms were given to the poor at the gatehouse and the priory sponsored an infirmary nearby to help the sick. The nuns taught some of the local girls from good families to read.

Elizabeth Exmewe was typical of many of the Dartford nuns—she was the daughter of a gentleman, Sir Thomas Exmewe. He was a goldsmith and “merchant adventurer,” serving as Lord Mayor of

London. It was common for brothers and sisters to enter monastic life together, though at separate places. Elizabeth White, a fellow nun at Dartford, was the half-sister of Cardinal John Fisher. The siblings were close. "One of Fisher's last and in some ways most revealing writings was a devotional tract composed for her while he was a prisoner in the Tower," writes Eamon Duffy in *Saints, Sacrilege and Sedition: Religion and Conflict in the Tudor Reformation*.

Elizabeth's brother, William Exmewe, was a Carthusian monk and respected scholar of Greek and Latin at the London Charterhouse. He was also one of the monks who in 1535 refused to sign the Oath of Supremacy to Henry VIII, despite intense, even personal, pressure. Henry VIII visited Exmewe, a former man of the court, to persuade him. But Exmewe would not compromise his beliefs, and he was punished with a horrifying death: He was hanged, disemboweled while still alive and quartered.

No nun in England was executed besides Sister Elizabeth Barton, the Benedictine who prophesied against the king's marriage to Anne Boleyn. Elizabeth Exmewe did not publicly criticize the king nor seek martyrdom. Four years after the death of her brother, she was turned out from Dartford Priory. Because of her youth and lack of seniority, she received a pension of less than

"100 shillings per annum."

Elizabeth tried to continue her calling as best she could. She shared a home in Walsingham with another ex-nun of Dartford. "They were Catholic women of honest conversation," said one contemporary account. A half-dozen other Dartford refugees tried to live under one roof closer to Dartford. Meanwhile, Henry VIII had their priory demolished. He built a luxurious manor house on the rubble of the Dominican Order, although he never slept there. It became the home of his fourth wife, Anne of Cleves, after he divorced her in 1540.

When Mary I took the throne in 1553, the queen re-formed several religious communities as she struggled to restore the "True Faith." Elizabeth Exmewe and six other ex-nuns successfully petitioned Queen Mary to re-create their Dominican community at Dartford, which was vacant after the death of Anne of Cleves. They moved into the manor house, built on the home they left 14 years earlier, with two chaplains. The convent life they loved flourished again: the sisters spent their days praying, singing and chanting; gardening; embroidering; and studying.

But the restoration didn't last long. When Mary died and her Protestant half-sister took the throne, Elizabeth's first Reformation Parliament repressed all the re-founded convents and confiscated the land.

And so the Dartford nuns were ejected again, this time with no pensions. Mary's widower, King Philip of Spain, heard of their plight, and personally paid for a ship to convey the nuns of Dartford and Syon Abbey to Antwerp, in the Low Countries. (The sisters of Syon were eventually able to establish a strong community in Lisbon, Portugal.) Paul Lee, in his book *Nunneries, Learning and Spirituality in Late Medieval Society*, has charted the Dartford sisters' poignant journey after leaving their native land.

After a few months, a new home was secured for them. For the next ten years Elizabeth Exmewe lived "in the poor Dutch Dominican nunnery at Leliendal, near Zierikzee on the western shore of the island of Schouwen in Zeeland." Several of the English nuns were entering their eighties, with Elizabeth being the youngest. All suffered from illness and poverty. The Duchess of Parma, hearing of their hardships, sent an envoy to the Dartford nuns. He wrote: "I certainly found them extremely badly lodged. This monastery is very poor and very badly built.... I find that these are the most elderly of the religious and the most infirm, and it seems that they are more than half dead. "Despite his dire observances, the nuns themselves expressed pride in their convent. Their leader, Prioress Elizabeth Croessner (a cousin of the earlier head), wrote a letter to the new pope, Pius IV, saying they strove to

remain faithful to their vows and, incredibly, insisting they were interested in new recruits.

In the 1560s the nuns died, one by one, leaving only Elizabeth Exmewe and her prioress, Elizabeth Croessner. Destitute, the pair moved to Bruges and found another convent. They lived through

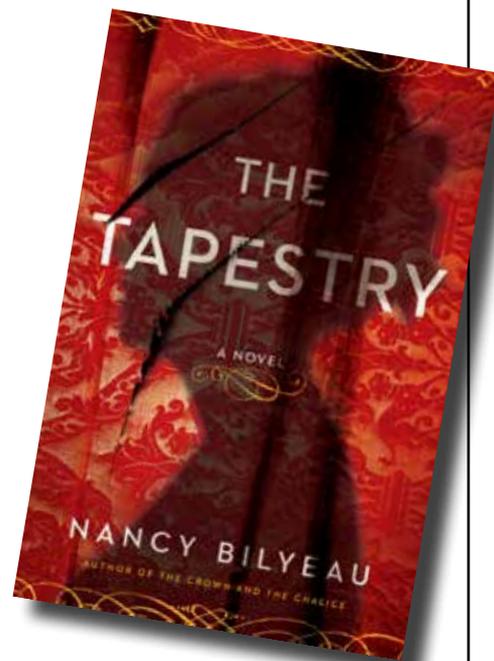
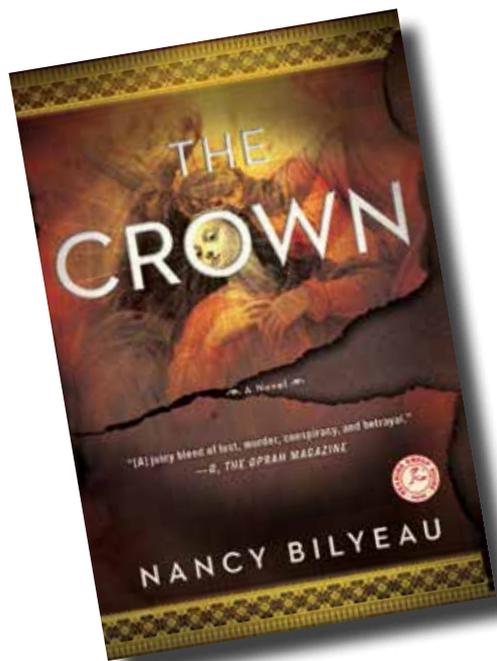
a bout of religious wars, with Calvinists marching through the streets.

The onetime prioress of Dartford, Elizabeth Croessner, died in 1577. Now Elizabeth Exmewe, the daughter of a Lord Mayor and the sister of a Carthusian martyr, was the only one left of her Order.

In 1585, she, too, perished in Bruges and was buried by Dominican friars with all honors. Elizabeth Exmewe is believed to have lived to 76 years of age.

She was the last nun.

**NANCY BILYEAU**



**Nancy Bilyeau** is a magazine editor and author of a trilogy of historical thrillers set in Tudor England. The first novel, *The Crown*, was an Oprah magazine pick of January 2012. The second novel, *The Chalice*, won the RT Reviewers Award in 2014 for Best Historical Mystery. *The Tapestry* will be published by Simon & Schuster on March 24, 2015. Nancy lives with her husband and two children in New York City. For more information, go to [www.nancybilyeau.com](http://www.nancybilyeau.com)

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## 50 Shades of Henry VII

Last month marked a spate of wedding anniversaries in the Tudor clan – Henry VIII married both his queens Anne in January (Anne of Cleves on the sixth and allegedly Anne Boleyn on the twenty-fifth), and Henry VII wed Elizabeth of York on the eighteenth.

The latter anniversary produced a spate of ill-tempered remarks online. Some likened his portrait to ‘a wanted poster’, theorising on how miserable young Elizabeth must have been at their marriage. Given that her previous potential bridegroom had been an uncle who had deposed her brother and disinherited her sisters, then found time to order the execution of her half-brother and disappearance of another, we might surmise that Elizabeth of York may have had fairly low expectations for future marital bliss, regardless of who marched her back down the aisle. But all of it is supposition.

A flurry of comments, replies and counter-replies condemned Henry VII for ‘stealing’ the throne from Richard III – an odd charge, I thought, since the latter didn’t exactly pluck it with gentle caresses from Edward V. In the online *mêlée*, even points in Henry’s favour (namely lifting the laws penalising the Welsh that had been in place since a rebellion against Henry IV) were swiftly discounted as ‘clearly’ being motivated by nothing more than a desire to tax the Welsh in the same way he taxed the English. It is worth pointing out that the fifteenth-century penal laws would have been very odd examples of their kind if they had let the Welsh off with lesser taxation. Equally odd would have been the comments from contemporary Welsh writers, one of whom referred to

Henry VII as a ‘Welsh Moses’ for the help he gave his native people.

I’ve been writing about Henry VII quite a bit recently – first in my *An Illustrated Introduction to the Tudors* for Amberley and then in my *A History of the English Monarchy from Boadicea to Elizabeth I* for MadeGlobal, which will be released this spring. Initially, I was so exhausted by the Ricardian zeal of 2013 that I went into my research with a high opinion of the first Tudor king. I found a lot to confirm my pre-existing admiration for him. Harried into life as a down-on-his-luck émigré thanks to the Wars of the Roses, he had to flee for his life in disguise more than once and when he eventually took the English throne in 1485, I must say he did so with a comparative lack of vindictiveness – especially when compared to the accessions of Edward IV or Richard III. I cannot imagine any of his immediate predecessors, or successor, pardoning a young man like Lambert Simnel who had been the figurehead of a rebellion against him. Not only did he pardon him, but he gave him a job in the



palace kitchens and promoted him as his hard work merited. Henry VII was not a bloodthirsty man.

Yet, the more I researched Henry VII, the more appalled I became. But not because he was murderous or amoral. The last decade of his reign saw him squeezing his people for more and more money. Thomas More, then on the first wave of his career, lambasted the government for going beyond the law to get it. The complaints of Henry VII's subjects, from all classes, the festering hatred for his advisers, the legally dubious means resorted to by his collectors, anti-taxation riots, and a resentful parliament all speak of how unfair and unpopular Henry VII's financial policy was. Earlier in his reign, he had put the pursuit of law and justice high on his list of agendas, but the Italian writer and eyewitness Polydore Vergil hit the nail on the head when he said that avarice was the vice that cancelled out so many of Henry VII's virtues.

This enormous failure of Henry VII's is not bloody, nor even particularly dramatic. It is not the actions of a murderous dictator, though it had the whiff, if not quite the stench, of tyranny. It underlined for me one of the most

important things that the study of history, and humanity, can teach us: that there are shades of grey to everyone, and more harm can often be done in the mundane than in the dramatic.

**GARETH RUSSELL**



Our regular columnist **Gareth Russell** has been incredibly busy in the world of history in recent years. He has recently published “**An Illustrated Introduction to the Tudors**”, amongst other historical books, his next book “**A History of the English Monarchy**” will be published by MadeGlobal early in 2015

# LA VOLTA

## THE DANCE THAT

### Shocked Society

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You thought that twerking (or the jitterbug or the charleston) was a shocking dance? **Jane Moulder** from PIVA examines the sordid history of a Tudor dance craze...

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In 2013 Miley Cyrus summoned disapproval and media outrage with a promotional video showing her “twerking”, thus sparking both a dance craze and a new word entry into the Oxford English Dictionary. However, twerking is just the latest in a very long list of dance styles and fashions that have scandalised polite society and created moral indignation, accompanied by loud tutting noises and the shaking of heads! In the 1950’s, the Jitterbug was described as being “conceived in hell and brought forth by the brothel”. The Charleston, Can-Can and even the stately Waltz were all derided by society and the press when they first appeared. The Times, in 1816, went as far as saying that the waltz was “as far removed from the modest reserve which has hitherto been considered distinctive of English females”.

But moral outrage aimed at the latest dance fashion dates date back much further than the 1800’s - in the 1560’s it was the lavolta causing tongues to wag. The German, Johann Praetorius wrote:

*“A new galliard, the volta, is a foreign dance in which they seize each other in lewd places and which was brought to France by conjurors from Italy. It is a whirling dance full of scandalous, beastly gestures and immodest movements. The volta is also responsible for the misfortune that innumerable murders and miscarriages are brought about by it”.*

I’m sure no murders were ever brought about by a dance but the volta is certainly a whirling dance and it was those movements that were considered very immodest at the time.

