Tudor Life

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The Role of Art in Tudor Costume
Melanie V. Taylor

On the Trail of Katherine of Aragon
by Natalie Grueninger

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by Toni Mount

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by Rebecca Lenaghan

September is Movie Month

Motion pictures inspired by History have a dubious reputation. Some, like "Braveheart", have been harshly criticised for politicising an ancient dispute and misleading its viewers through manifest inaccuracies. Yet, it's also true that many people reading this magazine first acquired their interest in Tudor Britain through the seductive imaginings of celluloid. For me personally, it was "Anne of the Thousand Days", which I write about in this month's edition. Movies continue to delight, enthral and provoke. Given how accessible and influential they are, they are also culturally important and revealing - as Rebecca Lenaghan's article on some modern portrayals of Elizabeth I show. Exciting and interesting, the ways in which the Tudors have been imagined, and re-imagined, by dramatists form a fascinating field of study!

Gareth Russell

Tudor Life

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TUDOR MOVIE SPECIAL

THE TRUTH ABOUT TUDOR DINING

Starting our Movies feature is **Toni Mount** who shows us the *real way* to eat Tudor-style

Perhaps one of the most iconic movies, bringing the Tudor period alive on screen, is *The Private Life of Henry VIII,* made in Britain in 1933 for London Film Productions, directed by Alexander Korda and starring Charles Laughton. Focusing on the later marriages of King Henry VIII, it was an international success, establishing Laughton as a box office star. He would reprise the role in 1953 in Young Bess, with Jean Simmons as his daughter, Elizabeth.

The Private Life was the first non-Hollywood film to win an Academy Award, with Charles Laughton taking 'Best Actor' and a nomination for 'Best Picture'. Laughton was also voted Best Actor in a British film by readers of *Film Weekly*, so clearly the public enjoyed this tale of Tudor affairs, but how 'authentic' is the king's private life as depicted in the film?

As a social historian, I'm fascinated – and horrified – by the scenes of King Henry dining at the high table. We see a well-educated Renaissance prince ripping apart his roast chicken, gnawing the meat off the bones and flinging the remains over his shoulder, into a bystander's face. Enticing wenches flaunt themselves as they serve plates piled high with food, almost throwing them in front of the diners. Yet this image of Tudor dining is as far from the truth as another imaginative scene in the film, when Anne of Cleves wins her freedom from Henry in a game of

> "Beware at meals of causing strife

cards.
So what is wrong with
this raucous scene of gluttony?

It is true that Tudors didn't use forks as we do, although there were pronged tools in the kitchen for lifting meat or fish from boiling pots. Queen Elizabeth used dainty two-pronged forks to eat sticky sweetmeats at the banquet which followed a feast. Tudor banqueting halls, follies or pavilions were for the VIPs to retire to while the servants cleared the trestle tables in the great hall, ready for the entertainments. Meanwhile, the VIPs sipped sweet wine, ate candied fruits, little cakes, Turkish delight and all kinds of syrupy sweetmeats – this was the banquet, quite separate from the feast.

Otherwise, everyone used fingers which had to be washed, nails cleaned and no nose-picking! Manners were everything to the well-brought-up Tudors. But let's return to chicken-gnawing Henry. Before serving, meat, or fish, was removed from the bone by trained carvers. In a nobleman's household, a young henchman began his training, looking after the cups on his lordship's cup-board, making sure they were clean, untarnished and not cracked or dented. Meanwhile, he observed the roles of the pantler (in charge of bread), the butler (drink), the ewerer (handwashing water), the napier (napkins, tablecloths and towels) and the cup-bearers, servers and carvers; he would progress through all departments. If a carver didn't remove every bone and a diner found one on his trencher, this was an appalling insult. Can you imagine taking offence at a T-bone steak or a chicken drumstick? King Henry would have been aghast with a whole chicken set before him and the carver responsible would probably have ended up in the Tower, awaiting a degree

of de-boning himself. Bones were disposed of discreetly, often fed to the dogs, but they were also a saleable commodity for making glue, never thrown around. As for buxom serving wenches, they belonged in disreputable taverns. At court or in a gentleman's household, the servers would all be male.

In 1508, in London, Wynkyn de Worde published the first printed book on manners, *The Boke of Keruinge,* (carving); it was based on a treatise on etiquette, *The Boke of Nurture* (Sloane MS2027, British Library), written by John Russell, a member of a noble household sixty years earlier. *The Boke of Keruinge* deals with the intricacies of carving – from tyring an egg (removing the shell) to unlacing a coney (boning a rabbit) to splatting a pike, all copied from Russell's manuscript. It covers every detail, including how to lay the table with three tablecloths. The first cloth was draped down the long side of the board, its edge in the centre of the board where it met the edge of the second cloth. This second cloth would drape the laps of the diners and act as a crumb-catcher – the way we use napkins. The third lay central on the board, covering the edges of the other two, and was changed at the end of each course, so the diners didn't have to look at any wine spills and dribbles of sauces staining it. You can see how fussy the Tudors were.

The highest standard of personal manners showed good breeding. Hands were washed before eating and in between courses. Napkins were for wiping greasy fingers and lips and changed at the end of each course. In the late fifteenth century, John Lydgate's manners book was printed by William Caxton (Wynkyn de Worde's master) at Westminster. Here's an extract (*Table Manners for Children,* John Lydgate, 1476):

With soup, do not use bread to sop it up,
Or suck it loudly – that is to transgress,
Or put your dirty mouth to a clean cup,
Or pass drinks while your hands are in a mess,
Or stain your napkin out of carelessness.
Also, beware at meals of causing strife,
And do not make a tooth-pick of your knife.

There are fourteen stanzas on this topic. Books of courtesy, as they were called, were required reading for all courtiers and social-climbers. No blowing on your soup, no belching or farting at table or laughing with your mouth full, don't blow your nose on your napkins and never rest your elbows on the table. This last was enforced at dinnertime when I was a child and my parents could never give me a sensible answer when I asked why; 'you just don't', I was told. Now I know the rule goes back to a time when the table was a board resting on trestles and not fixed to the legs, the reason is clear: if you lean on a trestle board, it will tip, sending food, drink and cutlery straight into your lap.

Tudor feasts would have been decorous affairs, with dainty dishes, elegant presentation and sober waiters – at least until the serving of the 'subtlety' the last dish of each course. Wondrous contraptions of sugar-work and marzipan – like wedding cakes without the cake – subtleties were the pinnacle of the confectioner's art. Castles, dragons spitting flame, warships firing cannon, mythical figures and trick-boxes, the more elaborate the better; were paraded and admired by the diners before the folk on the lower tables were let loose, to smash the masterpieces, grab the best bits and eat them. It was a free-for-all, courtesy forgotten, at least until the trumpet announced the service of the next course, when everyone returned to their places at table to begin fine dining once more. So don't believe history as you see it at the movies; they don't let the truth ruin a good show.

TONI MOUNT

SEPTEMBER
EXPERT SPEAKER
Gareth Russell

Gareth Russell is back by popular demand. Our members have mentioned how much they enjoy listening to Gareth's talks and then grilling him with questions in our live chat sessions.

This month, Gareth will be discussing the end of the Tudor period in a talk entitled "**The Tudor-Stuart Handover of Power**". It was a fascinating period of history where Elizabeth I had not produced an heir to the Tudor dynasty... what might happen next?

Cate Blanchett in Elizabeth 1998 credit Empire Online

Rebecca Lenaghan
Considers that

"All the World's a Stage"

Some modern portrayals of Elizabeth I on screen

"All the world's a stage,
And all the men and women merely players;
They have their exits and their entrances,
And one man in his time plays many parts."
As You Like It: Act II, Scene vii, lines 139-142

Over the course of the last one hundred years, the development of film has irrefutably altered the way in which historical figures have been presented. Much like the written word of historians, changes in filming priorities and the impact of contemporary events affect the way in which the past can be retold. It is conspicuously apparent in the biographical work of academics that evolving historical interpretations are defined by the period in which they are written; however, for filmmakers and directors, current events are simply the starting point for consideration when beginning a project centred on a historical figure. Ultimately, the production of a film, whether or not it is based upon historical events, relies on its potential to provide public entertainment and be profitable. No English monarch has appeared more frequently on screen than Elizabeth I throughout the twentieth century and into the twenty-first. Gloriana, the queen of the box office. This presentation, in alignment with the scholarly work of historians, has ranged from her portrayal as a figure of national pride in the 1937 chronicle *Fire over England*, through the feminist developments of the 1970s in the BBC mini-series *Elizabeth R*, and up to Shekhar Kapur's twenty-first century epics starring the ethereal Cate Blanchett.

The difference between academic history concerning the Tudor queen and popular representations is that scholarly historians seek to inform, while filmmakers depend on entertainment. Somewhat surprisingly, in most depictions of Elizabeth I, aspects of her life have been altered or exaggerated to captivate a wider audience; it would seem that the turbulence of Tudor England

LIGHTS, CAMERA, ACTION ... IT'S MOVIE TIME!

itself does not yield sufficiently dramatic storylines. Yet, perhaps the more significant concept to consider is that of layered interpretation. In Elizabeth-based films, there are multiple layers of influence which affect the final product; historical fact, a director's guidance, an actress's craft and current events. It is the combination of these forces which colours public perceptions of the Virgin Queen to reach an audience that academic historians can only dare to imagine.

For modern filmmakers, it could be argued that any propensity towards the preservation of historical fact has been disregarded. A popular belief that historical dramas cannot generate enough interest to surpass the label of 'documentary' has led to a decision by directors to eschew factual evidence from history, in favour of plying their characters with high-stake storylines rife in scandal, violence and treachery. Alongside the dramatic enhancement of plots, there appears to be a similar inclination among twenty-first century directors to make connections between the past and present; an inability to shape historical narratives through the lens of contemporary culture (if it is believed that the events of history constantly recur) renders such work invalid in the eyes (or words) of critics. The *Elizabeth* films of 1998 and 2007 directed by Shekhar Kapur, starring Cate Blanchett, certainly go further in this distortion than any previous representation of the queen by leaving behind historical veracity in the hope of a Hollywood hit.

In order to create a contemporary historical epic, filmmakers are often acutely aware of the historical facts before they decide to dispense with them. For a general audience, it is understandable that directors look to simplify intensely complex issues of a period drama because in order to comprehend their significance, an audience would need to be aware of the context in which they were placed. Kapur's first half hour of *Elizabeth* is among the first cinematic presentations to show the impact of the religious wars of the period. This is particularly surprising given that during the 1950s and 1960s filmmakers might have been more disposed to focus on the religious divisions rife in the sixteenth century to create a contemporary connection with the discouragement of mixed marriages between Catholics and Protestants in the Western world at the time.

The importance of sufficiently conveying the impact of religious wars in the film acts as a method of explaining the relationship between Mary Tudor and Elizabeth I, and subsequently with Mary, Queen of

Dame Judi Dench's Oscar-winning performance as Elizabeth I in Shakespeare in Love (1998), NY Post

LIGHTS, CAMERA, ACTION ... IT'S MOVIE TIME!

Scots. Directors savour an opportunity to exploit the personal nature of family rivalry and, when the subjects are products of Tudor England, it is easy to understand why. Reconciling the religious division in England was one of the greatest trials faced during Elizabeth I's reign; however, Kapur uses the issue of religion to define the relationship between the sisters, creating the characterisation of religious heroes and villains. Matching earlier filmic representations of 'Bloody Mary', *Elizabeth*'s Kathy Burke exhibits the mania and desperation which befell the Catholic ruler towards the end of her tenure. The suggestion she exclaimed in real life that Elizabeth was 'born of that whore Anne Boleyn' seems dubious. Instead of straightforward lewd antagonism of her sister in this way, Mary favoured a more subtle approach, which managed to concurrently insult Anne Boleyn's memory, by implying that Elizabeth was of Smeaton descent.

The relationship, presented by Kapur, of the queen and Robert Dudley goes further than any of its predecessors by consummating their love on screen. The screenwriter Michael Hirst defended this production decision, following uproar in the press, by saying that no one knows with 'any certainty whether they were actually lovers', hence he decided in contrast with most academics, that they were. Resulting from this controversial decision, Hirst was branded a heretic in the media and, perhaps, fairly so. For dramatic purposes, the film requires this loss of purity and womanhood to enable Elizabeth to become a true queen and virgin by marrying herself to England. However, while the decision merges with the aspirations of entertainment in the film for the benefit of a general audience, it is one of frustration for historians.

Flora Robson as Elizabeth I in Fire over England (1937)

Evidence of a physical relationship with Dudley has never been proved, despite endless speculation, and Elizabeth was certainly astute enough to be aware of the result such an affair might have had upon her reputation or her health. By evincing the physicality of the pair's relationship, the producers are swaying their audience's opinion to *assume* that Elizabeth's virginity was a myth and, therefore, inadvertently, diminishing her reputation.

In the second of Kapur's instalments, *Elizabeth: The Golden Age* reiterates some of the political statements of the first film. The director made clear in an interview before the film's release that his intentions did not attempt to include the maintenance of historical

reliability by asserting that, 'if you can't see our own times and lives in a film…there's no reason to make it'. Kapur utilises the post 9/11 fear of an unseen peril by comparing the Spanish army to the threat of fundamentalist Islam. The scene in which Elizabeth survives a personal attack as she goes to prayer with her ladies-in-waiting strikes a resonance with the idea of a suicide bomber who has failed to detonate. This approach to filmmaking is to enhance an individual empathy with the lives of the on-screen subjects, in an attempt to make the events of history more accessible to a general audience.

