

# Tudor Life

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## Melancholic Music

*Jane Moulder*

**Tudor Execution Methods** - *Beth von Staats*

**The Macabre Dance** - *Ruth Cowden*

**Macabre Iconography** - *Melanie V. Taylor*

**The Funerary Rites of Elizabeth of York** - *Lauren Browne*

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# Welcome!

November 2015

**F**OR the Tudors, November began with a heavy presence of the Dead. The first day was the feast of All Hallows, or All Saints, when all the canonised figures in the Church were commemorated, followed by All Souls on 2<sup>nd</sup> November, when the faithful were encouraged to pray for the departed. With that in mind, this issue is themed around Death in the medieval and Tudor eras. Ruth Cowden looks at how the threat of plague pandemics encouraged a strange blurring of the lines between religion, fear and magic – and gives you the surprising origins of the word “abracadabra”. Commemorating the dead was an important part of early modern culture, but not everyone was treated the same – Lauren Browne discusses how Henry VIII’s mother Elizabeth of York was eulogised as the perfect queen, wife and

mother after her death in 1503, while Dominic Pearce examines how the country reacted to the murder of the unpopular Duke of Buckingham in 1628. One lucky reader will also have the chance to win a copy of Kathryn Warner’s acclaimed biography of King Edward II, which I’m sure many will want to read after her article in this edition on the great mystery of Edward’s alleged murder in 1327. With our fantastic regular contributors providing thought provoking and fascinating articles, I hope this edition of “Tudor Life” provides great reading for the living and a reminder, as the Tudors would no doubt want, of the departed.

*Gareth Russell*



# Tudor Life

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Cover image: Melancholy by Domenico Fetti, 1621

# THE MACABRE DANCE: MAN'S DALLIANCE WITH DEATH IN THE LATER MIDDLE AGES

*by Ruth Cowden*

**B**Y the year 1200, most of England was Christian, with Christian doctrine interwoven through the very infrastructure of England's identity. Medieval culture was complex, but religion was paramount to everything and when it came to death there were many rituals to observe. It may be understandable therefore that the line between religion and magic became blurred when it came to rituals. People adopted them for protection. Why did people feel they needed this protection? Certainly the constant threat of disease was one aspect of medieval life which had cause to instil more fear than it does today. Here I will outline just how much the fear of death contributed to piety

among the masses, with a brief glance at how often magical aids were utilised as further protection from harm. The attention to each aspect will indeed only be brief; to explore such a topic fully would require a much longer piece of work and at least a year of one's life to fill.

So what was this fear of the dead and things pertaining to it? Where did it come from? Fear of death is something inherent in us as human beings, but in the Middle Ages it manifested itself in a more animated fashion than it does today. Tombstones depicted graphic images of decaying bodies, bearing inscriptions as vivid as that of Henry Chichele, who died in 1443:

*I was a pauper born, then to Primate raised  
Now I am cut down and ready to be food for worms  
Behold my grave.  
Whoever you may be who passes by, I ask you to remember  
You will be like me after you die  
All horrible, dust, worms, vile flesh.'*

In short, death was scary. One of the four horsemen of the apocalypse, Death was unbeatable and everyone was reminded of this each time they entered or even walked by a church. Indeed as John Lydgate's poem said, 'against death, medicine is of no worth'. This attitude is in harsh contrast to today, where we do all we can with medicine to 'perpetuate the lie that we are not dying at all'. Yet the threat of death was so ever-present in the Middle Ages that the people turned to magical charms to supplement the power of their religion. Why? Could it be the

more constant threat of death endured back then? Few alive even today can hear the words 'death' and 'medieval' together without jumping to the Black Death that plagued Europe in the Middle Ages. Recurring outbreaks of the illness – its name itself dread-inducing – alongside everyday struggles caused by overcrowding, poor hygiene and even famine served as an ever-present reminder of the brevity of life. These struggles of course were not routinely faced by the wealthy; it is important to remain aware of the different experiences faced by