This reputation for the la volta being a risqué and immoral dance has been used to great effect in recent film and TV productions and the very mention of a “la volta” is a byword for sex and seduction. In the TV series *The Tudors*, Henry commands Anne Boleyn to dance the La Volta with him. She duly accepts and there follows an infamous scene where a very sexy seduction takes place between Henry and Anne interspersed with scenes of them dancing. However, there is a more than a small amount of artistic licence used because they are

definitely not dancing a la volta according to its description. In fact, the dance hadn't even appeared in England at this date! Also the music they dance to is a 13<sup>th</sup> century Spanish Cantiga, written in honour of the Virgin Mary. But then, The Tudors is not really about historical accuracy! To see the clip:

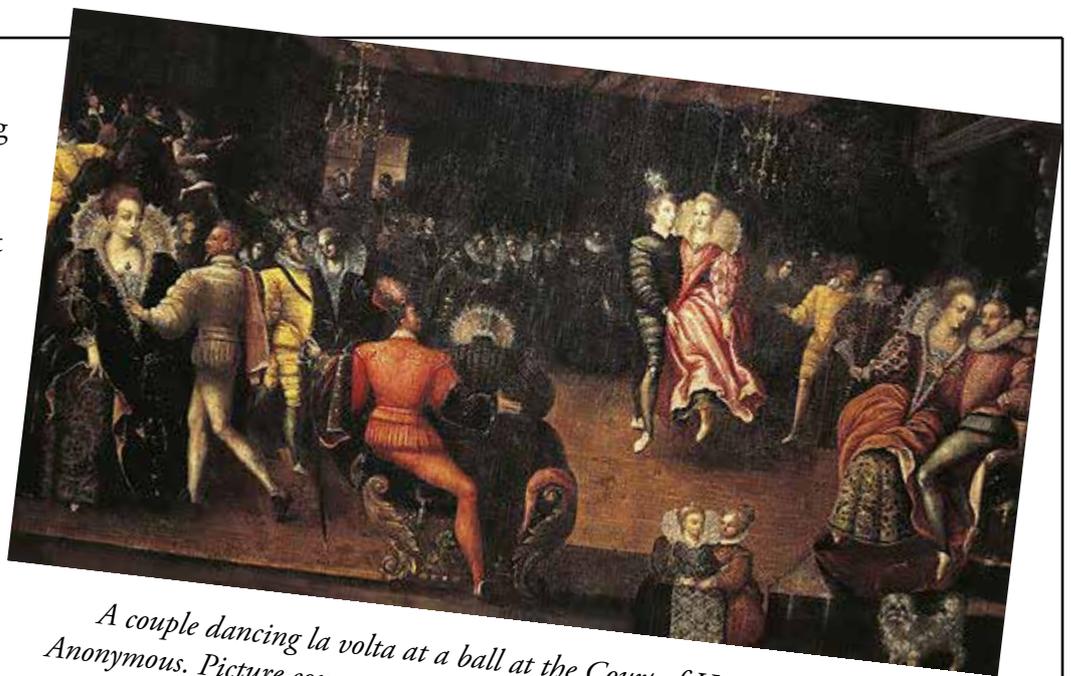
<http://tinyurl.com/psehfkj>

Likewise, in the award winning film, "Elizabeth" starring Kate Blanchett, there is an equally seductive version of La Volta when Elizabeth commands Robert Dudley, Earl of Leicester to dance the la volta with her, accompanied by gasps of shock and delight by the surrounding courtiers: <http://tinyurl.com/n885lt8>

Again, the dance performed shown bears no relation to the true, shocking La Volta!

The term "la volta" is Italian in origin and means to turn and that certainly describes one of the basic moves of the dance. La Volta may well have originated in Italy, where another similar dance called La Nizzarda has been described. However, it was in France that the dance became known and caused a sensation. It is thought to have been introduced to the French court by Catherine de Medici in the 1550's when she was married to Henri II. But it was during the reign of her son, Henri III, that the dance became really popular in 1570s and 1580s. This fashionable dance soon spread to the English court where it also shocked society.

One of the Ministers of the Reformed Church in France, Lambert Daneau, took particular exception to the dance as it made the couple dancing it the centre of attention and the gyrations were extolling worldly vanity and, most shocking of all, it gave pleasure and created



*A couple dancing la volta at a ball at the Court of Henri III (1551-1589). Anonymous. Picture courtesy of De Agostini Picture Library/G Dagli Orti / Bridgeman Images. Musée des Beaux Arts, Rennes.*

indignity!

However, the La Volta could be dangerous in ways that even Daneau could not have anticipated. There is a description by Guillaume du Vair in 1590, of a courtier who always carried a dagger inscribed with his motto "I hit without respect". Unfortunately for him, the dagger did exactly as the motto described as, when dancing the volta, the courtier's dagger came loose and dug into his thigh so deeply that he nearly died from the wound. Similarly, despite the warnings by the moralists that the volta could have dire consequences for anyone dancing it too vigorously, a young banker outdid himself in the dance and became so heated that within 24 hours he was dead having committed "high dancing and cutting capers". It wasn't just courtiers who were undone by the dance, even a professional dancing master felt the consequences of such a risky (or risqué) dance. John Olgivy made a wrong move when showing off in a la volta and in "endeavouring to do something extraordinary" he fell to the ground and "did spraine a veine on the inside of his leg, of which he was lame ever after".

In 1592 work, Johann von Münster, fumed in 'A Godly Treatise on the Ungodly Dance':

*"In this dance, the dancer with a leap takes the young lady - who also comes to him with a high jump to the measures of the music - and grasps her*

*in an unseemly place. With horror I have often seen this dance at the Royal Court of King Henry III in the year 1582, and together with other honest persons, have frequently been amazed that such a lewd and unchaste dance, in which the King in person was first and foremost, should be officially permitted and publicly practiced.”*

So what was it about the dance that caused such consternation and a reputation for sex and seduction?



*Engraving of a couple dancing from Orchesography*

Despite its popularity and the outrage that it caused in its day, there is only one surviving technical description of the dance.

This comes from Thoinot Arbeau's Orchesography printed in 1588.

In it, the ageing and old fashioned dancing master, Arbeau, says "Nowadays,

*dancers lack courteous considerations in their la voltas and other similarly wanton and wayward dances that have been brought into usage. In dancing them, the damsels are made to bounce about in such a fashion that more often than not they show their bare knees unless they keep one hand on their skirts to prevent it”.*

Orchesography takes the form of Arbeau giving instructions to Capriol, the young student. In this extract, having described the steps and patterns of the dance, Arbeau explains the next stage:

**Arbeau:** *When you wish to turn, release the lady's left hand and throw your left arm around her, grasping and holding her firmly by the waist above the right hip with your left hand. At the same moment, place your right hand below her busk to help her to leap when you push her forward with your left thigh. She, for her part, will place her right hand on your back or collar and her left hand on her thigh to hold her petticoat and dress in place, lest the swirling air should catch them*

*and reveal her chemise or bare thigh. This done, you will perform the turns of the lavolta together as described. And, after having spun round for as many cadences as you wish, return the lady to her place, when, however brave a face she shows, she will feel her brain reeling and her head full of dizzy whirlings: and you yourself will perhaps be no better off.*

*I leave you to judge whether it be a becoming thing for a young girl to take long strides and separations of the legs, and whether in this la volta both her honour and well-being are not involved and at stake. I have already given you my opinion.*

**Capriol:** *The dizziness and whirling head would annoy me.*

**Arbeau:** *Then dance some other kind of dance.*

This may not seem scandalous in the 21<sup>st</sup> century but in the mid-16<sup>th</sup> century this dance broke certain taboos. Firstly, in this period, it was the man that was the peacock. In dance, it was the man who jumped and capered, not the woman. The woman's steps were 'grounded' and she certainly never left the floor. Secondly, the physical closeness the dance demanded was unheard of until this time. Normally, the nearest a man got to touching a woman was to hold her hand – and very lightly at that! In order to carry out the turn and the lift, the man has to grasp the bottom of the woman's heavily boned bodice and then physically lift her bottom with his thigh (the original "knees up"! ). And finally, the prospect of seeing a woman's ankle was positively pornographic in the 16<sup>th</sup> century (times have changed!).

The French poet, Amadis Jamyn , wrote of Venus dancing the la volte and using it to seduce Mars.

*"Tirelessly, she dances with him a whole evening  
With her high leaps*

*She deliberately exposes her thighs  
So beautiful that they cannot be matched."*

In researching this article, I found that nearly every mention of La Volta is quickly followed by the statement "Queen Elizabeth's favourite dance". Whilst Elizabeth certainly enjoyed dancing, and there are many descriptions and accounts of her love of dancing, there is certainly no written record of La Volta



a depiction of Queen Elizabeth I dancing with Robert Dudley, Earl of Leicester. Dudley, was thought to be the lover of Elizabeth, and to show her dancing the La Volta with him would certainly have been scandalous at the time. This painting fuelled the debate as to whether or not the couple were lovers. However, today

the view is that the painting is probably French in origin and thought to be deliberately ironic or

mocking the English court. It is very similar in style to the painting of the dance in the court of Henri III.

The La Volta, despite its seeming popularity, was only ever a court dance and did not work its way down to the lower classes. It remained in fashion until the middle of the 17<sup>th</sup> century until the next dance craze hit. But that's another scandalous story .....

If you wish to see the dance, with the proper music, being performed beautifully by Nonsuch – then please go to <http://tinyurl.com/p8omh6x>. The music of La Volta can be heard on Piva's cd, Heigh Ho Holiday.

**JANE MOULDER**

being her favourite dance or even that she ever danced it. In fact, the La Volta is a derivation of the popular galliard and if it were not for the lifting and turning, then most of the dance steps are the same as a galliard. We do know for certain that Elizabeth danced the galliard.

*"The Queen's daily arrangements are musical performances and other entertainments and she takes marvellous pleasure in seeing people dance. Six or seven galliards in a morning, besides music and singing, is her ordinary exercise". Venetian Diplomat, June 1559.*

*"She takes great pleasure in dancing and music. She told me that she entertained at least 60 musicians; in her youth she danced very well and composed measures and music and had played them herself and danced them. Without doubt she is a mistress of the art having learned in the Italian manner to dance high." Mounseigneur de Maisse, January 1598.*

*"on the day of Epiphany the Queen held a great feast, in which the head of the Church of England and Ireland was to be seen in her old age dancing three or four galliards." Spanish Diplomat, 1599.*

The reason that the La Volta is ascribed as being Elizabeth's favourite dance is due to a painting that hangs in Penshurst Place, Kent. For many years it was supposed to be

For more information about PIVA and to find out where they're performing, visit their website at [www.piva.org.uk](http://www.piva.org.uk). Alternatively you can "like" them on Facebook [www.facebook.com/PivaRenaissanceMusic](http://www.facebook.com/PivaRenaissanceMusic) Jane Moulder had produced a series of 4 tune books featuring music from different periods. These, together with Piva's CD can be purchased directly from The Piva Shop. There are also links to download their music via iTunes or CDBaby.

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# Charlie

## An Illustrated Introduction to the Tudors



# Our Books

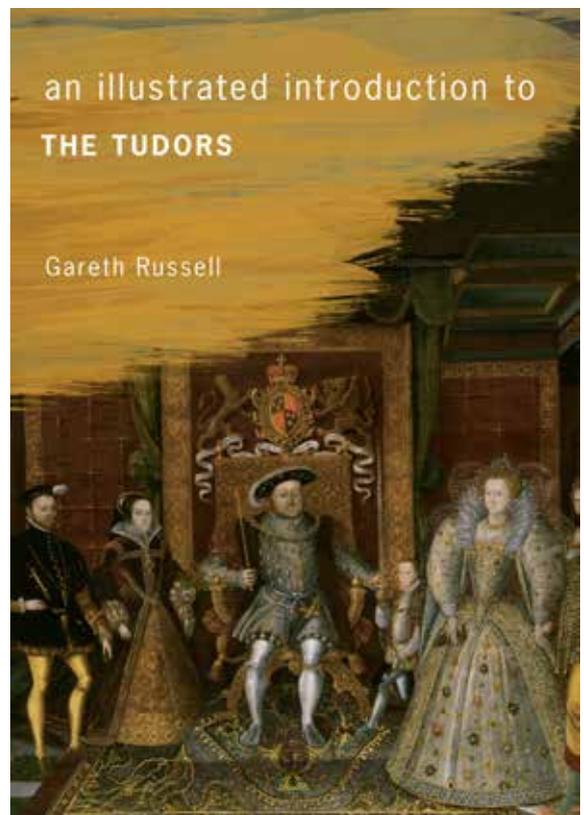
For those wanting to look at portraits and illustrations from Tudor times, look no further. *An Illustrated Introduction to the Tudors* is one of the most detailed illustrated guides I have ever read, and unlike a few others it manages to fit in a lot of information.

The illustrations are beautiful and the guide doesn't sacrifice historical accuracy. It quotes many primary sources and is easy to read, allowing anyone to read and understand it. It will appeal to anyone and draws people in, making them read it, even people that just bought it for the pictures and not the information.

There are biographies of each Tudor monarch, from Henry VII to Elizabeth I. What surprised me is that there was even a section on Lady Jane Grey, someone who is frequently forgotten. It could help readers learn more about the less popular monarchs, as well as seeing full colour images of the usual favourites. Russell even talks about the origins of the Tudor family, with Henry V's widow and Owen Tudor. It was quite interesting to see that he included that, as many people just skim over the events of the Wars of the Roses and instead focus on Henry VIII.

This book will appeal to both beginners and experts. It is a very entertaining and different read, both illustration and information wise.

**CHARLIE FENTON**



Charlie Fenton has recently published her Anne Boleyn novel, *Perseverance*, and has started a blog and Facebook page called **Through the Eyes of Anne Boleyn** to document and share her research into Anne Boleyn's life. She is also a student and is currently studying Medieval History in college.

Charlie writes monthly book reviews for the **Tudor Life Magazine**

# FEBRUARY FEAST DAYS

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It's only a short month, but as always  
in the Tudor world there is  
LOTS to celebrate...