The character of Elizabeth changes drastically between the first and second film; the viewer sees a figure of assertion and authority in *The Golden Age* which contrasts with the nervousness exhibited by Blanchett as a politician in its predecessor. However, the essence of her femininity remains through her triangular relationship with Bess and Ralegh as well as her famed indecision about the fate of Mary Stuart. The concept of making queens mortal through deciding upon their death surely struck a chord with Elizabeth whose reliance on her own divinity remained tangible throughout her reign. The consciousness of time is another theme throughout the film and one with which the queen struggles to come to terms. The film focuses on her obsession with image; her appearance radically changed from that of the fresh faced, loose haired Elizabeth in the first film. The queen reveals to Bess that the mirror is no longer her friend, she can see lines which, luckily, the courtier deftly remarks must only be 'smiling lines'. Nonetheless, the make-up is harsher, the wig more striking and the wardrobe reveals extravagance; yet, perhaps it is not simply a change from the girl in the previous film but is also a comment on the public queen in contrast with the private. Kapur argued that, 'People are always doing the same things for the same reasons – money, power, love, revenge – in only slightly different ways. Stress the similarities and the difficulties become easier to explain.' If the film is considered a segue from sixteenth century England to the modern Western world, then the director's interpretation of isolated public and private lives could certainly be seen as an assessment of current politicians. Yet, unless every audience member and cinema-goer decided to embark on a filmic post-mortem of *Elizabeth: The Golden Age,* to research the production reasons behind its making, an awareness of Kapur's political commentary while watching may have been overlooked.

At the end of the twentieth century, a type of Elizabethan mania swept through filmmaking, and the Oscar nominations certainly reflected this. The presentation of Elizabeth I in the 1998 romantic comedy *Shakespeare in Love* has received almost universal praise for the part played by the Tudor queen. Surprisingly, for a character who only receives eight minutes of screen time, Elizabeth is seen to be the pivotal role in the film. The simultaneous release of *Elizabeth* and *Shakespeare in Love* undoubtedly complemented one another alongside reinforcing positive memorialization of the monarch herself. However, director John Madden's multi-award winning comedy certainly makes no claim for historical authentication. While some of the characters are based on reality, the story is wholly fictitious; yet, this portrayal invites the question as to why the character of Elizabeth has been so thoroughly scrutinized and acclaimed.

Shakespeare in Love is a comedy, and at its most elemental, is fun. The film is woven together into a witty, clever and light-hearted storyline which bears all the hallmarks of Stoppardian genius. The script moulds an amalgamation of Shakespeare's stories and one-liners to create a plot in which the playwright finds himself in a dilemma that inspires the creation of *Romeo and Juliet*. Of course, based on the film's context it

should be difficult to place this version of Elizabeth alongside the performance of Blanchett; but there are moments in Judi Dench's portrayal of the queen which are undeniably authentic. Far from the Gloriana image, according to Susan Doran, Elizabeth is depicted as being 'kind-hearted, plain-speaking, humorous, self-knowing and perspicacious'. Although not entirely accurate, the role is both endearing and sympathetic to the queen which probably cemented the positive reviews proffered to Dench.

The character of Elizabeth in the Madden comedy provides the *dea ex machina* at the end of the story to prevent the exposure of Viola as a woman on stage. Described as 'a Shakespearian ending for a Shakespearian playhouse', the queen offers wisdom to a dismayed Viola who knows she must endure a marriage to, the fictional, Wessex. Elizabeth utters her resounding line about knowing 'something of a woman in a man's profession', which, indeed in the sixteenth century, she did. The impact of every one of Elizabeth's scenes has the effect of confirming to an audience her ability to command attention and it is perhaps due this quality that Dench was deemed Oscar-worthy.

There are a number of connections with *Shakespeare in Love* and the second Kapur film *Elizabeth: The Golden Age*; once again highlighting all lack of historical basis in the latter. The relationship between Judi Dench and Gwyneth Paltrow is regarded as one which, united, forms a fuller character of Elizabeth. While Dench is representative of the aging, irritable ruler, Paltrow is emblematic of the cultured youthful exuberance which has now slipped from the queen. In the later Kapur film, the idea of multiple characters representing one role is utilised again as Elizabeth Throckmorton, or 'Bess', is supposed to inhabit the physical enjoyment of marriage and love in a way which the queen cannot. Another shared moment, based on a seventeenth century story, is the existence of a puddle en route back to the queen's carriage. In *Shakespeare in Love*, Dench waits briefly for someone to cover it before giving up and splashing through regardless. This scene, used for comic effect, conjures the account that Walter Ralegh laid down his cloak for the queen at their initial meeting and the same anecdote was used in Kapur's film to introduce his male lead.

It is with a divergence from the typical representation of the queen that Dench exits the scene in *Shakespeare in Love*. Previous depictions, as well as Elizabeth's own self-promotion, regard the queen as the divine authority in all earthly matters. Cos However, pivotal to the plot's conclusion, Elizabeth declares that she cannot divide what God has joined in order to allow a fairy-tale ending for the bard and his muse. The very errors which 'plague' most films for keen historians are transformed into intentional plot devices which are delightful to seek out and enjoy in Stoppard's script.

The medium of film is a powerful propagandist tool regardless of its period. The presentation of any historical event or figure on screen is the primary means by which the general public receive their understanding of history outside school. Once history has been portrayed on such a large scale, it is difficult for academics to reshape the information which has been received and, suddenly, filmic fiction has become 'popular' fact. It is understandable that filmmakers choose to craft their productions in order to make a contemporary political comment, yet for biographical historians, the damage of a widespread film on a delicate reputation is almost irreparable.

REBECCA LENAGHAN

Y	A	H	E	B	W	A	W	U	K	G	P	T	D	O	K
I	J	O	S	E	P	H	A	U	C	L	S	A	M	R	D
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M	L	G	E	R	V	U	T	P	A	N	F	L	T	T	L
J	N	K	B	S	L	T	Z	S	N	D	U	O	L	T	C
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Y	R	W	T	R	S	Q	V	A	J	P	G	I	I	B	I
G	S	A	C	W	P	P	E	Y	A	E	O	S	K	O	Z
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V	E	A	Q	I	M	T	A	W	L	E	P	G	F	N	L
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F	A	D	E	L	I	Z	A	B	E	T	H	P	T	S	A

Anne Boleyn in "Anne of the Thousand Days" - Genevieve (6)
Director of "Elizabeth" and "Elizabeth: The Golden Age" - Shekhar (5)
Played William Cecil to Cate Blanchett's Elizabeth - Richard (12)
Helen Mirren's Elizabeth had wonderful onscreen chemistry with this Robert Dudley - Jeremy (5)
(6) Jackson was an iconic Elizabeth I
Which Natalie played Anne Boleyn to Jonathan Rhys Meyer's Henry VIII - (6)
This Superman played Charles Brandon in "The Tudors" series - Henry (6)
This Fiennes actor starred in "Shakespeare in Love" and "Elizabeth" - (6)
This actress wanted to be Anne Boleyn opposite Richard Burton's Henry VIII but had to settled for another role - Elizabeth (6)
Geoffrey Rush played Philip Henslowe in "Shakespeare in Love", but what was his role in "Elizabeth" - Francis (10)
Keith Michell played Henry VIII twice. Charlotte Rampling was one of his Anne Boleyns, who was the other - Dorothy (5)
"A Man for All (7)" is the Robert Bolt's play about Thomas More.
The film of the play mentioned above saw Paul Scofield starring as More, but who played Cardinal Wolsey - (5) Welles.
Which "Homeland" actor starred as Henry VIII in the BBC series "Wolf Hall" - Damian (5)
Bette Davis played which Tudor personality in two films - (9)

REBECCA LENAGHAN is currently studying for her masters in History at Queen's University, Belfast. For her undergraduate degree, she completed her dissertation on 20th century presentations of Queen Elizabeth I in popular culture, media and academia.

THE ROLE OF ART IN TUDOR COSTUME

Melanie V. Taylor

I was looking through the works of Hans Holbein and came across this portrait of Charles de Solier, Sieur de Morette (1480 – 1545) who was French Ambassador to the English court several times between 1526 to 1535. In particular, he was the Ambassador in 1534 when Henry VIII was trying to curry French support for his divorce from Queen Katharine of Aragon. My eye was caught by

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This brought to mind how paintings have inspired the costumes for productions on stage and screen. Cinema is still a relatively young art form, but even so, our Tudor dynasty has inspired film makers from the early days. In 1912 there was the French silent movie, *Les Amours de la Reine Elisabeth*, starring Sarah Bernhardt and Lou Tellegen. Because of the many portraits it is no wonder this period in history has been, and continues to be, popular with script writers, film and stage directors and television producers.

Trawling the Net, we can find images from the early films such as the 1912 French one above, the 1939 *The Private Lives of Elizabeth & Essex* starring Bette Davis, various docudramas such the 1972 BBC production of *The Six Wives of Henry VIII* starring Keith Michelle, films such as *Anne of a Thousand Days, Elizabeth I* and *Gloriana,* plus there is the BBC latest – Wolf Hall. Many of these were ground breaking in their day and thanks to modern cameras being really sensitive to light, the director of Wolf Hall used candlelight and no other artificial lights giving us the feeling we were actually there with Cromwell in the 16th century.

Why do we continue to be fascinated by all aspects of the Tudors? Is it because we have so much accessible evidence about their lives so we can relate to every level of Tudor society? Is it perhaps because the richness of dress worn by the courtiers and the wealthy merchants appeals to our imaginations and we too would like to wear such fabulous outfits?

the richness of his apparel and how similar de Solier's stance is to the famous Holbein portrait of Henry VIII painted at the end of the decade.

Charles de Solier, with his neatly trimmed grey streaked beard, is a compellingly authoritarian figure. If we had no idea of his identity, his fur lined robe of black fabric tells us that this man is of high status. The realistic rendition of his features (particularly his hands) screams that this portrait is from the hand of a master, so no wonder when Augustus II, Elector of Saxony, acquired this painting in 1746 he was pleased to think he now owned a da Vinci. However, in the 19th century this painting was identified as being a portrait of Ambassador de Solier by Hans Holbein.

We are supposed to be awed by this man's portrait and at the time, only the favoured few would have seen it. Now, thanks to the wonders of modern technology we can look the fabric, the style, how the ties attach the strips of fabric on his sleeves . They look like little bees. How are these made and

Mrs Pemberton : Hans Holbein V&A

Lady with the Squirrel, Hans Holbein,
National Gallery, London

LIGHTS, CAMERA, ACTION ... IT'S MOVIE TIME!

what are they made of? They also appear on the sleeves of Holbein's *Lais of Corinth*.

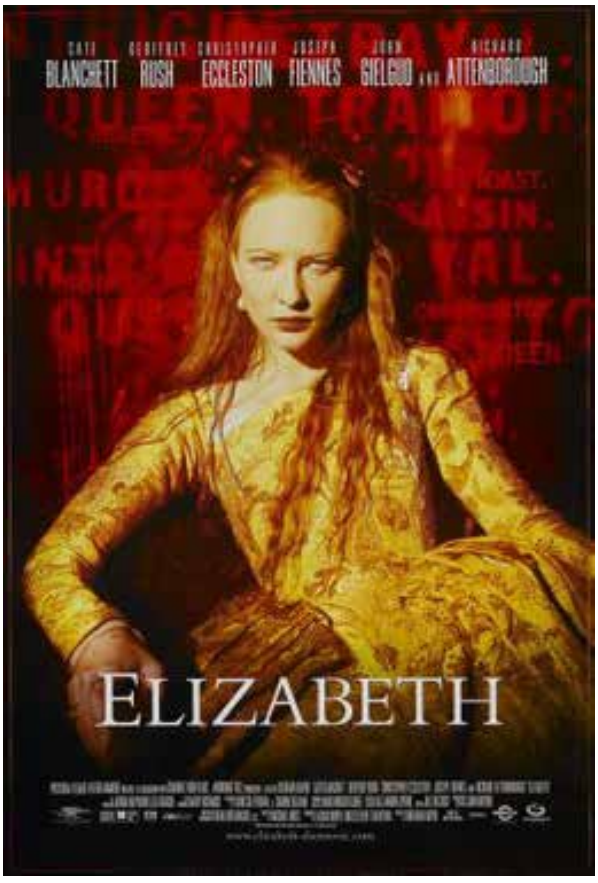
In France, 'Passmenterie' workers formed a guild in the sixteenth century and their work was much in demand. These 'ties 'would have been something that they would have made. I would love to know more about how these were made if there is anyone out there who knows.

Coronation Portrait, Anon.
National Portrait Gallery, London

Wimbledon College of Art has a degree course for costume design. I try and go to the end of year show because Wimbledon is second to none when it comes to producing top notch graduates especially in costume design, set design, film directing and special effects. I have asked whether the costume design graduates ever find themselves having to wait on tables because they cannot find a job as newly qualified designers, and the answer is 'never'! All graduates will be employed very shortly after graduating from this course and not just in England.

For Wolf Hall, the BBC commissioned new costumes and the designers clearly used the iconic Holbein portraits, which gives the series an authenticity that sets it apart from any other Tudor series made recently. Who can forget Damian Lewis's Henry VIII? When he stands with his hands on his hips we immediately think of that portrait of Henry VIII! No wigs or hair dye for Mr Lewis – he is a natural red head and looks every inch the King of England. In an interview before Wolf Hall was screened, he said he thought his education (he went to Eton) probably gave him the edge in having the right sort of attitude to play Henry. I'm not sure what that says about the English public school system!