The “Danse Macabre”: Medieval iconography stressed the inevitability of death in no uncertain terms (Public Domain)

different levels of society, but note too that fear of death pervaded through the levels of society to reach all echelons. Death is a leveller and takes no notice of our bank balances. The initial outbreak of the Black Death in 1348 lasted for six long years, taking the lives of up to 80% of the population of any one English manor and up to 60% of the population of Europe. It brought upon nations’ ‘wide-scale death, physical decay, and the subsequent crumbling of societal infrastructure’. Giovanni Boccaccio wrote that ‘it is inherently human to show pity to those who are afflicted’ and yet, he points out that even ‘the womenfolk had largely suppressed their natural pity...to assure their own survival’. People turned

from their natural inclinations in the interests of self-preservation.

The end of the initial outbreak heralded the increased devotion in many, due in large part no doubt to fear. Many believed the disease was punishment for sins, others that it was a test of their faith. Men and women alike sought a closer connection to their Lord Almighty, in part to grasp a better understanding of death itself and in part to ascertain their escape from the fires of Hell upon meeting their own inevitable end. It was little wonder, therefore, that they would seize upon the words and supposed visions of such mystics as Margery Kempe and Julian of Norwich – women



Innocent VIII. (Jean Baptiste Gibo) Genois, Pope en 1481.  
+ 1492.

**Pope Innocent VIII, who tried to limit “magic” in popular religion (Public Domain)**

who today would perhaps be welcomed into our communities much in the way we would welcome a bout of the plague itself.

So where lay the reasoning for many adopting seemingly magical aids to get through life? It might be at first helpful to define ‘magic’, which Valerie Flint proposes as ‘the exercise of a preternatural control over nature by human beings, with the assistance of forces more powerful than they’. Of course, at times people believed the ‘forces more powerful than they’ were in fact heavenly and herein lies a difficulty; the line between magic and religion was blurred.

1 This tradition still lives on in parts of Europe, with churches ringing their bells as ships head off on long journeys.

Anthropologists maintain that religion reflects the thought processes and traditions of society and can be found in most if not all cultures. In a similar vein, belief in magic has pervaded every known culture on earth to varying effects throughout history. In the Middle Ages, people made use of what we would today consider questionable rituals to prevent unwelcome contact with the dead occurring, such as the use of various charms for protection during childbirth and so on. A high mortality rate among newborns would also doubtless have been motivation for skipping over a dead man’s grave and reciting some Latin words three times over while heavily pregnant. One charm involved wearing a talisman carrying the words SATOR-AREPTO; words with no logical recorded meaning but which were supposed to have held great power to the wearer. Another attested that carrying a piece of paper with the word ‘abracadabra’ written multiple times in a triangular shape would cure the wearer of ‘an

ague’. Common belief also held that the sound of ringing church bells would scare away evil spirits.<sup>1</sup> The viability of such rituals and beliefs lay in how they were viewed by the Church. Some things that might be viewed as magical, such as superstitious bell ringing, were accepted and even perpetuated by the Church while others, such as the performance of love charms, were not.

The difference between magic and religion lies in the notion of manipulation and certainty of result. That is, charms expect a result through the coercion of higher forces; prayers are only supplications, with no guaranteed outcome. It seems that whether a charm was magical or not might be found in where the performer of the charm sought

power from. Some charms gained their power from God or the saints, while others from natural sources such as the moon or the earth. It was the latter type of charm which the Church especially condemned, due to their seemingly pagan origins, although even those appealing to the power of heavenly bodies required the right 'moral value' in their intention; for to add religious language to magical formulae 'debases them and adds nothing' to their potency. Officially the Church in no way condoned the use of magical charms, with the bull of Pope Innocent VIII, issued in 1484, declaring that any person using 'spells, conjurations, and other accursed charms and crafts' are blasphemous and effectively renouncing their faith. This was true as far back as Anglo-Saxon times. The Church believed that influence of the supernatural was possible – they found such events in the Bible – but asserted that it could come from only two sources: God or the Devil.