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## I FEBRUARY

### CANDLEMAS EVE

This was the day when Tudor people took down the greenery, such as holly, ivy and rosemary, that they had decorated their homes with at Christmas. 17th century poet Robert Herrick wrote in his poem "Ceremony Upon Candlemas Eve":

“Down with the rosemary, and so  
Down with the bays and misletoe;  
Down with the holly, ivy, all,  
Wherewith ye dress'd the Christmas Hall:  
That so the superstitious find  
No one least branch there left behind:  
For look, how many leaves there be  
Neglected, there (maids, trust to me)  
So many goblins you shall see.”

## 2 FEBRUARY

### CANDLEMAS

Also known as the **Feast of the Presentation of Christ in the Temple and the Purification of the Blessed Virgin**. It commemorates the day on which the Virgin Mary would have been purified after childbirth and would have presented her son at the temple in Jerusalem. It was also the day on which Church candles were blessed.



## **14 FEBRUARY**

### **VALENTINE'S DAY**

In her book *Pleasures & Pastimes in Tudor England*, historian Alison Sim writes of how the Tudors obviously did celebrate St Valentine's Day because it is mentioned three times in the *Paston Letters* in the 1470s.

Apparently, "valentines were chosen by lot from among a group of friends, who then had to buy their valentine a gift." Sim goes on to describe how the steward's accounts of the household of William Petre show lengths of cloth and gold trinkets being given to valentines who were chosen by lot and that one year "one of the maids was even fortunate enough to draw Sir William himself one year, and was given a whole quarter's extra wages as her valentine."

Obviously, there is no way of knowing whether drawing of lots was a general countrywide custom, but Valentine's Day would have been another opportunity to inject a bit of fun into the dreary English winter.

## **24 FEBRUARY**

### **THE FEAST OF ST. MATTHIAS THE APOSTLE**

According to Acts, after Judas's death, two men were nominated to take his place as one of the Apostles: Joseph called Barsabbas (also known as Justus) and Matthias. The eleven Apostles prayed and then cast lots, "and the lot fell to Matthias". Acts 1: 26.

## **LENT**

Shrove Sunday (moveable feast) – 15 February 2015

Collop Monday – 16 February 2015

Shrove Tuesday – 17 February 2015

Ash Wednesday – 18 February 2015

Lent was, and is, the lead-up to Holy Week and it lasted six and a half weeks. In Tudor times, it was a period of fasting, a time when meat, eggs and cheese were forbidden. Prior to this fasting

was a time of celebration, Shrovetide, which began on the seventh Sunday before Easter, a day known as Shrove Sunday.

The three days of Shrovetide – Shrove Sunday, Collop Monday (a ‘collop’ being a piece of fried or roasted meat) and Shrove Tuesday – were the last opportunity to use up those forbidden foods and to have some fun. Shrove Tuesday, the last day before Lent, was marked with court celebrations and entertainment such as jousting, plays, music and masques. Alison Sim, in *Pleasures and Pastimes in Tudor England* describes one Shrovetide entertainment, “threshing the cock”, which consisted of tethering a cock and then people trying to kill it by throwing things at it. A prize was given to the person who killed it. Sim also writes of how “sometimes the cock was buried with just its head sticking out of the ground and then blindfolded people would try to kill it with a flail.” Not nice!

Ash Wednesday was the first day of Lent and was “a reminder that humans are made of dust and will return to dust.” (*Tudor Monastery Farm*)

Lent was not just a time of fasting, it was also a time of self-denial, and couples were forbidden to have sexual relations.

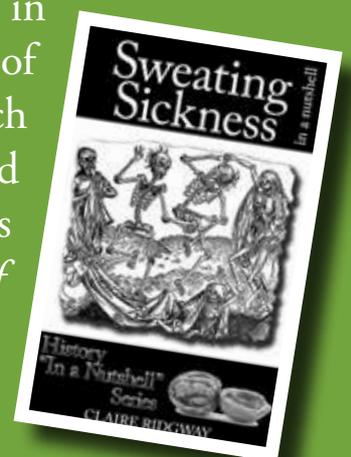
In churches during Lent, a Lent veil would hide the chancel from the nave and cloths would cover the lectern and altars. These cloths and veils symbolised the hiding of the way to salvation. The Lent veil would remain in place until the Wednesday of Holy Week when the priest would read out the passage from the Bible concerning the veil in the Temple in Jerusalem.

Pancakes were a way of using up eggs before Lent so eating pancakes became a custom in many countries. In the UK, pancake races became a way of using up the rich food forbidden during Lent and also having fun. The traditional pancake race of Olney in Buckinghamshire is said to date back to 1445. The story behind the tradition is that a housewife was busy making pancakes when the churchbells rang for the service. The lady was in such a rush to get to the service that she allegedly ran to church with her frying pan and pancake, tossing the pancake as she went!

## CLAIRE RIDGWAY



**Claire Ridgway** is the author of the best-selling books *George Boleyn: Tudor Poet, Courtier & Diplomat* (co-written with Clare Cherry), *On This Day in Tudor History*, *The Fall of Anne Boleyn: A Countdown*, *The Anne Boleyn Collection I & II*, as well as *Interviews with Indie Authors: Top Tips from Successful Self Published Authors*. Claire's latest release is *Sweating Sickness in a Nutshell*. Claire was also involved in the English translation and editing of Edmond Bapst's 19th century French biography of George Boleyn and Henry Howard, now available as *Two Gentleman Poets at the court of Henry VIII*.

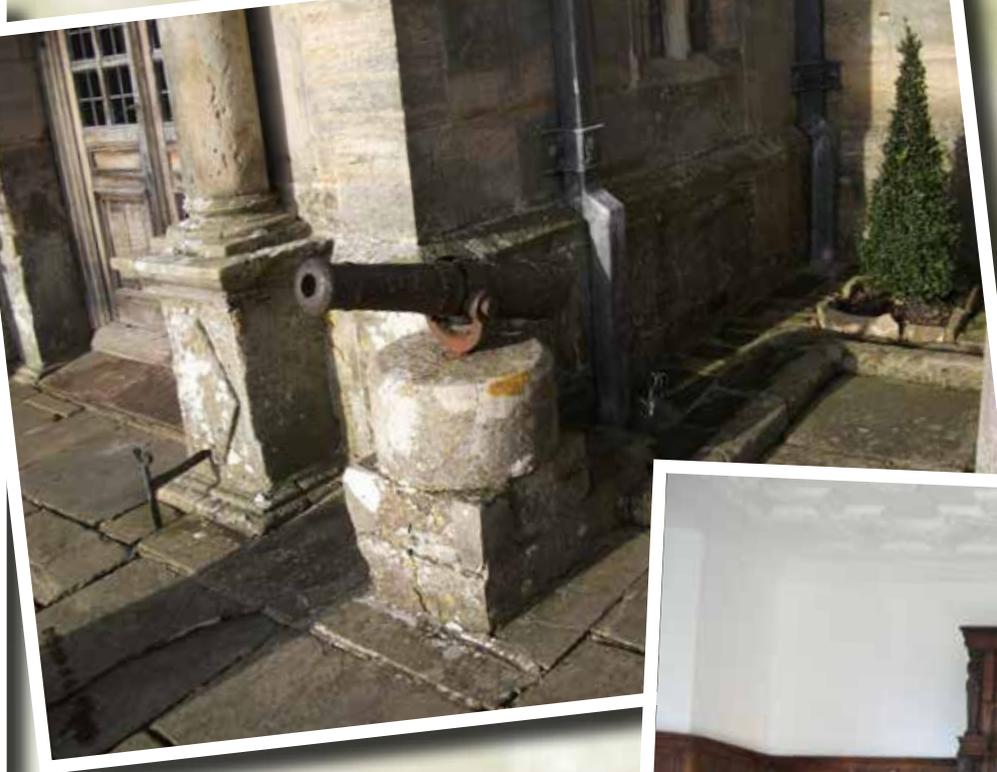




*Welcome to Wakehurst Place*



# Tudor Places



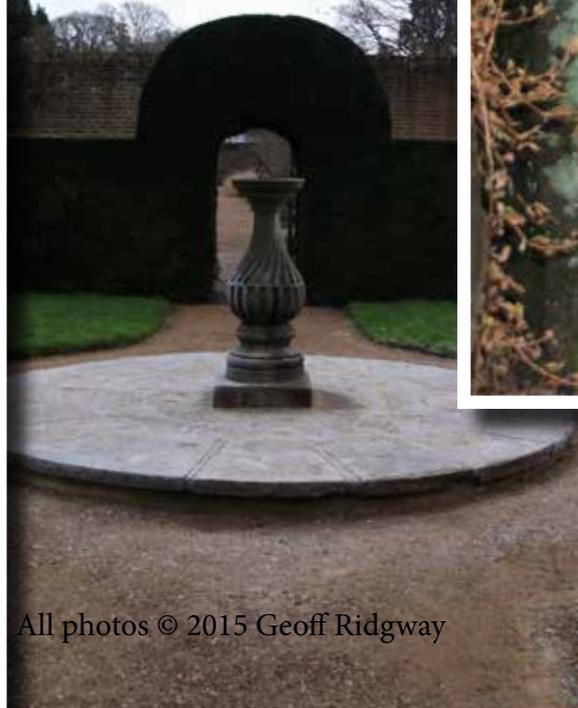
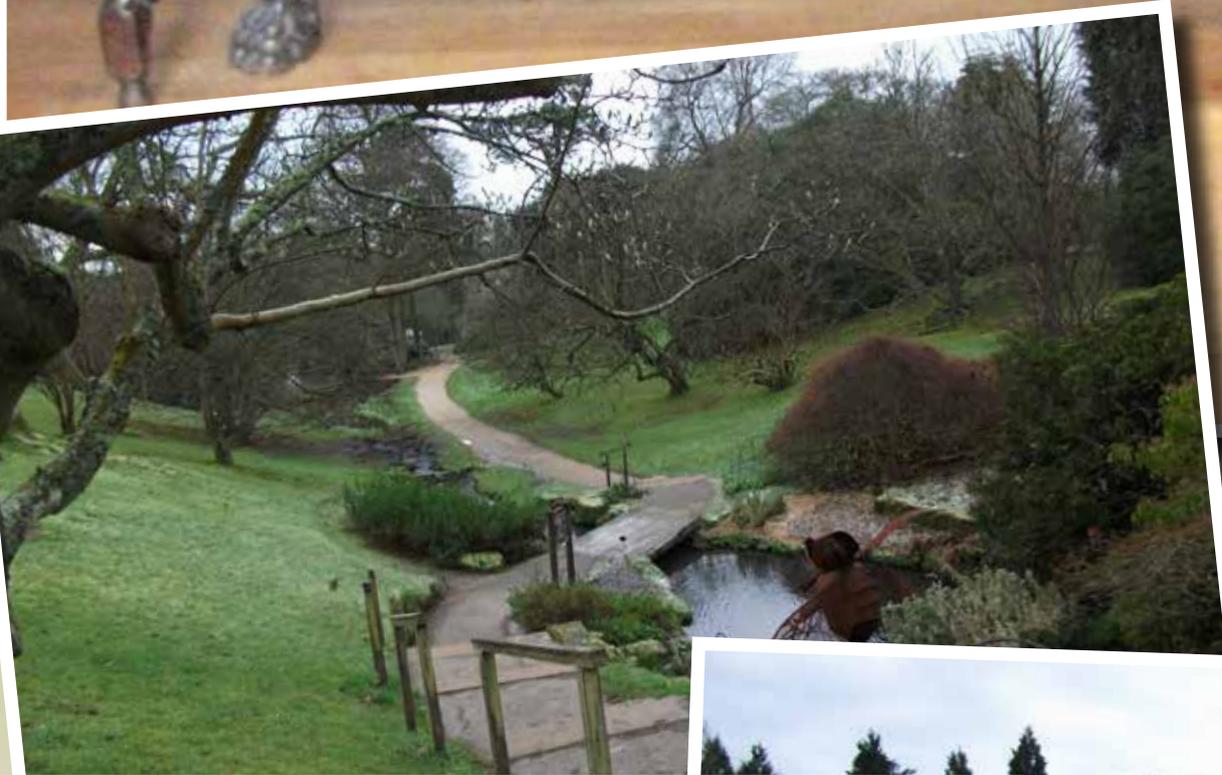
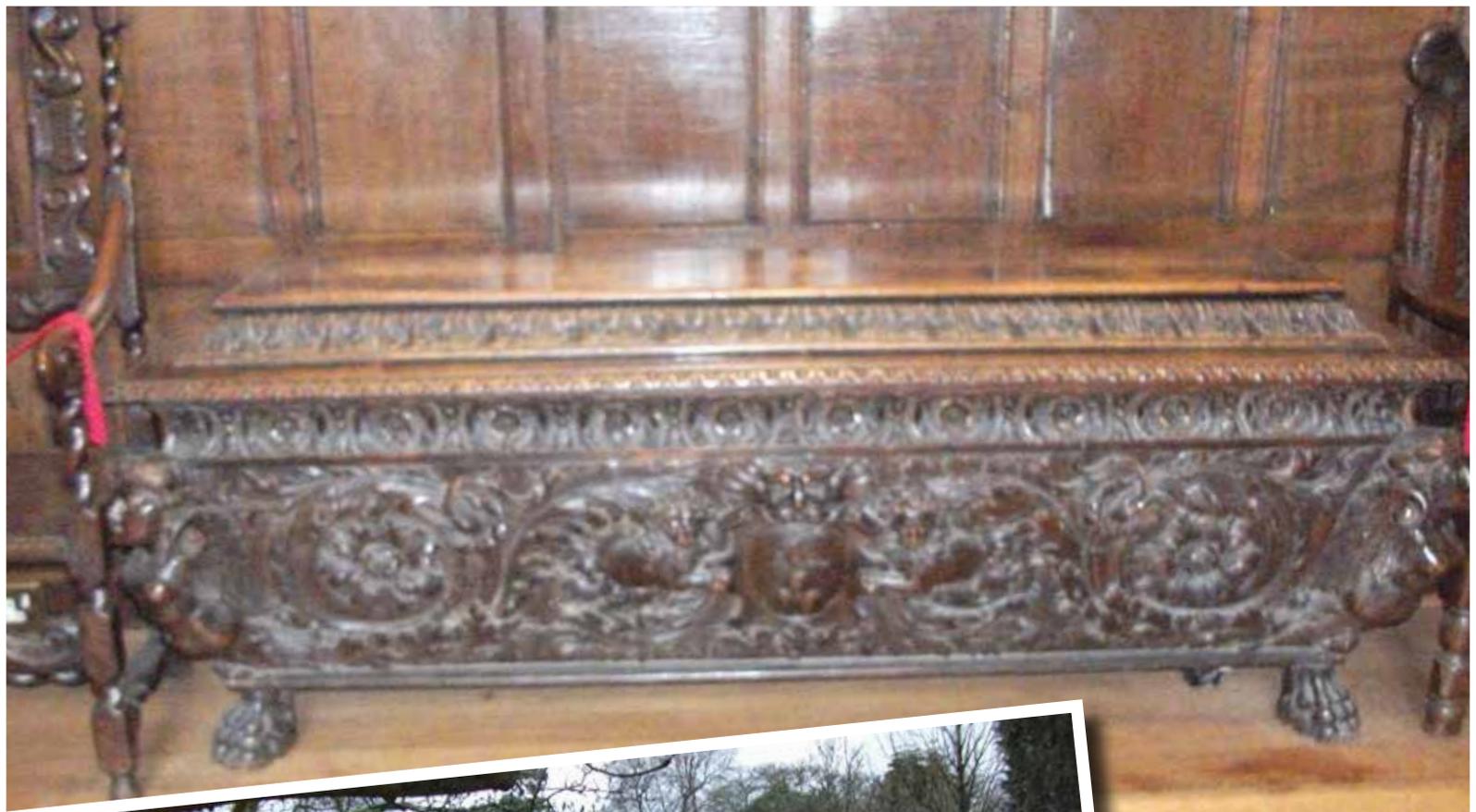