When we see Claire Foy seated on her dais, she is wearing a cream damask kirtle. At first I could not believe what I was seeing because the fabric was identical to the fabric I had used to make large cream scatter cushions for my sofa. In a previous existence I have made bespoke curtains (they paid for my university fees) so fabrics are close to my heart. Knowing that the fabric of Ms Foy's kirtle was not an expensive woven silk damask all the way from the Orient, but (if it is the same) is actually 100% polyester and only cost £10/metre did slightly take away from my enjoyment of that particular episode.



When I look at any of the sixteenth century paintings I wonder where the fantastic cloths of gold and silver, the velvets, silks, lace and embroidery came from? There was a long established Flemish weaving industry and England exported wool to Europe. Florence was famous for its cloth industry and Venice was importing many luxury

goods, including silks, from the Middle East. Marco Polo had opened up the trade routes with the Far East in the thirteenth century and the Chinese were famous for their silk weaving. This all adds up to a thriving import/export trade in the cloth trade. All this desire to wear your wealth meant employment for those skilled in weaving, lace making and embroidery, but these were people who were never going to feature on the pages of world history so have remained anonymous to the wider world and only figure occasionally in surviving household accounts, so are only known to dedicated researchers. We know that court ladies were expected to be able to embroider and from the prayer books embroidered by the young Princess Elizabeth, we know that she was a skilled needlewoman, but those court gowns are specialist work and take a phenomenal number of man hours.

For the less exalted in society, we only have to look at Mrs Pemberton (V&A) and the portrait of the lady with the squirrel (National Gallery, London), to appreciate their clothes tell that they come from a less exalted position in society. The shape of the warm white fur cap worn by our anonymous lady echoes the gable headdress worn at court. But if we are honest, none of us want to wear the sensible and sober clothes of Mrs Pemberton and our lady in the white fur cap. What we would rather have are the extravagant gowns of Elizabeth. The 'Les Tudor' Paris exhibition has the coronation robes made for the 1998 film, *Elizabeth*. Clearly this fabric is inspired by the Coronation portrait (NPG London). The original cloth of gold, ermine lined robes were first worn by her sister, Mary, for her coronation. I have often wondered whether this was an act of fiscal prudence, or some other unknown reason. Cloth of gold was incredibly expensive and this fabric has Tudor roses and other Tudor emblems woven through it, so it would have made sense to re-use Mary's original robes with all their dynastic symbolism. As we know from all the paintings by

LIGHTS, CAMERA, ACTION ... IT'S MOVIE TIME!

artists such as George Gower, Zuccaro, Nicholas Hilliard and the prolific –'Anon', Elizabeth did not restrain herself when it came to her wardrobe budget.

Real pearls are sewn on to her magnificent gowns and worn in extravagant strings; her jewellery was legendary, with precious stones, semi precious stones, emblems of the virgin moon goddess, Diana. Like her father, Elizabeth is a dream for the 21st century costume designer. But what about the practicality of these fabulous gowns worn at court back in the 16th century?

In various exhibitions over the years, we have been privileged to see rare examples of embroidered sleeves, gloves and other fashion requisites. From paintings, if we look hard enough, we learn how these incredible gowns are put together. The amount of fur lining tells us a bit about the weather, so we can conclude that England was cold and damp (nothing has changed even with global warming). Everyone wore layers. For the queen and her ladies, they had underskirts, and linen undershirts. The queen was then clothed with embroidered and jewel encrusted kirtles and over-skirts, bodices and sleeves all of which must have weighed a ton! Her household would have been dressed in her livery colours of black and white. The wives of the various aristocrats would have had a sharp reprimand if they outshone the queen in their own dress.

Sir Walter Raleigh, Nicholas Hilliard. National Portrait Gallery, London

I was on one of the medieval & renaissance discussion groups on LinkedIn and came across this image of a coat, with the detail of the cut velvet dating from the 15th century. The velvet is Italian and the blog is **http://morgana249.blogspot.co.nz/2014/09/60-examples-of-real-medieval-clothing.html** which has photographs of 60 examples of medieval clothing that have survived. The earliest dates from the 7th century! Apart from the miracle that any of these examples of clothing surviving all these centuries, it demonstrates just how sophisticated our ancestors were in the embroidery, weaving and cutting of fabric. There is a particularly interesting pair of yellow trousers from Germany that look as if they are made of a very soft leather. The blog is a really interesting one for anyone who is interested in the history of fashion.

Thinking of what men wore, they were just as fashion conscious as their ladies. The Earl of Leicester was very conscious of his public image and there are many portraits of him. A link in the endnotes will take you to a page for men's Tudor fashion.

We also have to consider the ruffle. Starched and trimmed with expensive lace, or soft and more comfortable, it was fashionable right across Europe. YouTube has instructions on how to make such a ruff.

The starched ones we see in portraits do frame your face, but and if anyone has ever been had to wear one in a play or for fancy dress, they will know just how uncomfortable they can be. Any man with a beard must have found it very uncomfortable. The cartwheel ruff of the late 1500s, as seen in Hilliard's miniature of Sir Walter Raleigh c1585, is not the most practical thing to wear. It is not the easiest thing to launder either as each little point of lace has to be pinned out to dry. Imagine trying to eat or drink wearing something as wide as this. It does make you wonder whether Hilliard was accentuating Raleigh's ruff as a way of framing his patron's face. It has the unfortunate effect of making the head appear as if it has been separated from the body, which in Raleigh's

case, might be thought of as being a portent of the future. Last year I went to the Globe theatre to see Shakespeare's *Julius Cesaer* and the ruffs worn by the players were soft and floppy and looked comfortable to wear.[3] There are lots of you out there who are expert in Tudor costume, so

The "Hardwick Hall" portrait of Elizabeth I of England.

The Rainbow Portrait of Queen Elizabeth I


possit et valeat possint et valeant perpetuis
alias personas quascumq; in sonos et sch
ordinationes et statuta per eundem Walte
successoribus nostris per presentes comed
illius sint vnum corpus corporatum et pol

perhaps you would like to share your experiences in making and wearing one of these.

From the 1580s onwards, Hilliard's portraits of Elizabeth are an illusion of a perpetually young woman, and many have her wearing these cartwheel ruffs, including when she is portrayed in illuminated letters.

This illuminated E is for the Charter of the founding of Emmanuel College Cambridge, 1584. It shows the queen on her throne, in a glorious gown and ruff, surrounded by all sorts of symbols many of which appear on the dress in the Hardwick portrait.[4]

If we look at the Hardwick portrait in detail, the gauzy wired wings, lace ruff, magnificent overskirt and sleeves are all wearable, as well as heaped with jewel symbols of virginity and queenly magnificence, but we have to ask ourselves, would anyone as conscious of her public image as Elizabeth, be seen wearing a kirtle and bodice embroidered with frogs, dogs, whales, plants, birds, insects and various sea creatures?

I love this portrait because there are visual clues to the exploration of the New World. It seems as if it the design is inspired by the work of the explorer and water-colourist, John White (1539/40 – 1593), who had travelled to the English colony of Roanoke and during his travels he painted the Secotan Indians and much of the wildlife of the area. [5] White's paintings were reproduced in engravings by de Bry in 1590 and published as a book, which was a best seller and brought the New World right into the houses of Elizabethan England. So is the kirtle and bodice in Hardwick portrait something the queen would have worn or has the artist tapped into White's images that had so captured the public imagination? Has the artist created an imagined portrait where Elizabeth wears the flora and fauna of England's New World colony, Virginia? Would you wear this? Probably not, but as a piece of art to hang in your stately home to inform all your guests just how loyal you are and that you are fully aware of the new colonies that are being claimed for England, this is a great example. The portrait hangs in Hardwick Hall

Similar wired wings and ruff appear on the Rainbow Portrait, which is another piece of visual propaganda. In this instance the embroidered bodice is covered with flowers and is something that may well have been part of the queen's wardrobe. The flowers are all mentioned in poetry about Elizabeth. Since this painting dates from the end of her reign, her youthful face shows the artist is buying into the idea of portraying the queen as the immortal goddess Astrea, who ruled over a Golden age in a time of perpetual spring. The orange overmantle is covered in eyes, ears and mouths, which suggests the gown is the product of a fertile imagination and not a real item of clothing.

As in the illuminated E a snake is prominent and appears on the sleeve as a symbol of the queen's sagacity. Snakes represent wisdom, which is rather appropriate for the illuminated E considering this is a charter for a university college, but when it comes to the Rainbow portrait is the snake telling us about the wisdom of the queen, or perhaps it is the wisdom of William and Robert Cecil? Like much of Tudor symbolism, there will be more than one meaning and considering how the Cecil family served Elizabeth faithfully all her life, then the likelihood of this portrait being read in more than one way, is high.

The eyes, ears and mouths have been the subject of debate for many years. In Cesare Ripa's late 16th century publication, *Iconologia,* the late Dame Frances Yates found references to a winged creature representing Fame. Ripa describes Fame as *having as many eyes as she has feathers, also many mouths and ears* and Dame Frances argued that the eyes, ears and mouths were symbols of Elizabeth's international reputation.

In an article written in 2002 Andrew Graham Dixon proposed this painting was painted by Isaac Oliver and in the same article Graham Dixon puts forward the idea proposed by the late Prof Steve Dedijer.[6] Dedijer (1911 – 2004) was not an art historian, but an academic who specialised in business intelligence and he had come to the conclusion that the eyes, ears and mouths are symbols of the English spy network. [7] In 1590 Robert Cecil had taken over the network of spies and informants originally set up and run by Sir Francis Walsingham and in 1598 Robert succeeded his father, Sir William Cecil, as Elizabeth's most trusted administrator. Commissioned by Robert Cecil in about 1600, this portrait still hangs in Hatfield House. The painting is not only a display of their loyalty, it may also be a statement of how

the Cecil family was vital to the successful reign of her majesty.

There is never a simple answer when it comes to Elizabethan puzzles and riddles. However, did the queen really wear this or is it an imagined portrait, created by a vivid imagination from a brief given by a loyal and dedicated administrator?

Hilliard was the master of the hidden visual message and he trained Isaac Oliver; Oliver married the sister of Marcus Gheerhaerts the Younger and the portrait has traditionally been attributed to Gheerhaerts. All three artists were alive at the end of the 16th century so it is tempting to imagine them sharing ideas about how to portray the queen in new and novel ways. In the case of the Hardwick portrait, the images on the kirtle and bodice may reflect the new discoveries of flora and fauna in newly discovered lands claimed in the name of Elizabeth I, just as the eyes, ears and mouths might represent the watchful agents so necessary for the Cecil family's successful peaceful administration of Elizabethan England.

Happy 1st Birthday Tudor Society. Perhaps next year we should have a birthday party and all come dressed as our favourite Tudor portrait? I fancy the wearing the outfit in the Rainbow portrait, especially the hat.

MELANIE V TAYLOR

NOTES

1 The copyright of the poster for the film, Elizabeth, is thought to belong to Universal Pictures, the publisher of the film or the graphic artist. A copy of the image may be found on www.MoviePostersDB.com

2 **http://www.thetudorswiki.com/page/The+Tudors+Costumes+%3A+Men's+Dress** an interesting page. **http://www.theanneboleynfiles.com/resources/tudor-life/tudor-clothes/** Bess Chilver wrote a fabulous article on Tudor clothes for The Anne Boleyn files back in 2010.

3 There was a high body count with lots of fake blood and at the end of the performance a couple of members of the cast came on stage and were scrubbing away the blood of that performance. The stage was an interesting shade of pink.

4 This image was scanned from *Gloriana : Portraits of Elizabeth I* by Roy Strong. On the internet it is labelled as being on a charter for Ashbourne School. This is actually the first letter of the founding charter of Emmanuel College, Cambridge and is by Hilliard .

5 **http://www.virtualjamestown.org/images/white_debry_html/jamestown.html is the link for those of you who want to see the work of John White.**

6 **http://www.andrewgrahamdixon.com/archive/readArticle/245** published in 2002.

7 **https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Stevan_Dedijer**

Melanie V. Taylor managed to fulfil her ambition to complete a degree by studying part-time for a Bachelor's degree in the History of Art Architecture & Design at Kingston University and then went on to the University of Kent at Canterbury to study full-time for a taught Master of Arts degree in Medieval & Tudor Studies.

As a result of Melanie's researches for her Master's dissertation she came across some images in our National Archives, Kew, London that intrigued her. She was looking for images that might have been drawn or painted by Levina Teerlinc and now believes that she stumbled on a source of evidence for political comment that is not often seen and even more rarely discussed.

Her Novel, **The Truth of the Line**, tells the story of Nicholas Hilliard and his relationship with Elizabeth, Virgin Queen of England and her various courtiers, and investigates Melanie's intriguing discovery in a fast paced novel format.

"Anne is mine..."