That the Church condemned magical practice in theory was true, but what occurred in the parishes stayed in the parishes, so to speak. Keith Thomas has argued that in actuality, by the sixteenth century ecclesiastical courts looked upon popular magic as no more serious than 'such other routine offences as Sabbath-breaking, defamation and fornication'. It was not, he added, 'singled out as particularly diabolical'. It was even true that some clergy found themselves caught up in the storm at times, with one Robert Booker anointing a man from head to toe and reciting a charm thus: 'Three biters have bitt him, heart, tongue and eye'.

Late medieval and early modern culture was formed from the fragments of many different belief systems, including classical, pagan, Teutonic and

Christian. It stands to reason that any religion born into this was fated to be fragmented and chaotic in nature also. Robert Swanson has described medieval Catholicism as 'atomistic, dependent on individuals creating their own relationships with the divinity...in their own terms'. Truthfully there is no use in trying to ascertain if the people thought of what they were doing as magical or not; paucity of primary sources detailing their intentions sees to this. Therefore we will never know whether it was an innocent confusion between that which constituted religious ritual and otherwise, or a desperation to elude death leading them to dabble in magic, but the laity certainly harboured a fear of death perhaps not excelling our own but definitely more frequently brought to the fore through the trials they faced and the sometimes grisly reminders to be found each time they entered a church.

With the threat of plague hanging over their heads and an eternally unpredictable future, people in the Middle Ages and early modern periods may have been used to encountering death in close proximity, but that made them no more likely to embrace the idea than we are today. A carelessly constructed blend of religious doctrine and magical formula was in place to provide protection from harm but perhaps mainly functioning as a coping mechanism for the difficult times they found themselves in. No doubt future historians will study our current fixation on fast food and reality television with an eye to highlighting our own coping strategies in a world blighted by war and economic uncertainty.

**RUTH COWDEN**



**RUTH COWDEN** completed her masters in medieval history at Queen's University, Belfast, in September 2012 by focussing her research on early modern concepts of the paranormal – and how the impact of the Protestant Reformation helped change that. She currently lives in Carrickfergus, Northern Ireland.

# THE LIFE AND DEATH OF GEORGE VILLIERS, DUKE OF BUCKINGHAM

*by Dominic Pearce*

Sir George Villiers died in 1606. One night in 1627 he returned from beyond the grave to tell an old family retainer Nicholas Towse that he had a message for his son, the Duke of Buckingham. Would Towse take it to him, so that his (the duke's) life would be preserved? Towse did so. The younger – the still alive – George listened carefully, and had several long and serious discussions with Towse.<sup>1</sup> However he decided not to follow his father's advice, which apparently included the abandonment of some of his political allies.

Accordingly on 23 August 1628, in the parlour of the Greyhound Inn in Portsmouth, Buckingham, thirty-five years old, was struck down by an assassin. One blow from a sharp knife was enough to kill him. As he died, his pregnant wife Kate gazed down on him from the gallery above. It was a brutal end but it was not unexpected. Not only his father's ghost but his friends had warned Buckingham to be careful, advising him to wear a coat of chainmail beneath his shirt in protection.<sup>2</sup>

How did it come about?

\*

What ended badly, began astonishingly well. The fortune of George Villiers was down to good luck – to, in the first instance, his looks. The younger

son, by his second marriage, of a Leicestershire squire, George was born in 1592. He had no great prospects in life. He had on the other hand physical beauty, a quick mind, warmth, energy. Thanks to his mother Mary, he was sent to France in his teens for three years, which gave him polish, some degree of French, and advanced equestrian skills. In short he was equipped for a career at the royal court.