All photos © 2015 Geoff Ridgway



# TUDOR PLACES: WAKEHURST PLACE





# WAKEHURST PLACE WEST SUSSEX

Located near to the quaint West Sussex village of Ardingly, the property of Wakehurst Place is a fabulous and often overlooked spot on the “Tudor” circuit. Wakehurst Place was built in the late 1500s by Sir Edward Culpeper on a site owned by the Wakehurst family. It is set within a lovely parkland with stunning walks all year round (these photos were taken on a cold winter’s day!), and the gardeners take an immense amount of pride in their work as it is a part of the country estate of the Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew. However it has an interesting Tudor past ...

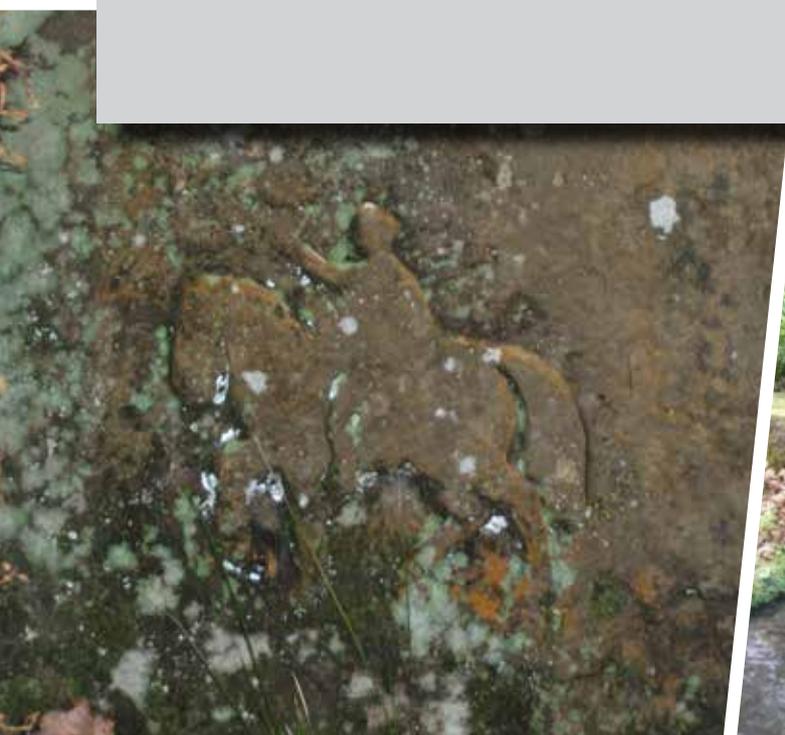
As with all Tudor and Elizabethan constructions, the building underwent many construction phases in its “early life” and then much was also destroyed and re-built at later dates. The building still stands in its original position, and it has walls made of local sandstone and roofs covered with Horsham slabs. The house has two storeys and attics, and entry into the house is allowed during normal opening hours.

Of Tudor note in the building is the modern porch with its twelve-panelled door and a shield dated 1590. The whole of the buildings on the north side are modern, but the entrance to the stair-hall has an original door from the south front which is enriched with carving and is nail-studded. Additionally, some of the fire-places are probably ancient and some have “overmantels” partly made up of 16th- and 17th-century material. Also watch out for many crests and friezes marking the Culpepper family and much intricately carved woodwork throughout the building.

Oh – and the gardens ... don’t miss the gardens!

**TIM RIDGWAY (PHOTOS BY GEOFF RIDGWAY)**

(Based on material from <http://www.british-history.ac.uk/>)



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# ELIZABETH OF YORK

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## Kyra Kramer looks at the perception of this iconic Queen consort

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**E**LIZABETH OF YORK, the eldest daughter of Elizabeth Woodville and Edward IV, came into the world on February 11, 1466. She left on the same day in 1503 due to postpartum complications. During the 37 years of her life she enjoyed popularity and adulation that few other famous women would ever be granted.

Although she was viewed sympathetically as the a tragic figure who had lost her father and her brothers to a wicked uncle, a significant part of the esteem granted to her was the result of the things she did NOT do. History tends to record the events surrounding women who do 'interesting' things, focusing attention on queens who stepped out of line and caused comment. Elizabeth of York did all the right things to an almost fantastic degree. She was a nearly perfect daughter, wife, mother, and queen. Her dedication to the norms of her era left her with the legacy of being a construct of "femininity, beauty, and fecundity; a distant iconic ideal" (Licence, 2009). Paradoxically, her good behavior has also left her to be an overshadowed and overlooked enigma whose life story is embedded in the more dramatic tales of her kin group. She is usually cast as a supporting actor even in her own narrative. Good girls may not finish last, but they can often end up in the footnotes rather than the footlights.

Few historians have bothered to dig Elizabeth of York out of the morass of melodrama that surrounded her. She has been seen more Elizabeth Woodville's beautiful daughter, Henry VII's dutiful and loving wife, Margaret Beaufort's long-suffering and dominated daughter-in-law, or

Henry VIII's devoted mother than a person in her own right. I didn't really pay much attention to her either; she was as exciting as a vanilla wafer. It was only after I read Amy Licence's book

*Elizabeth of York: The Forgotten Tudor Queen* that I discovered she was something other than a milquetoast example of a mild-mannered dynastic vessel.

As it was, I only read the book because I enjoyed the author's other work and assumed that even if I wasn't particularly interested in the personage I would be pleurably enlightened by the historical context. I quickly discovered that I, along with most people, had done this queen a disservice by my lack of appreciation. If nothing else, Elizabeth of York was kind and generous above and beyond what was expected of royalty. The queen made every effort to secure the happiness and prosperity of her family, friends, and underlings. She was a "woman who paid her fool additional money while he was ill, who recompensed her servant when his house burnt down and who bought her page's wedding clothes" (Licence, 2009). Elizabeth gave lavishly to charities and the poor. Henry VII's reputation for miserliness solidified after her mitigating and generous influence was gone, but while she lived his court was a generous one. Her actions were almost uniformly compassionate and she appears to have been sincerely interested in alleviating the suffering of others.

She was also stronger than I had realized. In fiction she has always been portrayed as biddable to the point of almost simple mindedness, utterly cowed by her powerful mother-in-law, Margaret Beaufort. In reality she does not appear to have



been cowed by either her strong-willed husband or his formidable mother. She seems to have employed gentle coaxing or sweet reason rather than outright rebellion or arguments, but that should not be mistaken for fear or spinelessness. Instead, the fact that Elizabeth of York behaved diplomatically should be taken as indicative of a people-pleasing personality. Some people are naturally conciliatory and happiest when they are pouring oil on troubled waters and Elizabeth conducted herself as though this was a substantial facet of her character. Moreover, her childhood and youth -- wherein she fled for her life with her mother when her father was briefly deposed and dealt with the murders of so many of her close family members -- would have predisposed almost anyone to prefer harmony over discord. Peace would have equated security and happiness and it is not surprising she sought to calm any storms that came her way.

There may have been an ulterior motive for exaggerating Elizabeth's perceived passivity in both history and historical novels. Her docility provided an excellent backdrop and foil for castigating Margaret Beaufort. As the mother of the king, Margaret had considerable influence and the strength to use it. Her power, shrewdness, and domination were bitterly resented by some. Male courtiers and clergy in particular found her to be an "unnatural" woman for exercising control over

matters of state. Ideally women should have been placid, and Elizabeth's easy temperament was used to highlight the supposedly draconian features of her mother-in-law. If Margaret Beaufort was to be cast as a monster, then she needed someone to be monstrous to. Elizabeth meekness was embellished in order to intensify the contrast between the damsel in distress and the 'cruel' and 'dominating' nature of Margaret Beaufort. Reality suggests, however, that Beaufort and her daughter-in-law were both friends and political allies.

I also learned that her tranquility did not mean she was a stick-in-the-mud. Her reputation as a compliant goody two-shoes had mislead me into thinking she was dull and serious. On the contrary, she was someone who valued frivolity. She enthusiastically encouraged and participated in parties, revels, 'disguisings' and merriment of all kinds. Elizabeth brought fun and laughter into her husband's reign. Without her convivial influence, Henry VII's court became a somber place.

Elizabeth of York had the admirable ability to win the genuine and deep affection of those who knew her. The court and country appears to have legitimately mourned her loss. She was "semi-diedified" as the "epitome of motherhood" and was revered as a virtuous and devout woman as beautiful in mind and spirit as she was fair

of face (Licence, 2009). Her children, including the teenaged future Henry VIII, were naturally heartbroken. Her son would later describe it as the worst news he had ever received. A passional written in medieval French which detailed the sufferings of saints and martyrs was given to Henry VII to commemorate his grief upon Elizabeth's death, and one of the illustrations seems to depict her young son weeping into her empty bedclothes.

Her husband also appears to have loved her deeply. He was so loyal to his spouse that he may be one of the only men to have worn the crown of England who did not have an extracurricular love-life. Henry VII is known as something of a cold fish, yet he was devastated when she died.

According to chroniclers at the time, when he learned of her passing he locked himself away for days to mourn in private. He woefully observed the anniversary of her loss for the rest of his life. When the king died in 1509 he was buried with his wife in Westminster Abbey where they share the same tomb, as united in death as they were united in life.

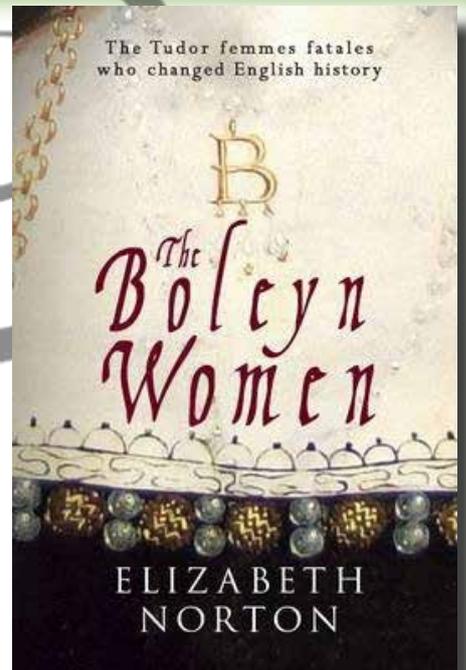
Surely a woman who inspired such love in those around her deserves to be remembered and celebrated, even if her achievements were "only" the domestic ones of a wife, mother, and caring matriarch.