Elizabeth Taylor and the fight to play Anne Boleyn

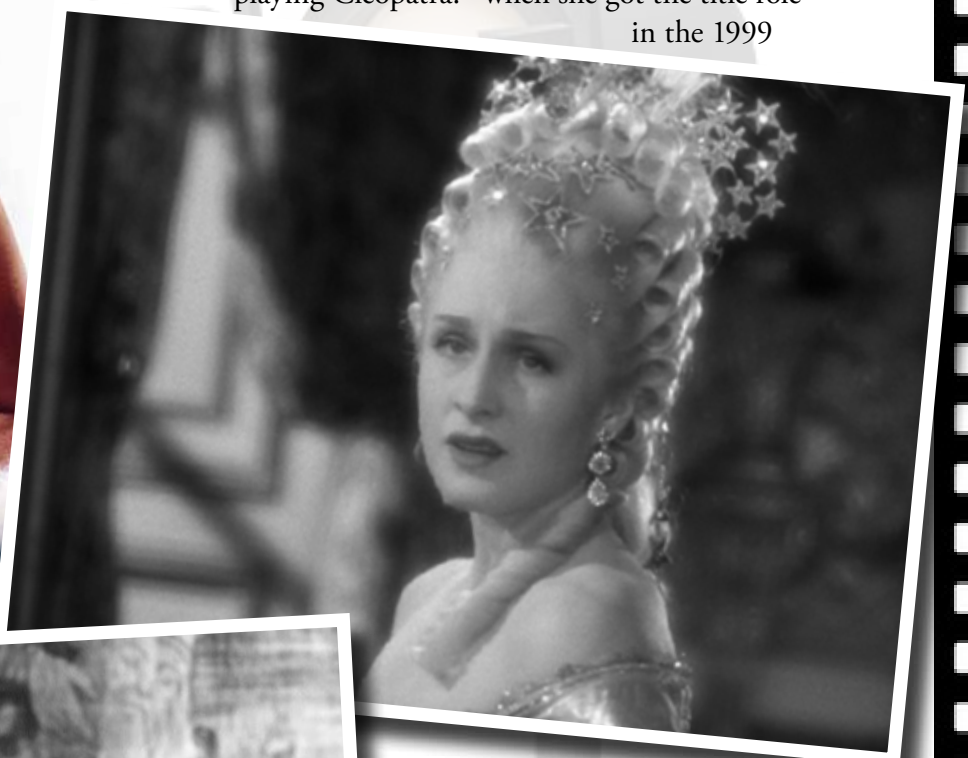
by Gareth Russell

The marathon casting sessions to fill the role of Scarlett O'Hara in *Gone with the Wind* are the stuff of movie-making lore. When up-and-coming British actress Vivien Leigh got the part, she snatched it from beneath the noses of some of the biggest names in Hollywood, including an enraged Bette Davis, who carried a grudge against Leigh for the rest of her career. By the time *Gone with the Wind* went into production, its inspiration – Margaret Mitchell's novel about a spoiled socialite struggling to rebuild her life against the backdrop of the American Civil War – had already won the Pulitzer and gone into its twenty-ninth print. But Scarlett O'Hara was not the only role that fired the imagination, ambitions and spite of stars, casting agents and producers in the days when the studio system reigned supreme. An adaptation of a best-selling novel, like *Gone with the Wind*, or a particularly successful play, such as *A Streetcar Named Desire*, had the added allure of giving an actor a part that was already well-known in a production with a better chance of success than a fresh script. That trend has not died with the studio system – apparently dozens of well-known actresses were tested for Daisy Buchanan in Baz Luhrmann's take on *The Great Gatsby*, before Carey Mulligan got a phone-call that began with the words, "Hello, is that Daisy?" Equally, when a story based on a famous historical episode offered the chance to play a real-life character, competition could often be fierce. Like the novel, a historical character had the bonus of already being well known and carrying a certain gravitas. Who, for instance, was not rightly impressed to hear that Helen Mirren was playing Elizabeth II or Meryl Streep was taking on Margaret Thatcher?

There had already been a scrap a few years before *Gone with the Wind* for the leading role in Irving Thalberg's *Marie Antoinette*. Suitability for the role of the ethereal blonde Austrian did not stand in the way of certain Hollywood stars driving after the part with a mania – Joan Crawford, a smouldering brunette oozing the Art Deco's inimitable brand of sophisticated sexuality, was incandescent when the role went to Thalberg's wife Norma Shearer,

the self-styled "Queen of MGM", who looked eerily like the original and was nominated for an Oscar for her depiction of Marie-Antoinette

from a naïve fourteen year-old to a stoic thirty-seven year-old facing death at the hands of her enemies. Particularly famous historical people had an inevitable appeal for actresses – as the young Chilean actress Leonor Varela said, "What actress doesn't dream of playing Cleopatra?" when she got the title role in the 1999



television adaptation of Margaret George's novel, *The Memoirs of Cleopatra*. Despite landing the lead in *Mary of Scotland* (1936), the jagged and witty Katharine Hepburn confessed later that she would have been happy with a supporting role – "I thought Mary was a ninny," she said, with

her trademark frankness, "I wanted to play Elizabeth."

The author of *Mary of Scotland* was Maxwell Anderson, an American playwright whose epic historical-based plays proved Broadway gold for decades, and Hollywood could not get enough of adapting them for the cinema. On the silver screen, Anderson saw Katharine Hepburn play his Mary, Queen of Scots in 1936, Bette Davis play his Elizabeth I in 1939, and Ingrid Bergman play his Joan of Arc in 1948. But it took over twenty years for one of Anderson's biggest successes, *Anne of the Thousand Days*, to make the transition from screen to stage.

When it made its Broadway début at the Shubert Theatre in December 1948, *Anne of the Thousand Days* was a huge success. The play, which chronicled the rise and fall of Anne Boleyn, starred Joyce Redman in the title role and the debonair Rex Harrison as Henry VIII. Both were nominated for a Tony award, though only Harrison won. An unashamedly sympathetic interpretation of Anne's character, the play nonetheless could not be turned into a movie because of the allegations of incest and adultery that brought about Boleyn's murder in 1536. In the 1940s and 1950s, Hollywood's creativity was firmly regulated by the Hays Code, which sought to preserve "public decency" by limiting what topics could be discussed or portrayed on screen. So it was not until the end of the 1960s that Hal B. Wallis decided that the time was right to bring Anderson's Anne to the screen and there was no doubt in his mind that he wanted Richard Burton to play the King. Burton signed on to play the monarch, who Anderson depicted as a dangerous mix of a spoiled child and a ruthless dictator, and significant changes were made to the script – for instance, the character of Queen Katherine of Aragon, played in the movie by Greek actress Irene Papas, did not feature in the stage play at all – before the hunt for Anne began.

Burton's wife, Elizabeth Taylor, felt they didn't need to look too far. During a lunch between Burton and the producer, the latter noticed that "Elizabeth hung on my every word. I was surprised by her attention". She wanted Anne for herself or, as she put it at dinner a few weeks later, "Hal, I've been thinking about it for weeks. I *have* to play Anne Boleyn!" Taylor had already been nominated for an Oscar for her performance as Cleopatra six years earlier, in a movie that first brought her and Burton together. She had also won two Oscars – for playing a prostitute in *Butterfield 8* and starring opposite Burton in the movie adaptation of *Who's afraid of Virginia Woolf?* Now, she wanted them to play perhaps one of the few couples more dysfunctional than *Virginia*'s George and Martha – Henry VIII and Anne Boleyn.

There were certainly some compelling reasons for considering Elizabeth for the part, leaving aside her status as one of the most famous women in the world and her proven acting talent. Her marriage with Burton was certainly volatile enough to provide sufficient real-life inspiration for the spiralling horror of Anne's relationship with Henry. By 1969, Burton and Taylor had established themselves as icons of the jet-setting era in a relationship that was a poisonous mix of the toxic and the glamorous. Taylor's jewel collection was already legendary – she owned *La Peregrina*, a magnificent pearl that had once been given to Mary Tudor as a wedding fit by Philip II of Spain and then passed through the hands of owners like the Bonapartes and members of the Irish aristocracy. They knew real-life royalty and nobility: the Burton-Taylors were invited to dinner at the Parisian mansion of the Duke and Duchess of Windsor, hosted by Princess Elisabeth of Yugoslavia, and invited to spend the weekend at the countryside château of Baron and Baroness de Rothschild. Like Anne Boleyn, Taylor's most memorable feature were her eyes – in Boleyn's case, dark and alluring, in Taylor's a beautiful lilac.

But beneath the glamour, the cracks were appearing in Elizabeth Taylor's life, which the attempts to tell Anne's story both mirrored and exacerbated. A marriage between two alcoholics

was a recipe for disaster – Burton himself called it "a first-class recipe for suicide". In January 1969, it was noted that Elizabeth had spent much of the holidays "unfocused, unable to walk straight, talking in a slow meaningless baby voice." The Burton-Taylors' marriage was by turns co-dependent and deeply cruel. As his alcoholism spiralled, Burton could be remorselessly cruel to his beautiful wife. Once, when she asked him to hold her hand, he replied, "I do not wish to touch your hands. They are large and ugly and red and masculine." Not just capable of nastiness to his wife, when in his cups Burton could be breathtakingly rude to just about anybody. To his wife's horror, he once got so drunk at a dinner party in Paris that he turned to their hostess, Wallis Simpson, and told her she was the most vulgar woman he had ever met. Without missing a beat, the Duchess replied that Burton was one of only two people around the dinner table who didn't have an aristocratic title.

Burton was not supportive of his wife's dream of playing Anne Boleyn. Operating on Maxwell Anderson's decision to date Anne's birth to 1507, the movie began when Anne was in her late teens and ended shortly before her twenty-ninth birthday. Taylor was thirty-seven and her unhealthy lifestyle had led to her first of many battles with weight gain. When she pushed for the chance to play Anne, Burton shot her down – "Sorry, luv," he laughed, "you're too long in the tooth." The part eventually went to the twenty-seven year-old French-Canadian actress Geneviève Bujold and apparently, from the moment he saw her, Hal B. Wallis knew there was no one else he wanted- "The minute she appeared on the screen, I was riveted," he wrote later. "I saw a tiny, seemingly fragile woman made of steel - willful, passionate, intense. She was exactly the actress I wanted to play Anne Boleyn."

Despite the setback, Taylor was still wanted to accompany Richard to the set and a supporting clause was subsequently written into his contract. Bujold did not particularly like this, particularly in light of the Burton-Taylors' unstable behaviour, which many found distracting and counter-productive. When they took a break during filming and went on a long weekend to Paris, the couple's arguments were so epic that the press found out about them and began running headlines about "the Battling Burtons". Back in England, Bujold was livid when Elizabeth interrupted filming by arriving on set during one of the movie's most important scenes. Furious, Bujold allegedly vowed, "I'm going to give that bitch an acting lesson she'll never forget." The scene in question was Henry and Anne's final confrontation in the Tower of London which, if anyone has seen it, was unquestionably one of Bujold's finest moments, among many. Taylor did, however, cameo in the movie. At one point, a laughing courtier and her *beau* interrupts Queen Katherine as she prays.

The courtier, who has just come from a masked ball, covers her face quickly but, peaking through its gilded slits are the unforgettable lilac eyes of Elizabeth Taylor.

Richard Burton and Hal Wallis were probably right when they said that by 1969 Elizabeth Taylor quite simply was not right for the part of Anne Boleyn, despite her zeal to play her. *Anne of the Thousand Days* is now regarded as a Tudor classic and the performances of both of its leads won rave reviews. At the Royal Variety Show that year, Her Majesty the Queen even took time to congratulate Hal B. Wallis on the success of his biopics. Bujold was nominated for an Oscar, which she lost to Maggie Smith, and a Golden Globe, which she won. Bujold's take on Anne Boleyn has acquired a near-iconic status and decades later, when she was interviewed by Professor Susan Bordo, Bujold paused before signing off with a line that many of her fans would still agree with: "Anne is mine."

GARETH RUSSELL

FURTHER READING

Liz by C. David Heymann (1995); *The Most Beautiful Woman in the World: The Obsessions, Passions, and Courage of Elizabeth Taylor* by Ellis Amburn (2000); *The Creation of Anne Boleyn: A new look at England's most notorious queen* by Susan Bordo (2013)

Gareth Russell read History at Saint Peter's College at the University of Oxford and he then gained his honours in medieval history with a postgraduate at Queen's University, Belfast. His first novel, Popular, set in Belfast, was published in 2011.

Since then he has written another novel, which was adapted for the stage, as well as two works of non-fiction and several plays. He is currently working on a full-length biography of Queen Catherine Howard. He is a columnist for Eile magazine, Tudor Life, and author of the blog Confessions of a Ci-Devant.

He is also the author of "A History of the English Monarchy".

Obituary

The team at the Tudor Society would like to offer their condolences to the family and friends of Suzanne Crossley.

Su was a regular visitor to the Tudor Society website and contributed last month's article about the history of Tudor watermills, along with other useful advice to the team. She was also Claire Ridgway's best friend of 30+ years.

Su sadly passed away on 29th July while on holiday in Austria. She will be sadly missed by all who knew her.

Suzanne Crossley is survived by her husband Andy (a regular historical photographer for the Tudor Society) and their sons Ben and Matthew.

by Tim Ridgway

Su with Claire Ridgway

COWDRAY HOUSE lies just to the east of the lovely West Sussex town of Midhurst. Visitors will love the "classic" appearance of its twin Tudor towers in a style seen in much larger places such as Hampton Court Palace. Sadly, this great Tudor house was largely destroyed by a fire in September 1793. Luckily it was of a good stone construction and it is these ruins which remain today.

Cowdray house has a fascinating Tudor history. In the 1520s, Henry VII's uncle, Sir David Owen, began construction of the building on the site of the former home "Coudreye" which he had acquired upon the death of his wife Mary Bohun in 1496.

Just nine years later, his son Henry sold the estate to Sir William Fitzwilliam and by 1533 Henry VIII had granted a license to Fitzwilliam's trustees for 600 acres of meadow, pasture and wood and allowed him to build fortifications.

Henry VIII himself made three visits to the house during his reign, in August 1538, July 1539 and August 1545. The house was then later visited by Henry's son, Edward VI in July 1552, and by his daughter Elizabeth I in August 1591. Others of interest staying in the house include Mary of Guise, widow of James V of Scotland who stayed a night at Cowdray in October 1551.