On his summer progress in 1614 King James I visited Apethorpe Hall in Northamptonshire. The king's gaze fell upon the long-limbed, dark-eyed, soft-featured George. At the same time the twenty-one year-old's potential was spotted by the faction opposed to the dominant, crypto-Catholic Howard family. To give a flavour of the politics, we can note that the enemies of the Howards were led

<sup>1</sup> *Curae Secundae* p 406 (appended to *the Mischiefs occasioned by the Duke of Buckingham etc*) (1729)

<sup>2</sup> *The Mischiefs occasioned by the Duke of Buckingham etc* p 377





Handsome, charming but unpopular: George, Duke of Buckingham (Public Domain)



**James I, George's lover and patron (Sligo Heritage)**

by the Archbishop of Canterbury, George Abbot, supported by the Queen of England.

The primary target of the Abbot group was Robert Carr, Earl of Somerset, the favourite of James I. Somerset had recently married Frances Howard, daughter of the Earl of Suffolk, after the annulment – on scandalous grounds of non-consummation – of her first marriage to the Earl of Essex.<sup>3</sup> In this way he allied himself with the Howards, who naturally prized him for his relationship with James I.

Here was George's second piece of luck. The archbishop and his friends wanted to find another beautiful man to distract the king from Somerset. In 1615 a group of courtiers purchased the office of Cupbearer for George, which meant that every other month he waited on James I at table. The

king found the company of George very delightful, especially by comparison with the increasingly hot-tempered and rather brutal established favourite. In short the plan worked.

By a truly amazing twist of fate, Somerset and his wife were then accused of murder. They were tried in May 1616 and found guilty. The victim was Sir Thomas Overbury. He had died on 15 September 1613 while a prisoner in the Tower of London, where he had been sent for contempt when he refused the offer of an overseas embassy by the king. The real reason for his disgrace was that he opposed the infatuation of his close friend Robert Carr for Frances, Countess of Essex.

Allegations of poison emerged later at a time of intense court in-fighting, but since Frances Somerset actually confessed to trying to poison Overbury – she worried that he would block her second marriage – it seems safe to conclude the charges were not purely political. James I spared the couple the death penalty, but Somerset was down and he was out. He and Frances – and their daughter Anne born in the Tower – spent the next five and half years in prison.<sup>4</sup>

With the field to himself, George Villiers made hay. The king made him Gentleman of the Bedchamber in 1615 and, after Somerset's disgrace, successively Baron Whaddon, Viscount Villiers, and Earl of Buckingham. George received large grants of land in different parts of England, and lucrative offices from the king. He secured titles, jobs, marriages for members of his family. In 1618 he was created Marquess then, in 1623, Duke of Buckingham, while he was in Madrid (Charles, Prince of Wales, and he were trying to finalise the prince's long-planned marriage with the Infanta Maria Ana). The dukedom was tantamount to admission to the royal family.

These achievements rested on George's bond with James I. It was love. There was sex. We can be misled by the colourful language of the seventeenth century, and can misread the conventions of the time, but the remarks of James I about his new favourite have a unique ardour. He called George 'Steenie' after St Stephen, reputed to have the face of

<sup>3</sup> There were four Howard earls. The others were Arundel, Nottingham and Northampton.

<sup>4</sup> For a full account see Anne Somerset *Unnatural Murder: poison at the court of James I* (Weidenfeld and Nicolson 1997)

an angel. He called him his 'sweet child and wife.'<sup>5</sup> Making an alarming comparison, the king in 1617 told the Privy Council that 'Christ had done just what he was doing...' – that Christ had his John – the beloved disciple – and James I had his George.

Buckingham himself spelled it out. In a letter written years later, George told the king that he had been thinking about their relationship over the years and specifically he had been wondering 'whether you loved me now... better than at the time which I shall never forget at Farnham, where the bed's head could not be found between the master and his dog.'<sup>6</sup>

\*

Fourteen years after Apethorpe, there were changes. James I died in March 1625, and was succeeded by his son Charles. There was a new Queen of England. Just after his father's death Charles married, not the Infanta of Spain, but Henrietta Maria of France. After long years of peace under James, England became involved in two wars, one with Spain, the other – despite Henrietta Maria – with France. Buckingham too had married. He was husband to Katherine Manners, a Midlands heiress, and father to Mall (Mary) and George.