**KYRA KRAMER**



ONE PERSON who is on the live chat with **Elizabeth Norton** will win a copy of **"The Boleyn Women"**.

**JOIN Elizabeth Norton**  
**IN OUR February**  
**LIVE CHAT**  
on Thurs 12th February, 11pm UK



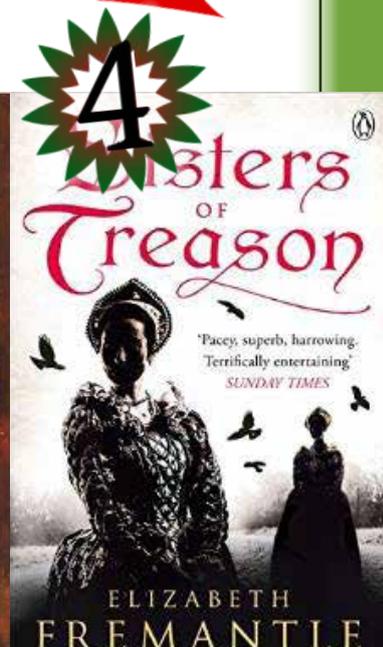
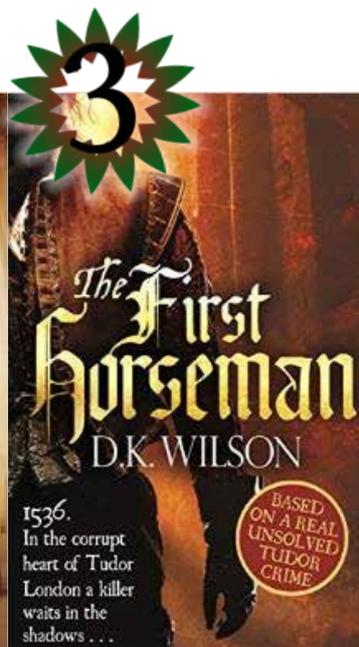
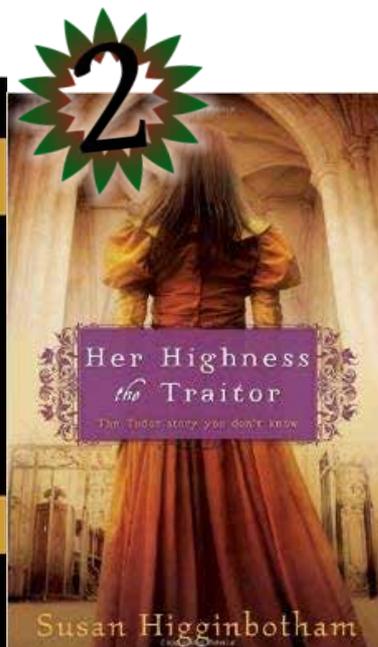
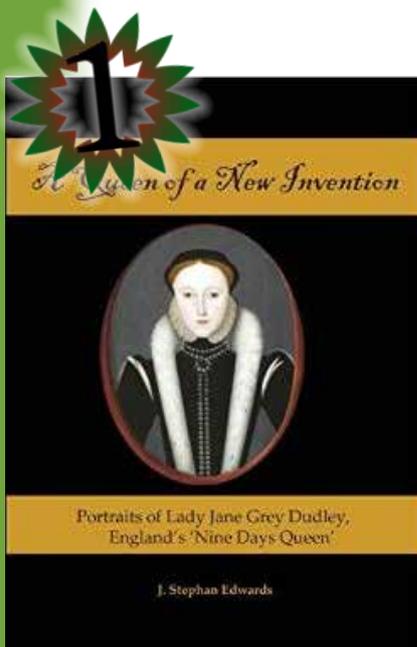
# MASSIVE FEBRUARY Giveaway!

PRIZE  
GIVE-A-  
WAY

Congratulations to member **Jennifer Mullins**, the winner from the January giveaway of "In the Footsteps of Anne Boleyn", "Bosworth 1485" and "The Little Book of Mary Queen of Scots".

Also congratulations to **Michelle Nasello**, winner of Sandra Vasoli's book "Je Anne Boleyn", picked randomly from those who were on the live chat.

As always, **one lucky member** of the **Tudor Society** will receive a copy of ALL OF THE FOLLOWING as part of our regular **MEMBERS' PRIZE DRAW!**



# A RIGHT ROYAL RIVALRY

## Henry VIII of England & Francis I of France

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**Melanie V. Taylor**, our regular art history columnist, examines an historical war of art ...

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**W**E LOOK at our magnificent Tudor Court and forget that the Tudors were the new kids on the block when it came to Renaissance art. It is only when Henry VIII succeeds to his father's throne in 1509 that England begins to embrace the new decorative style.

In France, the coronation of Francis on 25<sup>th</sup> January 1515 began the reign of a man who, like his English counterpart, was determined to be thought of as a modern man.

Francis (1494 – 1547) and his older sister, Marguerite of Navarre (1492 – 1549) had been classically educated, were sophisticated and cultured and the French Renaissance was already flourishing. Having said this, the 1515 portrait of Francis I, by a French Anon does not have the same level of expertise as that of Henry VIII c1520 by an Anglo Flemish Anon. Both have been painted with their sitters three quarter profile as first seen in Leonardo da Vinci's 15<sup>th</sup> century portrait of Ginevra di Benci.





*Melanie On*

The two kings were to be rivals throughout their lives, including the arts. In

architecture, the most expensive of art form, Francis renovated and constructed various chateaux. Henry did very much the same, building hunting lodges, renovating palaces and creating Nonsuch Palace as a direct response to Francis's renovation and expansion of Chateau de Fontainbleau.

Their rivalry is also apparent in the various portraits of both men.

In France, Francis I employs the talented artist, Jean Clouet, whose name is first mentioned in documents in 1516. He is made a Valet de Chambre in 1523 with an income of

180 livres that later rises to 240 lives per annum. By appointing Clouet to an official post within the French court it is clear that Francis I values his artist.

During the 1520s Hans Holbein was introduced to English aristocratic circles but he does not paint the iconic penetrating portraits of the English king and his infant son until the late 1530s. He was also employed to design fireplaces and interiors, pieces of plate, jewellery and fantastic sets for masques and banquets, but Holbein's status is never anything other than that of artisan even though he receives a regular salary from the royal purse.

So who was Jean Clouet and how did he become painter to the king of France?

Clouet's father came to France from Flanders in about 1460. Jean Clouet had a son, François, who also worked for members of the French royal family and that is the sum of our definite knowledge of the Clouet family.

Neither can we be confident of the attributions for Jean Clouet's work, which is often attributed to his son Francois who worked for Francis I after Jean's death in c1540.

Some of you will ask, what about Leonardo da Vinci? Wasn't he a French court artist? From 1516 da Vinci lived at Chateau du Clos Lucé, near Amboise. We know, from written evidence, that he designed the decorations for the christening of Francis's son





born in 1518, but we can only speculate about what else he created for the king. He may have been behind the original designs for some of the chateaux Francis renovated, but Leonardo was an old man by the standards of his day, being 67 when he died in May 1519.

A Clouet portrait of Francis I, now in the Louvre, dates from between 1525 to 1530. This painting is much more sophisticated in technique than the first one. In this instance the king rests one hand on the top of a table that separates us from the royal personage, while the other rests on the hilt of his sword. Subtle references to monarchy are contained in the woven cloth of estate forming the background on which the king casts a shadow which gives a feeling of depth. The French Order of St Michael hangs around his neck, but is almost lost in the sumptuous magnificence of the clothes.

Even if you did not know his identity, you would recognise this was a man of wealth and power. If you had the time to look closer and analyse the emblems in the background, you could deduce that this was probably a portrait of a king. Clouet is using traditional Netherlandish symbolism in a subtle way. He develops iconography so that visual clues are still contained within the painting, but in a way that would be more appealing to a modern audience.



There is a portrait in Liverpool's Walker Art Gallery of Francis I's sister, Marguerite, Madame d'Alençon, who became queen of Navarre in 1527. This portrait may be a celebration of her betrothal to Henry of Navarre. The painting has a similar background to the portrait of Francis I in that the artist has included symbols of her rank and identity here. You can just make out stylised flowers within the weave that may refer to her name. She is holding a green parrot, so perhaps the artist knew, or had seen, the 15<sup>th</sup> century Flemish altarpiece, *The Madonna with Canon van der Paele* by Jan van Eyck, which is in Bruges. This is a detail from that altarpiece showing the Virgin, with the Christ child holding a green parrot against a woven floral fabric as the cloth of estate.

In an article in the *Journal of Netherlandish Art*, Carol Purtle refers to an obscure 15<sup>th</sup> century text by Franciscus de Retza where he cites the parrot as a symbol of the inviolate virginity of Mary and even provides us with an image.<sup>1</sup> The translation of de Retza's text is "If a parrot has the power from nature to say Ave, why might not a pure Virgin conceive

1 <http://www.jhna.org/index.php/optical-symbolism-as-optical-description-a-case-study-of-canon-van-der-paeles-spectacles>

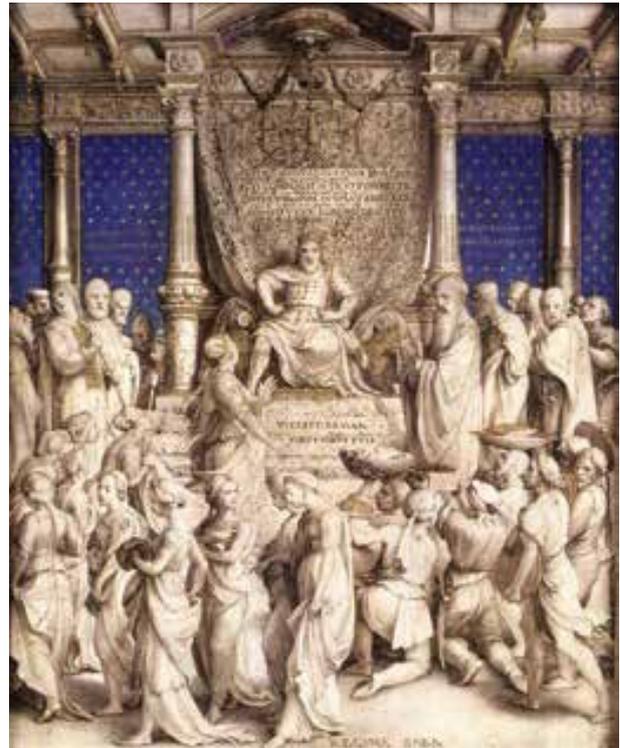


through (the word) Ave?”. Purtle tells us that there was a common belief (at that time) that a parrot greeted people with the word ‘Ave’, being the word the Archangel Gabriel used at the Annunciation. A contemporary audience would have understood this and made the link (conscious or otherwise) with Marguerite and the Virgin.

Marguerite’s union with Henry II of Navarre was her second marriage; her first being at the age of seventeen being to Charles IV of Alençon who died in 1525. The couple were childless so is it possible that the inclusion of the parrot was to be read as a statement of Marguerite’s apparent virginity?

Marguerite’s portrait with the parrot is not the only reference of one of the French royal siblings being likened to a holy figure. In a private collection there is a portrait c1518 of King Francis as St John the Baptist, also attributed to Clouet.

The date and the pose suggests the influence of da Vinci who we know brought three paintings with him to Chateaux de Clos Lucé, one of which was a St John the Baptist. In Clouet’s painting John points to the sheep being the Agnes Dei, whereas in the Leonardo painting St John points heavenwards. There is also a green parrot in the top left hand corner,



so perhaps it is the inclusion of the parrot that is the evidence for the Walker Gallery’s portrait of Marguerite being by Jean Clouet.

It is not until 1534, that Holbein creates a miniature (Royal Collection, Windsor) with Henry VIII clearly depicted as King Solomon. The iconography has been read as The Queen of Sheba representing the Church who pays tribute to God, represented by King Solomon. This is understood as a statement of Henry’s position as the head of the Anglican Church and it has been suggested that it was commissioned as a New Year’s gift either by Anne Boleyn (is she the Queen of Sheba who has her back to us?); or perhaps Thomas Cromwell. Later in Henry’s reign Henry himself commissions a Psalter from the French artist Jean Maillard where he is portrayed as King David, but nowhere are there any large images of him portrayed in a similar way to that of Francis portrayed as St John the Baptist.

*‘A Man Holding Petrarch’s Works’* (c1530-33) in the Royal Collection, Windsor is also attributed to Jean Clouet. The sitter is unknown and he holds a copy of the 14<sup>th</sup> century Italian poet’s works. His expression and the fact that the strings of the book are undone suggest our sitter has been interrupted in his reading. From his gloves, clothes and the inclusion of the

book we can deduce he is an educated man of position. He must have had access to the French Court and/or the artist to be able to commission this portrait. Technically, the brushwork is like that of da Vinci, but the attribution is to Clouet, which suggests that perhaps Clouet had encountered the great artist, or at the very minimum, members of his studio. The experts have dated this portrait to c1530-33, which precludes it to being from the brush of da Vinci.