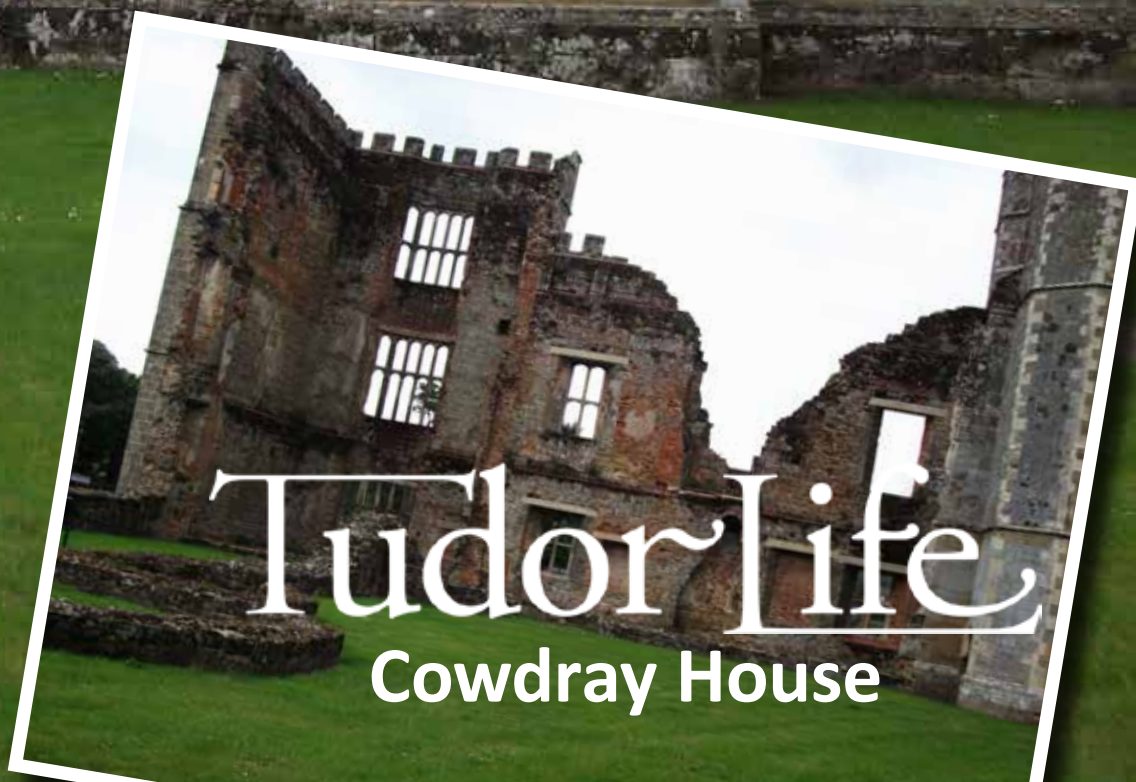
In November 1538, Margaret Pole, 8th Countess of Salisbury was imprisoned at Cowdray until September 1539. She was removed to the Tower of London and was executed in May 1541.

The ruins of Cowdray are not open all year around due to difficulties in staffing a glorious building which is sadly not on the usual "tourist trail". Please do check out their website for visiting open hours: http://www.cowdray.co.uk/historic-cowdray/

Tudor Places

Enjoy these wonderful photos from Tudor Society member Geoff Ridgway. Photos © 2015 Ridgway

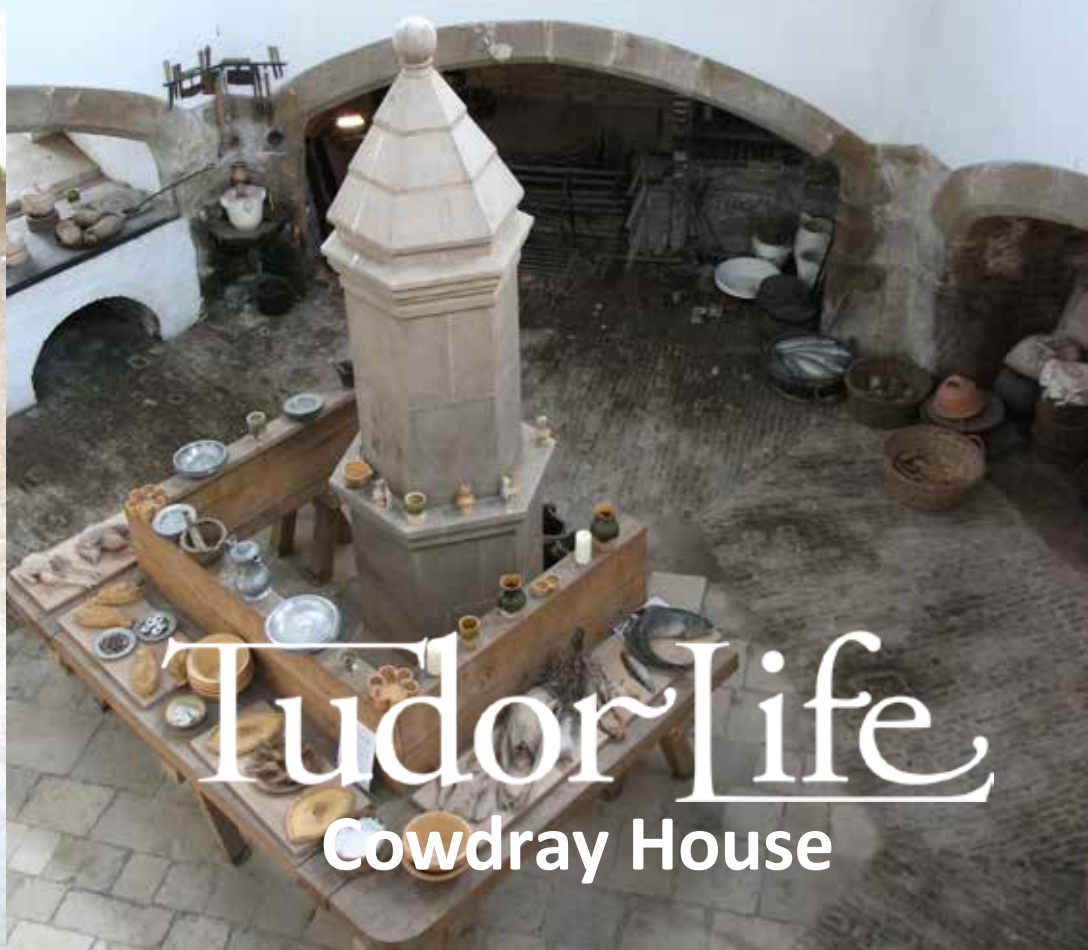
Tudor Places



Tudor Life

Cowdray House

Tudor Places



Tudor Life

Cowdray House

Tudor Places

Tudor Life

Cowdray House

Tudor Places

Tudor Life

Cowdray House

ON THE TRAIL OF KATHERINE OF ARAGON

In April this year, **Natalie Grueninger** spent seventeen days travelling around Spain, researching her second book about the wives of Henry VIII...

Recently I spent time in Spain, in a campervan, as part of the research for my second non-fiction book, co-authored with Sarah Morris, '*In the Footsteps of the Six Wives of Henry VIII*'. With my husband and two children in tow, we drove 4,500 km in search of historic sites associated with the first wife of King Henry VIII, a woman of indomitable spirit and courage, Katherine of Aragon.

Our travels took us from the country's vibrant capital, Madrid, through the undulating plains of Castilla-La Mancha, to the dramatic desert-like landscapes of Andalucia, a region rich in Moorish history and architecture. From there, we made our way along Spain's Mediterranean coast, with its long stretches of turquoise waters, to the cosmopolitan seaside city of Barcelona. We then wound our way along the breathtaking Bay of Biscay coastline, through the soft-rolling hills of northern Spain, to Galicia in the north-western Iberian peninsula, where pilgrims from around the world converge on its ancient capital, Santiago de Compostela. We then journeyed through Castilla-Leon, a region dotted with enchanting medieval towns and famous for its many historic and cultural treasures, before making our way back to Madrid.

While I have visited many palaces, castles and stately homes in England associated with Katherine of Aragon, this was my first time in her beloved Spain, an experience made all the more significant because of my own ancestral connections to this land. The days I spent traversing Katherine's country greatly enriched my understanding of her life and, stirred the soul. For it's in this land of diverse landscapes and climatic extremes that

Katherine was born to Ferdinand II of Aragon and Isabella I of Castile – *Los Reyes Católicos* – in December 1485, and where she spent the first fifteen years of her life, before leaving for England to marry the heir to the Tudor Dynasty, Prince Arthur.

Over the course of my travels I saw many places where Katherine and her family had once lived, many of which will be featured in some detail in my upcoming book, however, I'd like to share with you five highlights from my trip.

ARCHBISHOP'S PALACE ALCALÁ DE HENARES

To the north-east of Madrid lies the town of Alcalá de Henares, where Katherine's story begins. It's here that the Spanish *infanta* was born on 16 December 1485, in the great fortified palace of the Archbishops of Toledo. Unfortunately, a fire swept through the palace buildings in August 1939, destroying virtually the entire complex, with the exception of a small section of the facade, which was later incorporated into a new building. This building is today home to the bishopric of Alcalá and not open to the public, however, it is possible to arrange a guided tour (in Spanish) of two of the medieval towers that formed part of the defensive wall surrounding the palace. As part of this tour, arranged through the Tourism Office in Plaza de Santos Niños, visitors gain access to an exhibition area called 'Antiquarian', where archaeological remains of the old palace are on display.

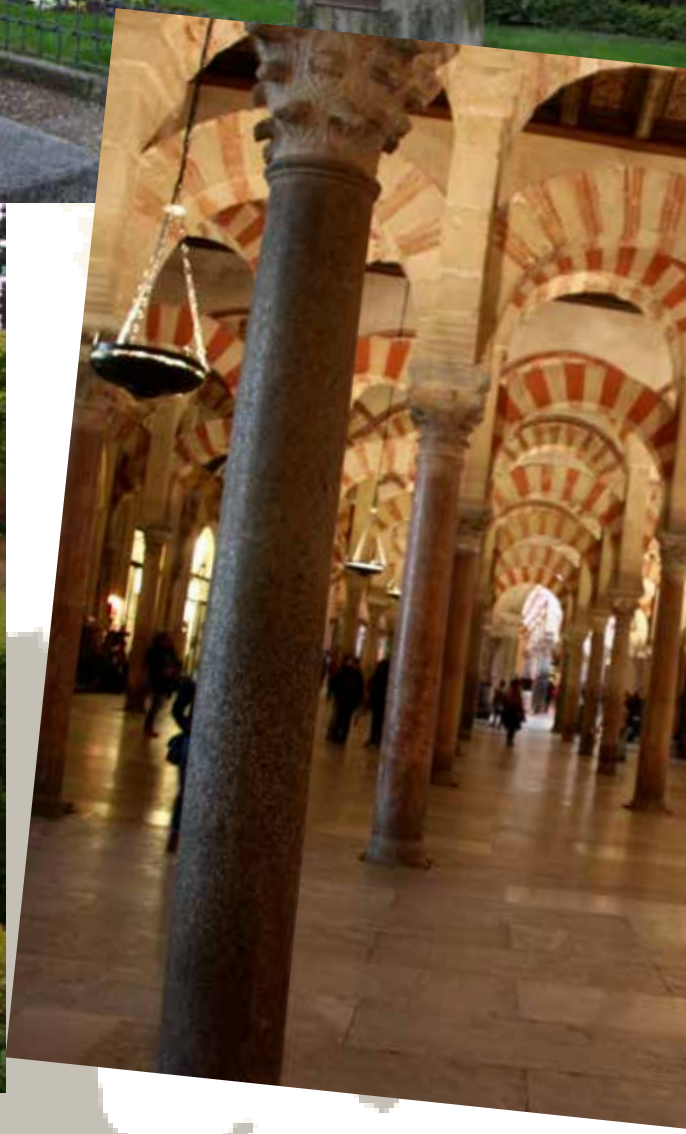
While there may not be much left to see of the buildings that witnessed the birth of a future queen of England, this remains a powerful and evocative place. So often when people hear the name Katherine of Aragon, they picture a stout middle-aged woman, rejected and abandoned by her husband and living unhappily in virtual isolation, but here, on the grounds of the once magnificent *Palacio Arzobispal*, we are free to imagine a youthful and exuberant Katherine, as depicted in a beautiful bronze statue of the young princess installed near the palace remains in 2007.

ALCÁZAR OF CORDOBA

To the south-west of the historic city of Cordoba lies the Alcázar (castle) of the Christian Monarchs. This imposing fortress, on the right bank of the Guadalquivir River, has throughout its long history served as the temporary residence of many kings and queens, including Katherine's parents, who are known to have spent long periods of time there with their children by their side. Today, the palace and its delightful gardens are open to the public. Keep an eye out for the statues of Isabella, Ferdinand and Christopher Columbus in the Avenue of Kings. I must confess, though, that the highlight of my visit to Cordoba was not the former residence of the Christian Monarchs, it was in fact the extraordinary 'Mosque-Cathedral', a symbol of the many religious changes Cordoba has undergone over the centuries, and one of the most beautiful and fascinating buildings I have ever seen.