The works of Petrarch were important to King Francis, so much so that he wanted to be portrayed as Petrarch's heir. Looking at the size of the man's nose, I wondered whether this is a relative of the French king, or perhaps a portrait of the king himself by another hand, but we need more evidence than a comparison to a nose in order to convince our fellow academics. There are preparatory drawings for this portrait in the Musée Condé, Chantilly and it would be interesting to study these against any of Clouet's surviving sketches of the French king. Whoever this man is, this portrait is a fine example of Clouet's work.

In 1520 the English and French kings met on The Field of the Cloth of Gold. An anonymous English artist recorded the event (this painting is also in the Royal Collection), which is a visual narrative that should be read from left to right. The Tudor dragon dominates the sky, the famous wrestling match between Francis and Henry is shown in the centre of the top of the painting, but relegated to the distance.



Henry is a large glittering figure mounted on a white horse in the foreground (bottom left). We also see the glittering gold tents that gave the event its name. The artist has shown in great detail, the magnificent temporary English banqueting house. We know from the written records this temporary building had real glass and the fountain in front of it ran with free wine.

Comparison of this artist's style to that of the Clouet portrait of Francis I and the *Unknown Man* demonstrates how this anonymous English artist was still mired in medieval artistic concepts. However, as an





historical record this is the only visual portrayal of this event and is therefore a very important document.

It is clearly a piece of English propaganda because Henry is portrayed in the foreground and the image of Francis is relegated to the wrestling match. It appears to have been painted to a very definite brief, but we do not know who commissioned it. Maybe the patron considered that the English tents, wine producing fountains, the temporary banqueting hall etc., were more superior to those of the French and wanted their gloriousness recorded for posterity? It may have been commissioned to record the exorbitant cost, or possibly to justify the expense.

Francis was married to Claude, Duchess of Brittany in 1514 and they were lucky enough to have a healthy, legitimate son and heir born to them in 1518. Clouet paints an early portrait of the Dauphin who, as an infant, was betrothed to the two year old English Princess Mary. The Dauphin died in 1536 possibly from tuberculosis, but some sources hint at poison. He had been playing tennis and was given a glass of water by his secretary, (who had come to court with Catherine de Medici). Francis collapsed and a few days later, died. Under torture, his secretary confessed to having poisoned him.

This portrait of his younger brother Henry

with his pet dog, (the French spare heir) is not attributed to any specific artist. Henry went on to become Henry II of France and was married to Catherine de Medici in October 1533. Henry died as a result of a jousting accident in 1559.

Holbein's 1539 portrait of the two year old English Prince Edward is more a statement of the king to come, than a realistic portrayal of a child. Like the first French Dauphin, Edward died in his teens, but not before Holbein had done a pen, ink and watercolour of Edward holding a pet. Holbein died in November 1543 so the oldest Edward could be in this second portrait is six years old. This small image has faded over time and can be seen in the Kunstmuseum, Basel.

In the mid 1520s Clouet was instrumental in introducing an art form to the English court that would be popular until the advent of photography.

Francis I had been captured at the Battle of Pavia of 1525 and his young sons were exchanged and held hostage as insurance for their father's good behaviour after the conclusion of the Treaty of Madrid. In the autumn of 1526 Marguerite, then Madame d'Alençon, sent a double gold locket containing miniature portraits of her nephews, the Dauphin and his brother Henry, to Henry VIII. It is thought



Marguerite hoped Henry would be persuaded to intercede with the Emperor, Charles V, for their release. However, a short while after their delivery, similar sized portraits of Henry VIII and the Princess Mary were sent to the French court.

This miniature of the Dauphin came into the Royal Collection during the reign of



Queen Victoria. It is dated c1526 we know the Dauphin is about eight years old and it is clearly not part of the double locket sent to Henry VIII in the autumn of that year, but it is attributed to Jean Clouet.

The illumination of the versions of the 1527 treaty between France and England was another form of rivalry between the two kings



The English version is in the Bibliothèque Nationale de France and the French version is in the English National Archives at Kew.

The French version is printed on very fine vellum, illuminated with exquisite naturalistic marginalia, but more importantly, a miniature portrait of Francis looks out at us. This portrait is not as well executed as the large version of Francis's portrait in the Louvre suggesting the illuminator was working from a template, perhaps one provided by Jean Clouet.

What is becoming apparent is that King Francis is very aware of the efficacy of his image in the war of visual propaganda. On



this occasion the French won the battle of the treaties with their innovative use of technology, portraiture and marginal decoration.

Like those at the English Court, French courtiers and leading intellectuals commissioned Clouet to paint their portraits. In the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York there is a portrait of Guillaume Budé, founder of the Collège Royal - later the Collège de France. He was also the first keeper of the royal library, which eventually became le Bibliothèque National de France. Budé had trained as a lawyer, been secretary to King Louis XII, gone on diplomatic

missions to Rome and was considered to be one of the leading scholars of the day.

Clouet's portrait of Budé is uncompromising. From his expression it appears this man has little of the empathy we see in Holbein's portraits of Bude's academic contemporary, Erasmus.

It might be thought unfair to compare the talents of Holbein and Clouet since so much more is known of Holbein's life and works. However, there is a sketch (attributed to Jean Clouet) of Jean de Dinteville, Seigneur de Polisy in the Musée de Condé which allows us to do exactly that. In 1533 de Dinteville was in



England as the envoy of Francis I and Holbein painted his portrait in the famous painting, *Les Ambassadeurs*, now in the National Gallery, London. This portrait is cropped from the Holbein painting. de Dinteville looks directly out from the canvas, but his eyes are not challenging us; he looks past us as if lost in thought.

In the Clouet sketch, the French envoy gazes into the distance as if he is absorbed in his own thoughts. Even though this is just a sketch, it is clearly the same man.

In 1540 François (or perhaps Jean) Clouet



paints Francis I astride his horse in a similar manner to the statue of the classical Roman statue of Emperor Marcus Aurelius that is now in the Capitoline Museum, Rome. This image of the French king is done in gouache on vellum and a similar portrait exists in the Uffizzi that is oil on wood. Both are approximately 28 x 22cms.

The discovery of what we now know as the statue of Marcus Aurelius, inspired the revival of the equestrian portrait in the 15<sup>th</sup> century by the sculptor Donatello who created a bronze statue of the mercenary, Erasmo di Narni, that still stands in Padua. Andrea del Verocchio was commissioned to create a similar statue of the mercenary Bartolomeo Colleoni di Bergamo that now stands in the Campo di Santi Giovanni e Paulo, Venice.

Here we are being asked to consider the qualities of the aging French king as being akin to that of the emperors of imperial Rome. Despite being a brave attempt to compare Francis to the emperor Marcus Aurelius, this is not a convincing portrait of a warrior king.

In this brief look at the artistic rivalry of the Henry VIII and Francis I, it appears it is not only a rivalry of kings, but also a rivalry of artists.

Francis I was very aware of the power of

visual propaganda, but Henry VIII does not appear to consider using his portrait in this manner until after the death of Jane Seymour when Holbein creates the first life size portrait of Henry VIII in the mural of the Royal family in the private royal chambers in Whitehall in c1540. I wonder if Holbein ever considered using the concept of portraying Henry on a horse? The only image that comes close to Henry resembling a Roman emperor is that of the mounted Henry in the foreground of the 1520 painting of *The Field of the Cloth of Gold*.

Whatever the discussions between king and artist, the end result was the iconic portrait of Henry looking directly at us, hands on hips and sword, and legs astride. If you did not know who he was, you might describe this portrait as being the vanity of a rich, belligerent fat man. But this is the king of England! The stance and the direct gaze was innovative and, more to the point, Henry must have approved it as a template because he is portrayed like this many times and by many different artists. This particular version, known as the Barbarini portrait, is in the Galleria de Arte Antica, Rome.

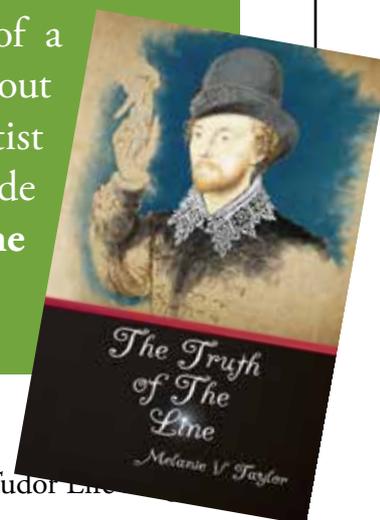
In March the exhibition of *The Real Tudors : Kings & Queens Rediscovered*, currently at the National Portrait Gallery, London, travels to



the Musée de Luxembourg, Paris where it will form part of the 500<sup>th</sup> celebrations of Francis I's accession to the French throne. This promises to be a fabulous exhibition (18<sup>th</sup> March – 19<sup>th</sup> July) where images of the two rival royal families will be side by side so we will be able to judge for ourselves (nationalities notwithstanding) who was more successful in the art of visual propaganda.

## **MELANIE V. TAYLOR**

**Melanie V. Taylor** is an art historian who regularly writes for Tudor Life magazine. She is the author of a fascinating book about the life of the artist Nicholas Hilliarde "The Truth of the Line".





## Compassion and Mirth Within the Tudor Courts

by **Beth Von Staats**

**I**n a tyrannical age well known for its liberal use of torture, judicial murder, and cruelty to the absolute extreme, did the monarchs of Tudor England and their courtiers ever demonstrate sincere compassion for others? And in an age where the appearance of perfection, royal favor, wealth, power, and prestige defined a person's self-worth, could people of difference find value? Surprisingly, yes. In fact, some of the most beloved people of the Tudor Courts, those people most cherished by the monarchs and the courtiers closest to them, were people with significant cognitive challenges, people identified in the Tudor Era as "innocents" or "natural fools".

Through the groundbreaking research of historian Suzannah Lipscomb, and as poignantly performed by "The Mis Fits" at Hampton Court Palace in 2011, a performance group of individuals with cognitive challenges from Bristol, England, we now know that most and perhaps all of the fools so beloved in the Tudor Courts, including King Henry VIII's fools Patch Sexton, Will Somer and Jane (who lived with his queens), as well as Thomas Cromwell's

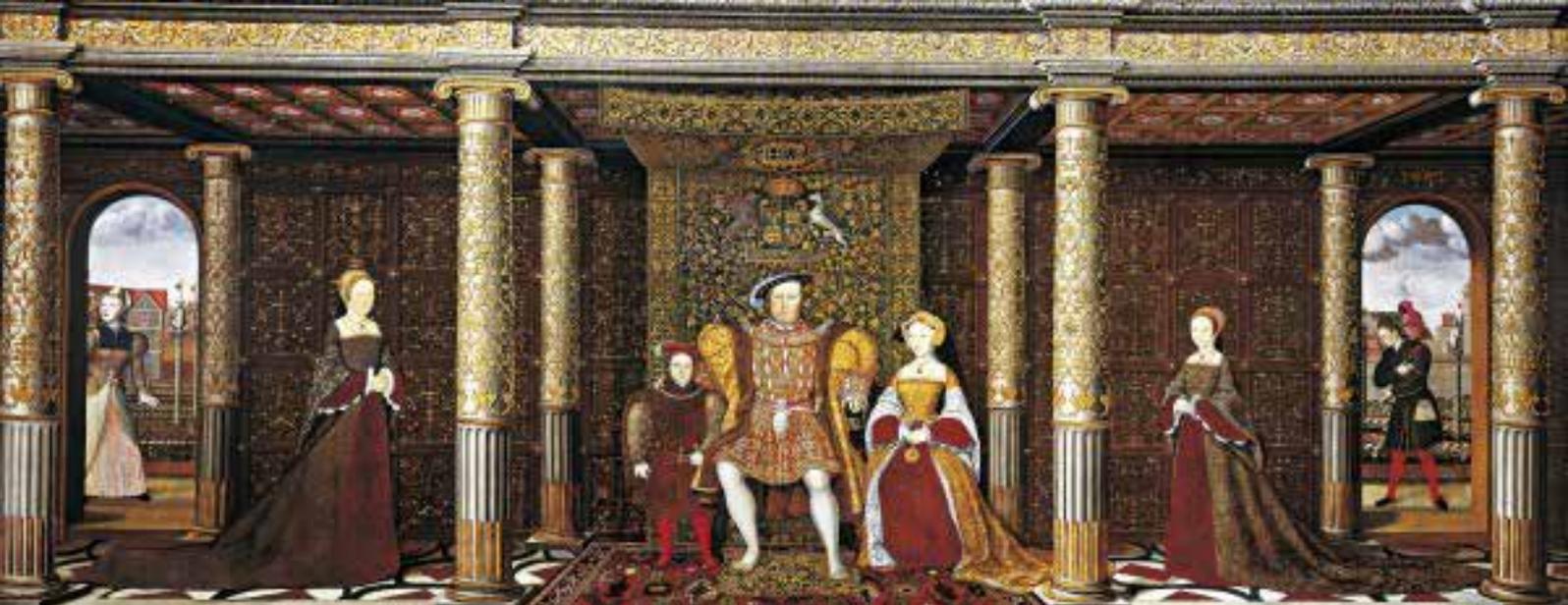


fool, Anthony and Queen Catherine Parr's fool Thomas Browne, were "innocents" or "natural fools" -- people thought to be close to God, and who through the gift of mirth, held no evil within them.