ALCÁZAR OF SEVILLE

Seville's Alcazar was without doubt one of the major highlights of our trip. It is a magnificent complex of buildings dating from different periods of time, each with their own distinct architectural styles, ranging from Mudéjar to Gothic. When in Seville, Katherine and her family resided there, often for long periods of time, especially during the conquest of Granada. Today, the *Cuarto Real Alto*, or Upper Royal Apartments, is the official residence of Their Majesties, the King and Queen of Spain in Seville and formed part of the royal apartments during the reign of Katherine's parents. This area



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can only be accessed by guided tour, so be sure to book a place first thing in the morning to avoid being disappointed, and if you don't fancy waiting in long queues, book your tickets to the Alcázar online prior to visiting.

You can easily spend several hours exploring this splendid site. Make sure you allow plenty of time to stroll through the enchanting gardens, where magical courtyards, pools and fountains abound. Remember to allow enough time to visit Seville's immense cathedral, said to be the third largest in Europe, and home to the tomb of Christopher Columbus, which may or may not contain the famous explorer's remains, but that's another story!

THE ALHAMBRA PALACE

Set against the backdrop of the Sierra Nevada, The Alhambra Palace must be seen to be believed. It is a vast and breathtaking palace and fortress complex in Granada built by the Nasrid kings in the thirteenth century, and added to in later centuries by subsequent rulers, including Charles V, who ordered the construction of a Renaissance palace that still stands to this day.

Katherine spent time at the Alhambra during the last two years of her life in Spain, from where she penned love letters to her betrothed, Prince Arthur. The family's royal apartments were in the Nasrid Palaces, a complex of three independent palaces: The Mexaur, Comares Palace and the Palace of the Lions, all of which are of unsurpassed beauty and, thankfully, open to the public.

As I toured the site and explored the extensive grounds, with its fragrant gardens, water features and orange scented courtyards, it dawned on me just how difficult those first few years in England must have been for the young Spanish princess. She spent the last months of her Spanish life at the Alhambra and the first few months of her married life to Arthur at Ludlow Castle in Shropshire. Having visited both, I cannot think of two more different places.

When planning your visit, be sure to pre-book tickets well ahead of time and don't forget to book a time slot to tour the Nasrid Palaces, as these fill up quickly. You might also like to visit the Royal Chapel of Granada where Katherine's parents and sister Juana are buried.

ROYAL TESTAMENTARY PALACE, MEDINA DEL CAMPO

The present building stands in the Plaza Mayor de la Hispanidad, on the remains of the former royal palace in which Isabella I lived, dictated her will and died on 26 November 1504. It's also where the Treaty of Medina del Campo was negotiated and signed in March 1489, which led to among other things, the marriage of Katherine and Arthur Tudor. The English ambassadors who travelled to Medina del Campo were there to negotiate on behalf of their king, but were also eager to see and meet the three-year-old girl who would one day become England's queen.

Today, this building is home to the *Museum of Isabel la Católica* where visitors can learn more about the life of this remarkable woman and see the famous painting by Eduardo Rosales, of Isabella dictating her will, recreated in one of the rooms.

NATALIE GRUENINGER

Tip! Plan your visits in advance, as many historical sites in Spain, especially those out of the main cities, close for a couple of hours at lunch time, which made visiting more than one in a day, tricky. Also, note any festival days, as these too will affect opening times.

Natalie Grueninger and Sarah Morris' second book will be published soon and will undoubtedly be a fascinating read.

Facts and Fictions and THE OTHER BOLEYN GIRL

Believe everything you see and read? Think again. **Kyra Kramer** discusses this ever-popular Tudor tale...

I ENJOYED *The Other Boleyn Girl*, both the book (2001) and the movie (2008), but for both I had to willing suspend my disbelief with such suspension that I could have built a mental model of the Golden Gate Bridge. Others have written eloquently about the misinformation that the book and its movie contained vis-à-vis Anne Boleyn, but the misrepresentations regarding Mary Boleyn have been addressed infrequently and with less passion. Ironically, in a tale centering Mary Boleyn she is STILL the overlooked other Boleyn girl. I want to correct that, at least to some extent.

The book initially caused some fluttering in my heart, because it depicted Mary as a virgin upon her marriage, and did not promulgate the myth that Mary was the mistress of the king of France. The "evidence" of Mary's affair with Francis I is so paltry that one cannot help but be amazed the notion ever gained any traction. For one thing, there are only three pieces of historical data that tie Mary to the French monarch:

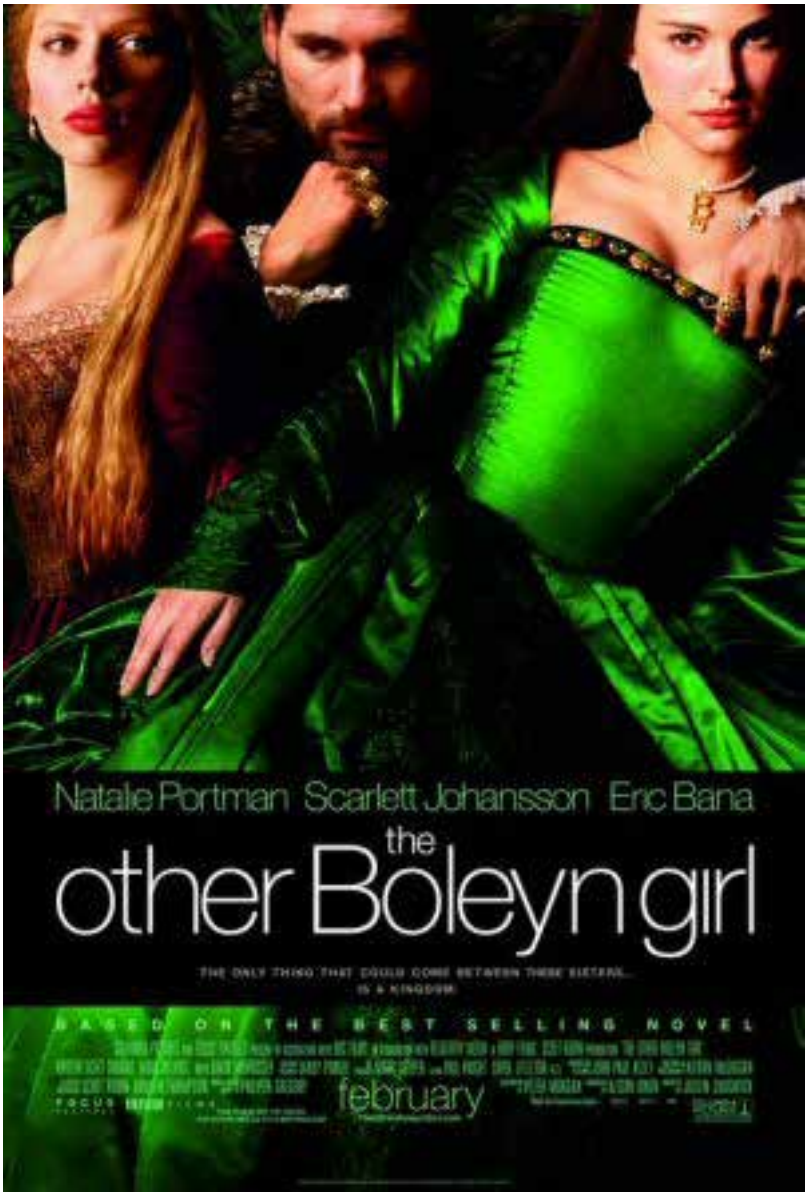
One accusation was written in Rodolfo Pio the Bishop of Faenza's letter to Prothonotary Ambrogio on the 10th March 1536 (LP x.450): "Francis said also that they are committing more follies than ever in England, and are saying and printing all the ill they can against the Pope and the Church; that "that woman" pretended to have miscarried of a son, not being really with child, and, to keep up the deceit, would allow no one to attend on her but her sister, whom the French king knew here in France 'per una grandissima ribalda et infame sopre tutte.'"

The second accusation was by Nicholas Sander in his 1585 book *Rise and Growth of the English Schism:* "Soon afterwards she appeared at the French court where she was called the English Mare, because of her shameless behaviour; and then the royal mule, when she became acquainted with the King of France."

The third and final accusation was by Lord Herbert of Cherbury in his book written in 1649 entitled *Life and Raigne of King Henry the Eighth*, in which he quotes William Rastall, the author of a biography of Sir Thomas More written around 1557. Rastall wrote that while in France Mary Boleyn "behav'd herself so licentiously, that she was vulgarly

call'd the Hackney of England, till being adopted to that King's familiarity, she was termed his Mule."

As you can see, the only "evidence" of Mary having had sex with Frances I, *or anyone else at the French court*, that was given by a person **who was even alive at the same time as Mary Boleyn** was in the letter by Rodolfo Pio, the Bishop of Faenza, who was writing about *an event that was supposed to have happened more than two decades prior*.



I have to wonder why anyone, let alone a historian, would assume that a die-hard enemy of Anne Boleyn was telling the unvarnished truth about her sister. There are confirmed historical mistakes in the same sentence as the accusation of Mary's promiscuity in France. No credible historian believes that Anne Boleyn didn't miscarry in January of 1536, and it is well known that Mary did not attend Anne in the birthing room. Why, then, is the final part of a sentence full of erroneous information given so much credence? The taste for a Boleyn scandal has overridden academic prudence.

Furthermore, Mary was only in France for six months, from the fall of 1514 to the spring of 1515. She would have been a well-born virgin in her mid-teens and thus would have been under intense chaperonage. Although older court noblewomen sometimes took lovers, an unmarried woman was expected to be chaste in order to marry (Rickman, 2008:203). If the French king had deflowered Mary, the young daughter of an English ambassador, it would have raised some diplomatic dust. At the very least the Francis would have had to have given Mary a nice gift for her dowry or made a present to her father. Additionally, at no time in the *years* following his coronation was Mary Boleyn ever listed by a contemporary as one of his mistresses. It was only during the height of Anne Boleyn's unpopularity and demonization that her sister Mary became the "great slut". Suddenly anti-Boleyn sympathizers started claiming that Francis I had called her his "English Mare" because he had "ridden" her so much. The gap in Mary's attendance at the French court and everyone's "memory" of her harlotries makes the accusation suspicious to say the least.

Although I liked that the book did not buy into the idea of the sexually voracious Mary Boleyn, it did stray rather far away from facts in quest of a good storyline. Mary was never an acknowledge mistress of Henry VIII; the king never appointed mistresses and was always discrete. Amy License, in her book *The Many Mistresses and Six Wives of Henry VIII*, explains that Mary's affair with Henry took place in a 'traditional' way for courtier's wives. The romance between Henry and Mary did not begin until after her marriage to William Carrey,

and involved the occasional tryst rather than a torrid affair. Moreover, although either man could plausibly be the father of Mary's daughter Catherine Carey Knollys, Henry was in the wrong place at the wrong time to have been a likely candidate to have sired Mary's son. Henry Carey would have been conceived at the end of May or the beginning of June in 1524, and the king had definitely returned to Windsor by April 23 of that year while Mary and William remained in their manor of New Hall in Essex.

Mary and Anne probably had a better relationship that was displayed in the book or movie as well. When Mary was banished from court for making a disadvantageous marriage (the king was now a brother-in-law to a simple man at arms!), it was Anne who sent Mary a gold cup to help the newlyweds establish a household. Mary also wrote to Thomas Cromwell to beg for funds, but it wasn't because her sister had entirely spurned her. There was certainly never an incident wherein the young Henry Carey was taken away from his mother by his jealous and corrupt Aunty Anne.

The movie, which was as loosely based on the book as the book was on history, made the disconnect between historical fact and historical fiction even more obvious. Some of the scenes that stood out for me were: 1) The very dark (in reality she was very fair in coloring) Catherine of Aragon's forcing Mary Boleyn to sing to her, as a way to humiliated Henry's latest mistress. Catherine, if she knew who Henry's mistresses were, would have never humiliated *herself* by acknowledging jealously. 2) Anne mocked the king's riding ability. No. No one would have mocked the king in that time period. He own the universe as far as his ability to hurt your family went. 3) Henry raped Anne. There is no evidence whatsoever that the king ever raped his sweetheart. 4) Mary was practically forced to be Henry's sex-toy by her unscrupulous parents. Thomas Boleyn wasn't exactly a warm parent, but there is no indication he pimped out his daughters. 5) Mary wrote to Henry to try to save Anne from beheading. Mary wasn't even allowed at court by then, having angered the king by marrying William Stafford. 6) The raw ridiculousness of Mary storming into a palace to 'rescue' the infant Elizabeth. There is no way the king would have allowed his child, newly bastardized or not, simply swept away by a maternal relative. The king's offspring were raised in royal nurseries and given royal education and households, as befitting monarchal blood.

What *The Other Boleyn Girl* has chiefly done is to make the latest incarnation of Mary a goo-hearted and nubile victim instead of a slutty simpleton in the popular imagination. I'm not sure this is an 'improvement'. It hardly does justice to a woman strong enough to flout convention and her family's will by marrying a second son for love.

Mary died on July 19, 1543. She was the last of the Boleyn children but not the last of her line. Her daughter and son would produce between them more than 20 children, most of who lived to adulthood. Mary's descendants, who include luminaries like Charles Darwin and Winston Churchill, have continued to thrive throughout the centuries. She is the ancestress of Queen Elizabeth II as well as of William Duke of Cambridge through his mother, Lady Diana Spencer (Hart, 2009). The bloodline of Mary Boleyn Carey Stafford sits on the throne of England. The other Boleyn girl, in spite of the book or the movie or Anne's everlasting interest to the public, has had the last laugh.

KYRA KRAMER

Kyra Cornelius Kramer is the author of **Blood Will Tell, The Jezebel Effect** and the forthcoming **Henry VIII and his Health: In a Nutshell**. She has a canny way of looking at the world of history through fresh eyes, which enables us to see things in a different way.

QUIZ ANSWERS...

SEPTEMBER FEAST DAYS

HARVEST HOME

The festival of 'harvest home' or 'ingathering' was, and still is, celebrated when the harvest was safely done. It was a thanksgiving for God's help with the harvest and for the crop. It was essential to get the wheat and barley in before the autumn rains and cooler weather, otherwise the community could face starvation – wheat was needed for bread and barley was needed for ale. Professor Ronald Hutton explained the importance of the harvest in the TV series "Tudor Monastery Farm". He explained that Bloody Flux, a disease common in the Tudor period, was actually caused by malnutrition because when the body was completely famished it suffered an intestinal haemorrhage. Famine was what happened when there was a bad harvest so people celebrated a good harvest and gave thanks for their farming success.
Harvesting was hard work so those involved had every right to celebrate when it was done. There would be much merriment and singing, and probably feasting and drinking too! One tradition associated with Harvest Home was the picking of a maiden as the Harvest Queen who would be carried on top of the barley cart. The merriment might also involved games. One traditional harvest game involved the men carrying barley sheaves and trying to get into the barn which was guarded by the women holding buckets of water to pour all over them.
Another tradition associated with Harvest Home, which is an old Celtic tradition, was for the last wheat sheaf of the harvest to be made into a corn dolly, known as a *t* According to pagan beliefs, harvesting a crop left the spirit of the crop, or the goddess of fertility, homeless and so this cailleach gave the spirit a home for the winter. The cailleach might then be ploughed into the first farrow in the following spring. Another idea is that the cailleach was drenched with water to use as a rain charm in the spring.
Other traditions included burning last year's doll when a new one was made, burying the cailleach well away from any crops if the harvest had been poor.
Harvest Home marked the end of the agricultural year.

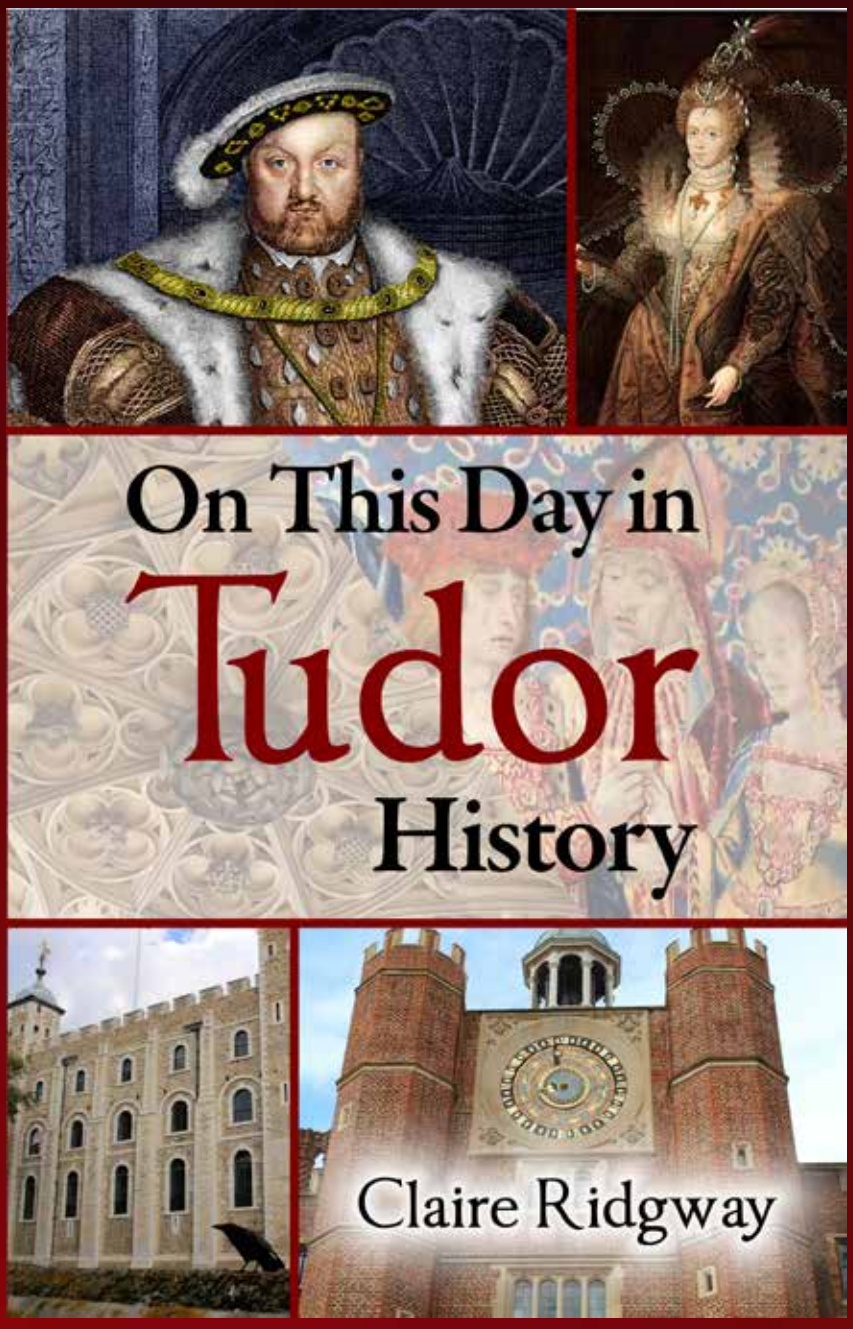
MICHAELMAS

Michaelmas, or the Feast of St. Michael and All Angels, was celebrated on 29th September, and was the feast day of St Michael the Archangel and Protector of the Church. St Michael is referred to as "the archangel Michael" in the Book of Jude, which tells of him "disputing with the devil about the body of Moses", and then the Book of Revelation tells of a war in heaven and depicts St Michael as leading God's armies against the dragon (Satan) and his angels, and defeating him.

The Feast of St Michael was officially the first day of the agricultural year but sometimes coincided with Harvest Home which, as I've said, marked the end of the agricultural year. Michaelmas was the time to prepare the fields for the next crop and it was also the time when accounts were done (now that the harvest was in and could be accounted for), annual rents were collected and bills were paid.

It was traditional to enjoy a feast of goose at this time of year. The geese had been fattened on the stubble land left over from the harvest and so were now perfect for slaughtering and cooking. Landlords would often have a Michaelmas goose cooked as a feast for their tenants.

CLAIRE RIDGWAY



Corn Dolly from Winterspells

A CHEST OF VIOLS

BY JANE MOULDER

Wardrobe Inventory in the Palace of Westminster 1542/3

Item: Elevin Vialles great and smale with 3 cases of wodde covered with blac lether to the same

In the King's Upper Library

Item: oone Viall

"receyvid of Phillip van wilder, mynstrell, in the kings privey chamber - Item: seven Vyalles great and smale

Inventory taken after Henry's death in 1547

Item: 19 Vialles greate and small with 3 cases of wodde couered with blacke leather to the same

Item: A chest collared redde with 6 Vialles hauinge the Kinges Armes

THESE are extracts from the two inventories of Henry VIII showing the entries for an instrument called a viol. The first inventory was taken in 1542/3 whilst Henry was still alive and the second was made in 1547, just after his death. It seems from the two inventories that Henry's collection of viols grew from 19 to 25 in the last 5 years of his life.

Unless you have a particular interest in early music, this instrument may not be known to you but during the 16th and 17th centuries, the viol was an incredibly popular and important instrument. The reason for this can partly be explained by the fact that this instrument crossed the social divide: it was considered a courtly instrument to be played by the nobility, it was an instrument played by professional musicians and, as the 16th century wore on and instruments became more affordable, it became a popular instrument for the amateur in the burgeoning middle and merchant classes. Another reason for its popularity was that it was one of those rare instruments that was considered dignified for both men and women to play. The majority of wind instruments were not considered appropriate for a courtly gentleman or a woman to play as one often had to "distort" one's face to play them and therefore not becoming. So wind instruments generally remained the preserve of professionals or the lower classes but keyboard and stringed instruments did not have this issue.

An English viol consort. A detail from the funerary painting commemorating the life of Sir Henry Unton, 1596 (National Portrait Gallery) This is one of the very few paintings of English musicians to survive from this period.

The viol was cultivated by courtly society and, along with the lute, it became the instrument of choice for gentleman amateurs. The Italian Baldassare Castiglione wrote in his "Book of the Courtier" that "*music is not just a decoration but a necessity for a courtier. It should be practiced in the presence of ladies because it predisposes one to all sorts of thoughts. And the music of four viols is very enchanting because it is very delicate, sweet and artful".* This book had a profound effect on the whole of Europe becoming an instant hit when it was first published in 1528. It went on to became one of the most widely printed books throughout the whole of the 16th century having been translated into 6 languages and taken up by over 20 printing centres across Europe. The book basically contains a blue-print of how one should behave in order to be considered a true gentleman or lady and the whole of European society did their very best to emulate the examples in the book.

Through various conversations and four different sections, Castiglione gives advice and guidance on how to behave and develop the attributes considered fitting of courtly behaviour. When it was eventually translated into English in 1561 by Charles Hoby it became an overnight sensation and had a lasting influence on the upper class's conception of what it was to be a true English gentlemen. It was Castiglione's assertion that the ability to appreciate and play music was considered to be an essential skill for any courtier "*I am not satisfied with our courtier unless he is also a musician and unless, as well as understanding and being able to read music, he can play several instruments."* He went on to say that music should only be performed in private and as a courtier one should not perform in public (that would have been considered ostentatious!). The fact that Castiglione appreciated viols no doubt helped their popularity.

However there is, as anyone who has tried to play an instrument will testify, a very big difference between wanting to play an instrument and actually developing a skill in performing on it! This fashion for playing the viol, as spurred on by Castiglione, was not always successful . The viol became a regular subject of jest by a number of dramatists with its players often assuming the role of an affected idiot. Shakespeare describes how Sir Andrew Aguecheek '*plays o' the viol de gamboys'* and

Baldassare Castiglione, Italian courtier, diplomat and soldier and author of one of the most popular books of the Renaissance "The Art of the Courtier".

describes the Princess such:

> *You are a fair viol, and your sense the strings;*
> *Who, finger'd to make the man his lawful music,*
> *Would draw heaven down, and all the gods to hearken;*
> *But being play'd upon before your time,*
> *Hell only danceth at so harsh a chime.*
> *(1.1.124-128)*

Being "played upon before your time" relates to the fact that a new stringed instrument needs to "mature" in order to develop its sound – much like people!

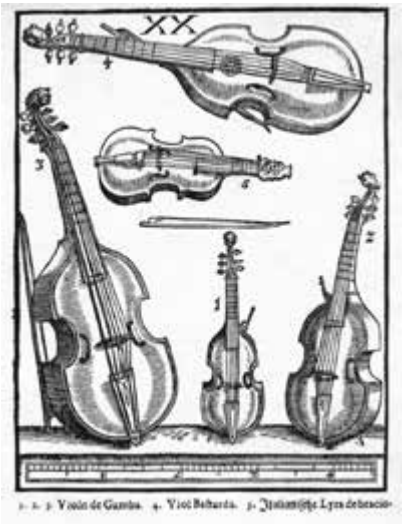
As playing the instrument became an essential attribute for amateurs and professionals alike, a considerable repertoire was developed for viols and viol consorts, much of which survives to this day. In England there is plenty of evidence from surviving household accounts and inventories to indicate that it was an instrument owned and played by a large proportion of the gentry. The instrument's popularity was no doubt helped by the fact that it was very much a consort instrument and therefore played with other people, giving a

A consort of Viols painted in 1536 on a wall painting in the Knight's Hall of Goldegg, Austria.

social aspect to performing on it. It was therefore well suited to the new popular pastime of domestic music making. The viol would have been played both in a "pure consorts" (i.e. a number of the same type of instrument) or in a "mixed consort" (i.e. a mixture of different types of instrument), so it could be played in a variety of contexts and there was also a strong social side to playing it. The instrument was also well suited to a wide range of music and playing styles and was perfect for renaissance polyphony such as motets and fantasies or dance music. The viol also offered good support for the voice and would have been perfect for accompanying the other courtly art, singing.

The other aspect that helped its popularity was that the instrument was fairly approachable for a keen amateur. The wide fingerboard has frets which help the ability to play it in tune and all the different sizes of instruments are held, fingered and bowed in exactly the same way, meaning that someone could easily change instrument and be equally proficient. This is something that distinguishes the viol from the violin and cello which are fingered and held quite differently from each other.

The viol wasn't only popular in England but also throughout Europe. Michael Praetorius, the German composer, organist and music publisher, stated that the use of a consort of viols was "*an everyday matter*". However, the make-up of the consorts changed from country to country. In England, according to Thomas Mace, writing in the 17th century, the practice was that "*your best provision (and most Compleat) will be, a Good Chest of Viols; six in Number; viz. 2 Basses, 2 Tenors and 2 Trebles' All Truly and Proportionably Suited".* But in Germany and elsewhere a combination of larger sized instruments would have been more normal, (one tenor, two basses and a contrabass) giving a completely different sound from the English Consort.



A depiction of different types of viol by Martin Praetorius published in 1612

Looking a little more closely at the viol and its history, there are two statements which are often made about the viol. The first is that it is an instrument dating from the medieval period which was developed in the renaissance. The second is that the violin developed from the viol. Both these statements are completely wrong!