It is indisputable that King Henry VIII and Queen Mary I at least, and most likely all of the Tudor monarchs, cherished the "innocents" in their lives. In the remarkable "Dynasty Portrait", artist unfortunately unknown, not only is King Henry VIII, Queen Jane Seymour and the king's children then Edward, Prince of Wales and the Ladies Mary and Elizabeth depicted, but also peeking through background entrances are "innocents" Will Somer and Jane. King Henry VIII also dutifully ensured that his cherished fool Will Somer would be cared for after his death by arranging payment to William

Beth's  
Tudor

Tidbits



Seyton 40 schillings a year to do so.

Upon the death of King Henry VIII, Jane most likely entered the care of the Lady Mary Tudor, who dutifully doted on her. Jane was richly dressed and adorned, even owning her own horses. Provided with rich bedding and needlework supplies and opulent dress common of ladies of the court rather than performers, Jane was a constant presence in Mary Tudor's life, even upon her ascension and then ultimate reign as queen. By all appearance Queen Mary held great compassion for people of difference, as among her most cherished servants was also a gentleman with dwarfism, John Jarvis. Although later English courts maintained "menageries of freaks", there is no evidence whatsoever that this was Queen Mary's motivation.

As is commonly known by English History lovers, the "natural fools" of the Tudor Courts were allowed great liberties uncommon to other subjects of the realm. They typically were afforded the "liberty of speech", allowed

to state what would be treasonous of others. Why? Well beyond the obvious conclusion that "innocents" did not necessarily understand the context and thus the often inappropriateness of their words, people with cognitive challenges greatly benefited from the teachings of humanist scholar Desiderius Erasmus of Rotterdam. In his then contemporary acclaimed *The Praise of Folly*, "innocents" were defined by scripture to be holy and possessing simple pureness of heart resulting in their incapability of sin.

Through their innocence of speech and innate sense of humor, "natural fools" provided an essential function to the Tudor Courts, providing monarchs, courtiers and servants alike the gifts of humor, joy and mirth. Although the vast majority of people of difference in the 16th century lived in great depravity and profoundly stigmatization, those people with cognitive challenges who happened upon the Tudor Courts not only lived lives of privilege, but also cherished lives of value. Who knew?

#### RESOURCES:

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- Lipscomb, Suzannah, *All the King's Fools*, History Today, Volume 61, Issue 8 August, 2011.
- Logan, Brian, *All the King's Fools: 'Disability is deep in comedy's DNA'*, theguardian, 24 February, 2011.
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- Website, *All the King's Fools*, <http://www.allthekingsfools.co.uk/site/>.



# FEBRUARY'S GUEST SPEAKER ELIZABETH NORTON

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## Boleyn Family History

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**Elizabeth Norton** is a well-loved Historian specialising in the queens of England and the Tudor period. She obtained an Master of Arts in Archaeology and Anthropology from the University of Cambridge and a Masters degree in European Archaeology from the University of Oxford. She is the author of many non-fiction books including:

- She Wolves, The Notorious Queens of England
- Anne Boleyn, Henry VIII's Obsession
- England's Queens: The Biography
- Bessie Blount AND
- The Boleyn Women

Elizabeth is a fascinating person to listen to, and her wide-ranging historical knowledge really comes through in this month's expert talk.

Prepare yourself for a detailed run-through of the history and background of the Boleyn family from its peasant origins all the way up to Elizabeth I - you'd be surprised how far this influential family came...

**Announcing:**  
**LIVE CHAT WITH**  
**ELIZABETH NORTON**  
Thursday 12th Feb, 11pm UK  
(3pm PST, 6pm EST & 12 Midnight  
Central European Time)  
**LIVE in the CHATROOM**



# Recent and Forthcoming Books

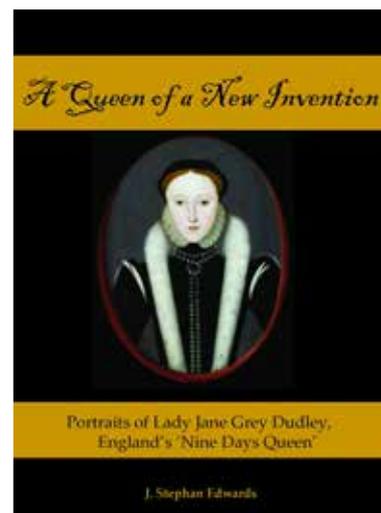
## NON-FICTION

### ***A Queen of a New Invention: Portraits of Lady Jane Grey Dudley, England's Nine Days Queen* by J. Stephan Edwards**

*Release Date: 12 February 2015*

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Lady Jane Grey Dudley was proclaimed Queen of England on 10 July 1553 following the untimely death of Henry VIII's only son and successor, King Edward VI. But sixteen-year-old Jane did not have the support of the majority of her would-be subjects. They rallied instead to Henry VIII's eldest daughter, Mary Tudor. Jane was deposed just nine days after her reign began, earning for her the sobriquet 'The Nine Days Queen.' She was imprisoned in the Tower for six months before finally being executed on 12 February 1554. Queen Jane remains the only English monarch of the past five centuries for whom no genuine portrait is known to have survived. Dozens of images have been put forward over those five centuries, but none has yet been conclusively authenticated. Neither has any comprehensive academic study of the iconography of Jane Grey Dudley ever been previously undertaken or published. Now, through almost a decade of research leading up to this volume, twenty-nine surviving portrait-images said to depict Jane have been carefully and systematically sought out, analyzed, and contextualized in an effort to determine whether any of them may be a reliable likeness. A handful of additional paintings all now lost are also discussed in detail. Finally, the single written account of Jane's physical appearance, an account upon which historians have relied over the past century, is analyzed for its own authenticity.



*Paperback: 224 pages*

*Publisher: Old John Publishing (February 12, 2015)*

*Language: English*

*ISBN-10: 0986387312*

*ISBN-13: 978-0986387319*

### ***The Mythology of Richard III* by John Ashdown-Hill**

*Release Date: 28 April 2015*

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Richard III. The name will conjure an image for any reader. Shakespeare's hunchback tyrant who killed his own nephews or a long-denigrated, misunderstood king. This one man's character and actions have divided historians and the controversy has always kept interest in Richard alive. However, curiosity surrounding his life and death has reached unprecedented heights in the aftermath of the discovery his skeleton under a Leicester car park. The myths that have always swirled around Richard III have risen and multiplied and it is time to set the record straight. John Ashdown-Hill, whose research was instrumental in the discovery of Richard III's remains, explores and unravels the web of myths in this fascinating book.

*Hardcover: 240 pages*

*Publisher: Amberley Publishing (28 April 2015)*

*Language: English*

*ISBN-10: 1445644673*

*ISBN-13: 978-1445644677*

## **Elizabeth I and Her Circle by Susan Doran**

*Release Date: March 2015*

This is the story of Elizabeth I's inner circle and the crucial human relationships which lay at the heart of her personal and political life. Using a wide range of original sources - including private letters, portraits, verse, drama, and state papers - Susan Doran provides a vivid and often dramatic account of political life in Elizabethan England and the queen at its centre, offering a deeper insight into Elizabeth's emotional and political conduct - and challenging many of the popular myths that have grown up around her. It is a story replete with fascinating questions. What was the true nature of Elizabeth's relationship with her father, Henry VIII, especially after his execution of her mother? How close was she to her half-brother Edward VI - and were relations with her half-sister Mary really as poisonous as is popularly assumed? And what of her relationship with her Stewart cousins, most famously with Mary Queen of Scots, executed on Elizabeth's orders in 1587, but also with Mary's son James VI of Scotland, later to succeed Elizabeth as her chosen successor?

Elizabeth's relations with her family were crucial, but just as crucial were her relations with her courtiers and her councillors. Here again, the story raises a host of fascinating questions. Was the queen really sexually jealous of her maids of honour? Did physically attractive male favourites dominate her court? What does her long and intimate relationship with the Earl of Leicester reveal about her character, personality, and attitude to marriage? What can the fall of Essex tell us about Elizabeth's political management in the final years of her reign? And what was the true nature of her personal and political relationship with influential and long-serving councillors such as the Cecils and Sir Francis Walsingham? And how did courtiers and councillors deal with their demanding royal mistress?

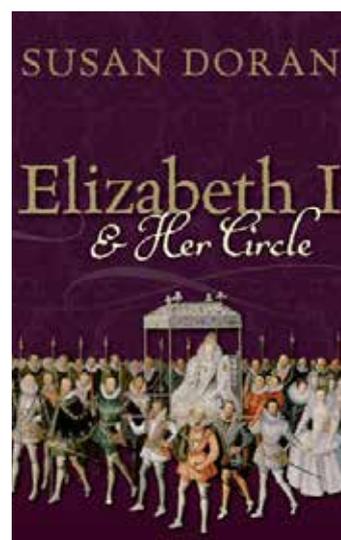
*Hardcover: 424 pages*

*Publisher: OUP Oxford (Mar. 2015)*

*Language: English*

*ISBN-10: 0199574952*

*ISBN-13: 978-0199574957*



## **Lady Katherine Knollys: The Unacknowledged Daughter of King Henry VIII by Sarah-Beth Watkins**

*Release Date: January 30, 2015*

Katherine Knollys was Mary Boleyn's first child, born in 1524 when Mary was having an affair with King Henry VIII. Katherine spent her life unacknowledged as the king's daughter, yet she was given prime appointments at court as maid of honour to both Anne of Cleves and Katherine Howard. She married Francis Knollys when she was 16 and went on to become mother to many successful men and women at court including Lettice Knollys who created a scandal when she married Sir Robert Dudley, the queen's favourite. This fascinating book studies Katherine's life and times, including her intriguing relationship with Elizabeth I.

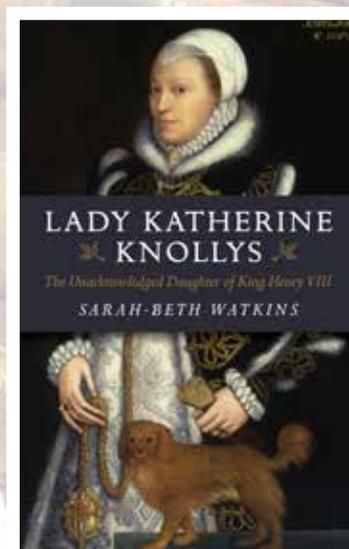
*Paperback: 132 pages*

*Publisher: Chronos Books (January 30, 2015)*

*Language: English*

*ISBN-10: 1782795855*

*ISBN-13: 978-1782795858*



## **Richard III: King of Controversy by Toni Mount**

*Release Date: 19 Jan. 2015*

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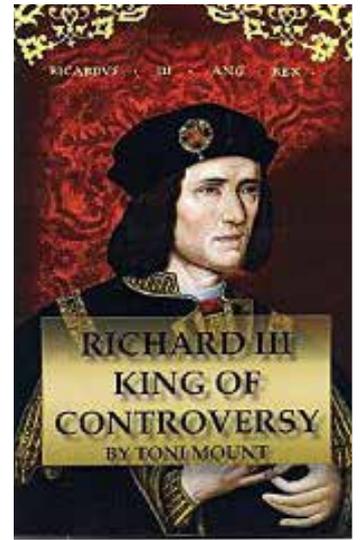
An introduction to the life and controversies surrounding one of England's best known Kings; Richard III reigned for only 2 years, but his reputation has grown and intrigued generations over the centuries. His body was discovered in an amazing twist of fate in 2012 and his re-interment in Leicester Cathedral in 2015 created yet more controversy for this most enigmatic King of England.

*Format: Kindle Edition*

*File Size: 1941 KB*

*Print Length: 41 pages*

*Publisher: Toni Mount (19 Jan. 2015)*



## **Dragon's Blood & Willow Bark: The Mysteries of Medieval Medicine by Toni Mount**

*Release Date: 28 April 2015*

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A time when butchers and executioners knew more about anatomy than university-trained physicians - the phrase 'Medieval Medicine' conjures up horrors for us with our modern ideas on hygiene, instant pain relief and effective treatments. Although no one could allay the dread of plague, the medical profession provided cosmetic procedures, women's sanitary products, dietary advice and horoscopes predicting the sex of unborn babies or the best day to begin a journey. Surgeons performed life-saving procedures, sometimes using anaesthetics, with post-operative antibiotic and antiseptic treatments to reduce the chances of infection. They knew a few tricks to lessen the scarring, too. Yet alongside such expertise, some still believed that unicorns, dragons and elephants supplied vital medical ingredients and the caladrius bird could diagnose recovery or death. This is the weird, wonderful and, occasionally, beneficial world of medieval medicine. In her new book, popular historian Toni Mount guides the reader through this labyrinth of strange ideas and such unlikely remedies as leeches, meadowsweet, roasted cat and red bed-curtains - some of which modern medicine is now coming to value - but without the nasty smells or any threat to personal wellbeing and safety. N.B. No animals, large, furry or mythological, were harmed during research for this book.