In the 15th and 16th century, spellings were not standardised (as illustrated by the inventory examples at the top of this article) and consequently it can be difficult for a modern researcher to determine what the actual name of the instrument is or which is the actual instrument being referred to. There was a medieval bowed instrument called a Vielle or Viel which was actually a type of fiddle. This spelling mistakenly

Various early depictions showing viol de braccio (or viols played on the arms)

led some musicologists in the past to believe that the Vielle was an earlier form of viol. As knowledge about early instruments increased, this assertion was proved wrong but somehow the attribution stuck. With regards to the belief that the violin developed from the viol: there is absolutely no link between the two instruments! In fact, viols and violins are very different from each other. The viol has gut frets, six strings and a wide fingerboard. (There are some instruments that have seven strings but 6 is the norm.) The viol is tuned in fourths with the middle strings being tuned to the third. The violin meanwhile, has a narrow fingerboard with no frets and is tuned in fifths. As well as there being differences in bowing and playing techniques, the construction of the two instruments vary from each other as explained later.

As with any instrument, the origins of the viol are somewhat hazy but it is believed that it was derived from another instrument that came from Aragon in Spain, the vihuela. The vihuela was held across the body and plucked in a similar way to the guitar. The vihuela travelled from Spain to Italy, probably in the musical entourage of the first Borgia Pope, towards the end of the 15th century. In Italy this instrument was referred to as the "viola alla spagnola" and quickly established itself in the Italian Courts where it was considered to be a highly fashionable instrument and status symbol. The instrument was adapted by local makers to suit their local music, so that the sound was produced not by plucking but by using a bow. The early name given to the new instrument was "vihuela de arco" (Arco is Spanish for bow). Early depictions of the instrument show it being held and played in a variety of ways, indicating that the instrument was still in developmental stages. There are pictures of the instrument being played across the body (this became known as the viol de braccia – or viol of the arm) or sometimes played at a downward angle. Eventually, however, it became established as an instrument normally held between the legs – or gamba – and this was especially so for the larger sizes of instrument. Thus its other known name, the viol de gamba. This name went on to became more associated with the bass sized instrument and was often simply called a "gamba" where the other smaller sizes were called viols.

Isabella D'Este, the powerful and influential wife of the Gonzaga court in Mantua, had alliances with the Borgias and she was also a great patron of the arts. She persuaded her personal instrument maker, Lorenzo da Pavio, to provide her with a matched set of viols (viole) in around 1495. It is at this point that the viol became an instrument in its own right. The fist viol consorts with four players were documented at the end of the 15th century in the courts of Mantua and Ferrara (Isabella's home city) and soon the trend for this new variety of instrument spread to Venice, Naples and Rome. Early groups of viol players were sometimes called "violoni" perhaps leading to the confusion with violins – but the violin did not actually exist at this time. From Italy, musicians took the instrument across Europe and there are references at the very beginning of the 16th century to it being played in Vienna, Bavaria, England and Germany. In fact, the early German name for the viol was *welsche Geige*, literally translated as 'foreign fiddle', giving reference to its origins.

One of the earliest known depictions of a viol.
A detail from a painting of The Madonna and Child by Lorenzo Costa, 1497.

The standard construction of the viol is to have six strings and seven frets on the fingerboard. The shoulders of the body slope up to the neck, and unlike a violin, the sides are deep and the sides of the belly and back are flush (not overhanging as in the violin). The instruments were often highly decorated with purfling and inlay, sometimes with very complicated trellis designs. Instead of the familiar "f" shaped sound holes of a violin, the viol had "C" shaped holes. At the top of the tuning peg box, there was often carved an animal or human head or, if there was a scroll, this would be "open" as opposed to the closed scroll on a violin.

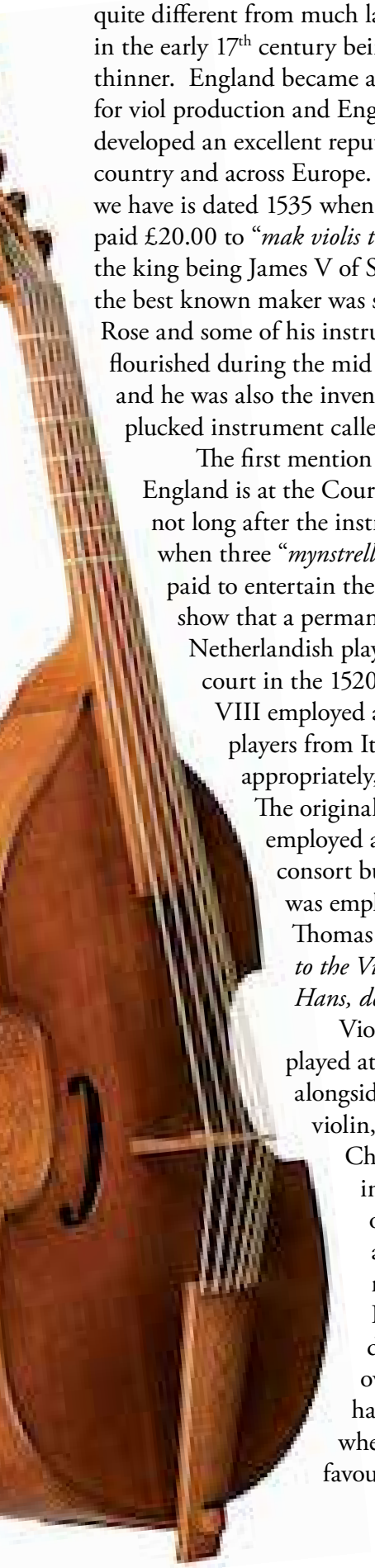
Whilst the viol was developed right at the end of the 15th century in about 1495, there are no surviving examples from this period so we cannot be absolutely certain what they looked like. In fact, the earliest example of a viol dates from 1540 and was made by Francesco Linarol, a Venetian maker. Even this instrument is

A typical "open" scroll on a viol

quite different from much later examples made in the early 17th century being much lighter and thinner. England became a well-known centre for viol production and English made instruments developed an excellent reputation throughout this country and across Europe. The earliest reference we have is dated 1535 when Richard Hume was paid £20.00 to "*mak violis to the Kingis grace*" – the king being James V of Scotland. However, the best known maker was someone called John Rose and some of his instruments survive. He flourished during the mid to late 16th century and he was also the inventor of a metal stringed plucked instrument called the bandora.

The first mention of viols being played in England is at the Court of Henry VII in 1510, not long after the instrument's invention, when three "*mynstrelles with the vyalles*" were paid to entertain the king. Court documents show that a permanent viol consort of three Netherlandish players was employed at court in the 1520's; and in 1540 Henry VIII employed a new group of six viol players from Italy. They were known, appropriately, as the "*newe vialles*". The original trio continued to be employed alongside the Italian consort but no English viol player was employed until 1549 when Thomas Kentt was *"admitted to the Vialles in place of greate Hans, deceased"*.

Viols continued to be played at the royal courts, alongside the new fashionable violin, through to the time of Charles I. After that the instrument began to fall out of favour as fashions and tastes changed. The restoration of Charles II finally sealed the dominance of the violin over the viol. Charles had been exiled in France where the French court favoured the violin ensemble



A tenor viol by John Rose in the Ashmolean Museum, Cambridge. There is considerable decoration on the instrument with a carved head on the top of the peg board.

A sketch made by Nicholas Houel showing an amateur viol consort, 1583.

made up of 24 violins – the very beginnings of today's modern string orchestras – and he brought that fashion back with him to England.

Wanting to follow the new royal fashion, musicians and composers turned their allegiance to the violin, sealing the fate of the, now old-fashioned, viol. The demands for larger scale ensembles and more dynamic, louder instruments meant that the it simply couldn't compete with the violin. However, the viol continued to be a popular domestic instrument until the end of the 17th century.

Today the instrument lives on in the hands of both professionals and amateurs who play music of the period on reproduction instruments. And rightly so, the viol, especially when played in consort, can produce a most mellifluous sound as Marin Mersenne so eloquently wrote in his handbook, Harmonie Universelle, in 1636:

> *"If one were to judge musical instruments according to their ability to imitate the human voice, and if one were to esteem naturalness as the highest accomplishment, so I believe that one cannot deny the viol the first prize, because it can imitate the human voice in all its modulations even in its most intimate nuances, that of grief and joy."*

JANE MOULDER

SEPTEMBER

1 September 1532
Henry VIII made **Anne Boleyn** Marquis of Pembroke. The ceremony took place at Windsor Castle. Anne also received her own lands, worth over £1000 per year. The King crowned her with the gold coronet of a marquis and placed on her a crimson velvet mantle.

2 September 1591
Naval commander and explorer Sir **Richard Grenville** died at sea from injuries sustained while commanding his ship, *The Revenge*.

3 September 1557
News reached London that English and Imperial troops had been successful in storming St Quentin, and there were widespread celebrations.

4 September 1588
Robert Dudley, Earl of Leicester died at his lodge at Cornbury, near Woodstock in Oxfordshire.

9 September 1513
Catherine of Aragon and the English army won the *Battle of Flodden* against the **James IV** and his Scottish troops. James was killed.

10 September 1533
A three-year-old **Elizabeth**, daughter of **Henry VIII** and **Anne Boleyn** was christened at the Church of Observant Friars in Greenwich.

11 September 1561
Mary, Queen of Scots began her first royal progress, visiting Holyrood Palace and Edinburgh Castle amongst other places.

12 September 1555
The trial of **Archbishop Cranmer** began in the University Church of St Mary the Virgin at Oxford. He was accused of two offences, or doctrinal errors: repudiating papal authority and denying transubstantiation. He was burned at the stake on 21st March 1556

16 September 1541
King **Henry VIII** entered the city of York through Walmgate Bar, and was met by the city's officials at Fulford Cross.

17 September 1558
Death of **Walter Devereux**, 1st Viscount Hereford, at the Devereux seat of Chartley in Staffordshire. He was buried in Stowe church.

18 September 1544
Henry VIII rode triumphantly through the streets of Boulogne after the French surrendered, ending the *Siege of Boulogne*.

19 September 1555
Burnings of Protestant martyrs, **Robert Glover** and **Cornelius Bungey**, at Coventry.

20 Sept 1486
Birth of **Arthur, Prince of Wales** at Winchester, just eight months after his parents' marriage. Despite being premature, Arthur was healthy.

24 Sept 1561
Birth of **Edward Seymour**, Viscount Beauchamp, son of **Katherine Grey** (sister of Lady Jane Grey) and **Edward Seymour**, 1st Earl of Hertford, in the Tower of London. He was born in the Tower because his parents had been imprisoned for marrying without the Queen's permission.

25 Sept 1534
Death of Pope **Clement VII** in Rome from eating a death cap mushroom. He was laid to rest in Santa Maria sopra Minerva.

30 Sept 1515
Margaret Tudor, sister of **Henry VIII** and former Queen Consort of James IV, fled to England. Margaret was pregnant with the child of her new husband, **Archibald Douglas**, 6th Earl of Angus.

ON THIS DAY IN TUDOR HISTORY

5 September 1548
Early on the morning, **Catherine Parr**, Queen Dowager, wife of **Thomas Seymour** and widow of **Henry VIII**, died aged around 36 at Sudeley Castle. She had given birth to her first child, a daughter Mary, on 30th August, but within a few days of the birth, she had contracted puerperal fever.

6 September 1520
reformer **Martin Luther** sent his pamphlet "On the Freedom of a Christian" to **Pope Leo X**.

7 September 1571
Arrest of **Thomas Howard**, 4th Duke of Norfolk, for his part in the *Ridolfi Plot* to replace **Elizabeth I** with **Mary, Queen of Scots**.

8 September 1560
Amy Dudley (née **Robsart**), wife of **Robert Dudley**, Earl of Leicester, died at her home, the result of "misfortune".

13 September 1520
William Cecil, 1st Baron Burghley and Elizabeth I's chief advisor, was born. He became indispensable to **Elizabeth I** in later life.

14 September 1540
Sir **William Kingston**, Constable of the Tower of London, Knight of the Garter and comptroller of the King's household, died at Painswick.

15 September 1514
Thomas Wolsey was appointed Archbishop of York after having been elected in the August.

21 September 1558
Death of **Charles V**, former Holy Roman Emperor, from malaria at the monastery of Yuste in the Extremadura region of Spain.

22 Sept 1515
Anna von Jülich-Kleve-Berg, or **Anne of Cleves**, was born near Düsseldorf. Anne outlived **Henry VIII** and all of his other wives

23 Sept 1571
John Jewel was taken ill while preaching a sermon in Lacock and Wiltshire, and died at Monkton Farleigh Manor. He was laid to rest in Salisbury Cathedral.

26 Sept 1580
Sir **Francis Drake** arrived at the port of Plymouth in the *Golden Hind*, which was laden with treasure and spices after his three year voyage around the world. Drake had successfully circumnavigated the globe in his ship which was originally called *The Pelican*.

27 Sept 1501
At 5 o'clock in the afternoon, the fifteen year-old **Catherine of Aragon** left the port of Laredo, Spain, for England to marry **Arthur, Prince of Wales**.

28 Sept 1553
Mary I travelled in a decorated barge to the Tower of London to prepare for her coronation. She was accompanied by her half-sister, **Elizabeth**.

29 Sept 1528
Cardinal Lorenzo Campeggio, landed at Dover for the hearing for the annulment of **Henry VIII**'s marriage to **Anne Boleyn**

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~ OCTOBER ~

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