*Paperback: 304 pages*

*Publisher: Amberley Publishing (28 April 2015)*

*Language: English*

*ISBN-10: 1445643839*

*ISBN-13: 978-1445643830*

# Tudor Life

# FICTION

## ***The Tapestry: A Novel by Nancy Bilyeau***

*Release Date: March 24, 2015*

The next page-turner in the award-winning Joanna Stafford series takes place in the heart of the Tudor court, as the gutsy former novice risks everything to defy the most powerful men of her era.

After her priory in Dartford is closed—collateral damage in tyrannical King Henry VIII's quest to overthrow the Catholic Church—Joanna resolves to live a quiet and honorable life weaving tapestries, shunning dangerous quests and conspiracies. Until she is summoned to Whitehall Palace, where her tapestry weaving has drawn the King's attention.

Joanna is uncomfortable serving the King whom she has twice attempted to overthrow—unbeknownst to him. She fears for her life in a court bursting with hidden agendas and a casual disregard for the virtues she holds dear. And her suspicions are confirmed when an assassin attempts to kill her moments after arriving at Whitehall.

Struggling to stay ahead of her most formidable enemy yet, an unknown one, she becomes entangled in dangerous court politics. Her dear friend Catherine Howard is rumored to be one of the King's mistresses. Joanna is determined to protect young, beautiful, naïve Catherine from becoming the King's next wife and possibly, victim.

Set in a world of royal banquets and feasts, tournament jousts, ship voyages, and Tower Hill executions, this thrilling tale finds Joanna in her most dangerous situation yet, as she attempts to decide the life she wants to live: nun or wife, spy or subject, rebel or courtier. Joanna must finally choose her fate.

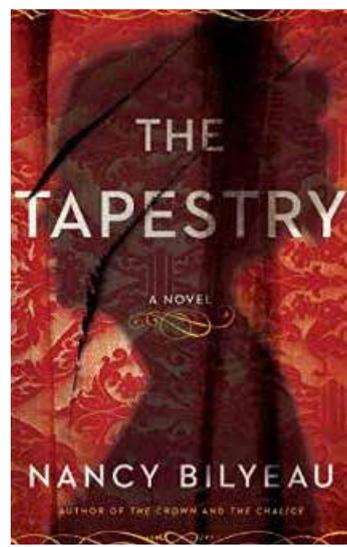
*Hardcover: 400 pages*

*Publisher: Touchstone (March 24, 2015)*

*Language: English*

*ISBN-10: 1476756376*

*ISBN-13: 978-1476756370*



## ***Sisters of Treason by Elizabeth Fremantle***

*Release of Paperback edition: 29 Jan. 2015*

Following the acclaimed Queen's Gambit, Elizabeth Fremantle brings us a new novel of intrigue and menace at the Tudor Court. . .

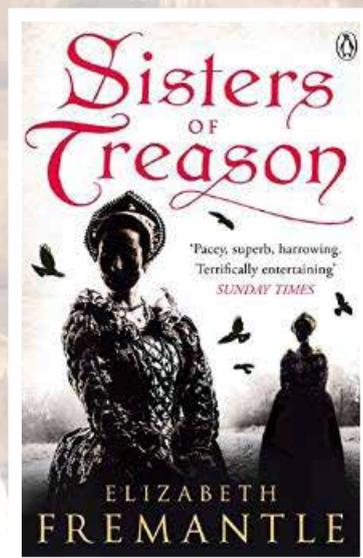
1554: Lady Jane Grey is executed by her cousin Queen Mary...

Now Lady Jane's younger sisters Katherine and Mary, cursed with the Tudor blood that saw their sister killed, face the perils of the royal court alone.

Lady Katherine - young and spirited - makes dangerous romantic liaisons.

While Lady Mary - crook-backed and vulnerable - becomes the Queen's reluctant companion, yet yearns to escape court intrigue. And both girls fear their proximity to the Queen might be their undoing.

For the childless Queen is ill. If she should die Katherine may be pushed to power, but the Queen's half-sister Elizabeth casts a long shadow and if she gains the throne the court will become a terrifying maze of treachery and suspicion - where holding royal blood could be a death warrant for the two



sisters...

*Paperback: 496 pages*

*Publisher: Penguin (29 Jan. 2015)*

*Language: English*

*ISBN-10: 1405909404*

*ISBN-13: 978-1405909402*

## **The Traitor's Mark by D K Wilson**

*Release Date: 14 Aug. 2014, July 2015 in the US*

### **The Real Crime**

Hans Holbein, King Henry VIII's portrait painter, died in the autumn of 1543. A century later a chronicler reported that the artist had succumbed to plague, yet there is no contemporary evidence to support this. Suspicions have been raised over the centuries, but the mystery of what actually happened remains unsolved to this day.

### **Our Story**

Young London goldsmith Thomas Treviot is awaiting a design for a very important jewellery commission from Hans Holbein. When the design fails to turn up, Thomas sends a servant to track Holbein down, only to discover that the painter has disappeared. In his hunt for Holbein and the lost design, Thomas is led into a morass of dangerous political intrigue, Spanish spies and courtiers that is more treacherous than he could ever have anticipated...

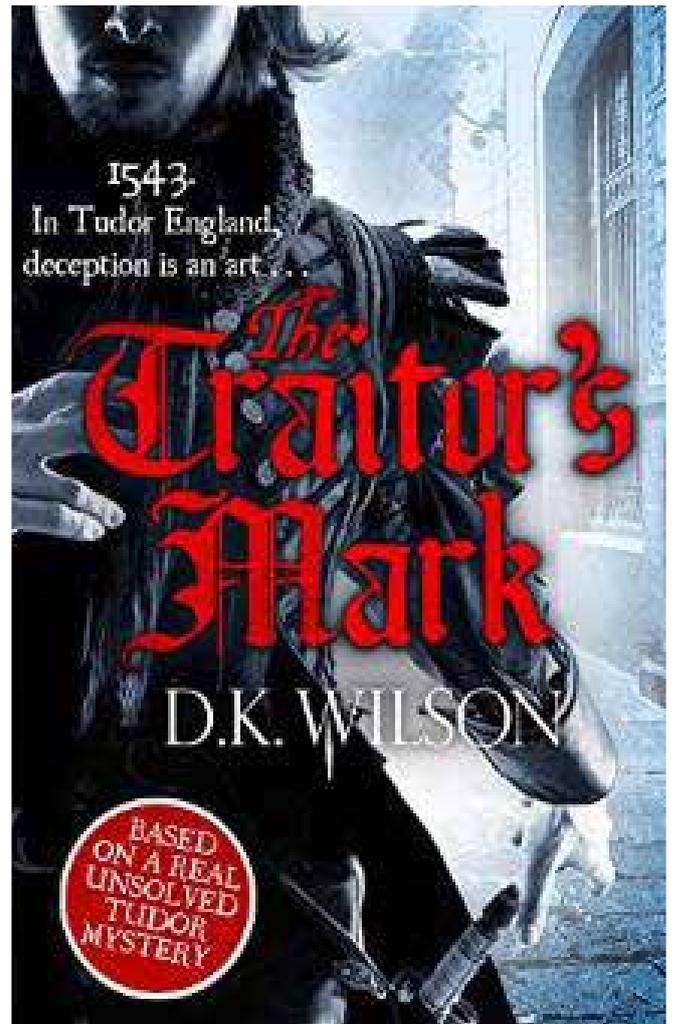
*Paperback: 400 page*

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*ISBN-13: 978-0751550375*



# Tudor Life

# Paris Meet

THE PARIS "MEET" IS NOT FAR AWAY!

So far we've got **Tim Ridgway**, **Claire Ridgway**, **Melanie V. Taylor** and **Clare Cherry** (plus some other "non-historians" and members) all meeting up in Paris at the **Musée du Luxembourg** on **Sunday 29th March** at 12:30 (exact meeting point to be announced on the website).

ARE YOU COMING?

For more information about the exhibition you can see <http://museduluxembourg.fr/expositions/expositions-0>

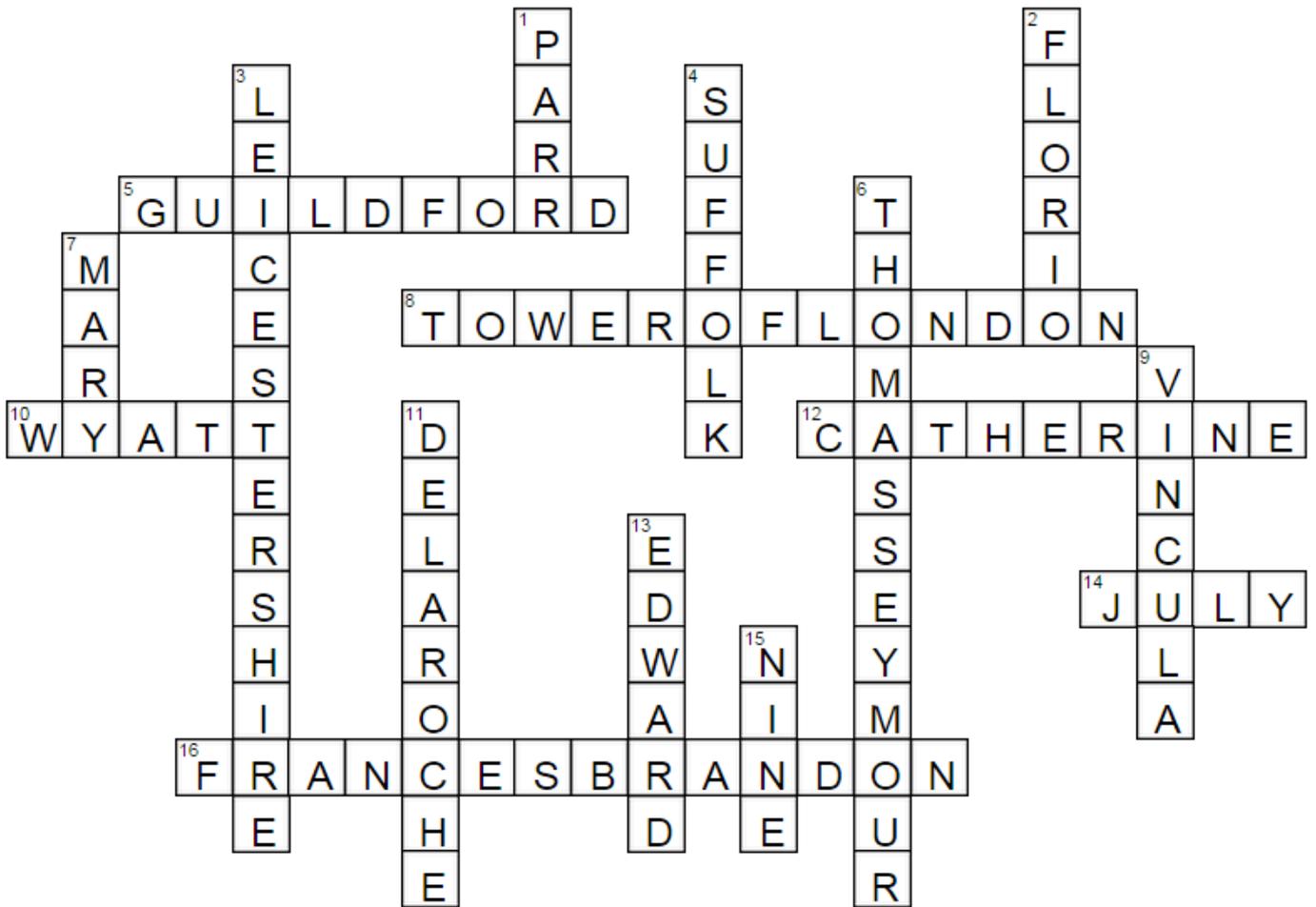
Will you be joining these historians and other Tudor Society members for this get-together?

Please express your interest in the comments on this page:

<https://www.tudorsociety.com/?p=1725>

THE  
TUDOR  
SOCIETY





# CROSSWORD Answers

## Have your say...

We'd love to include a "writers letter" into the Tudor Life magazine. If you've got something that you want to add to the discussions, something that you've got a particular interest in, maybe something you want others to know then we would love to hear all about it!

So, please send any letters you have to our society secretary to the email address [info@tudorsociety.com](mailto:info@tudorsociety.com) with the title "Magazine Writers Letter" and we'd be pleased to include it.

**The Tudor Society Team.**



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~IN MARCH~  
TUDOR LIFE MAGAZINE

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## RICHARD III

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SPECIAL  
EDITION

**JOHN ASHDOWN-HILL**  
**KRISTIE DAVIS-DEAN**  
**DAVID BALDWIN**  
**SUSAN SOREK**  
**TONI MOUNT**  
**JOSEPHINE WILKINSON**

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**PLUS ... OLGA HUGHES**  
Princess in the Tower

**DEREK WILSON**  
The Traitor's Mark

## AND ... OUR REGULARS

Melanie on Art  
Gareth on History  
Beth's Tudor Tidbits  
Tudor Feast Days  
Character of the Month  
On this Day in Tudor History  
Tudor Themed Puzzle Page  
Tudor Events  
Upcoming Books



**DON'T MISS**  
THIS MONTH'S GIANT  
GIVE-AWAY & EXPERT TALK!