One thing that had not changed was his pre-eminence. Buckingham was still on the Privy Council, Master of the Horse, Lord Admiral, Warden of the Cinque Ports, Warden of Windsor Castle, and so forth. He was still the 'fount of honours' for others. He was still the king's favourite. Charles (platonically) loved and trusted Buckingham, just as his father had (non-platonically).

Another thing that had not changed was the exile of Elizabeth Stuart, sister of Charles I. This attractive character was the inadvertent cause of much that went wrong in the last years of James I, and the first of Charles I. As wife of the Elector Palatine, she was the victim of her husband's ill-advised acceptance in 1619 of the (elective) crown of Bohemia at the hands of Protestant rebels against

the Catholic Holy Roman Emperor.<sup>7</sup> The imperial fight-back threw the Palatine family out of Bohemia but also out of the Palatinate. Elizabeth therefore lived in a borrowed palace in the Hague on a Dutch pension, and the honour of the Stuarts was insulted.<sup>8</sup>

\*

In these circumstances, the sad truth is that Buckingham was not a good judge of politics, if politics is the art of the possible. Three disastrous military expeditions were mounted by England in the years 1625-1627. All three came about because of his wish to restore Elizabeth Stuart and her family. All were considered Buckingham's responsibility.

Two were against Spain. In the last months of James I – early 1625 – an army was assembled under the mercenary general Count Mansfeld, intended to invade and retake the Palatinate (largely occupied by Spanish troops). It never got there. Hundreds of men died of infection, cold and malnutrition before the whole thing petered out. Second, after the succession of Charles I, a naval expedition was sent in October of the same year, under Sir Edward Cecil, to attack Cadiz. It failed after the men, undernourished and suffering from low morale, landed and found a wine store and drained it dry, becoming hopelessly drunk. Cecil never made an attempt on Cadiz itself. Nor could he take on new provisions. When the battered fleet returned, through stormy seas, some landing in Ireland, some in England, his men were half-starved, and, in the middle of winter, barely covered by disintegrating rags. These were shocking scandals.

Buckingham took personal charge of the third campaign, an entirely unnecessary expedition to France. He wished to provoke a rebellion by the Huguenot community – the Protestant French – so as to persuade King Louis XIII to dismiss Cardinal de Richelieu, whom he regarded as a personal and national enemy.<sup>9</sup> The Ile de Ré expedition ended in the loss of 5,000 English lives with no gains whatever.<sup>10</sup>

5 Bergeron *King James and Letters of Homoerotic Desire* (1999) p 138

6 Lockyer *Buckingham* (paperback edition 1984) p 22

7 Ferdinand II was elected King of Bohemia in 1617, before he became emperor.

8 Elizabeth adored her husband Frederick V of the Palatinate. She bore him thirteen children.

9 Subsequent events showed Richelieu to have no special animus against England.

10 For the numbers see ODNB *George Villiers, first Duke of Buckingham*, Roger Lockyer

The English people welcomed Buckingham's return from France with an explosion of popular rhymes, such as:

*'And art thou returned again with all thy faults;  
Thou great commander of the all-go-naughts,  
And left the Isle behind thee? What's the matter?  
Did winter make thy teeth begin to chatter?'*<sup>11</sup>

Buckingham was widely considered a godless debauchee utterly unfeeling about the lives of ordinary people. A pamphleteer recorded 'I know the man had so fatal a share in the sins of his lust, as it was impossible for any religion to settle at his heart.'<sup>12</sup> Parliament and the royal court too were filled with his enemies all burning with red-hot envy.

On 14 June 1628 an astrologer called Dr Lambe, a man over eighty years old, widely known as 'the Duke's Wizard' was beaten to death in the small hours by an angry mob in London for no particular reason. On 17 June 1628 the House of Commons presented a 'remonstrance' to Charles I which listed their fears of religious and constitutional oppression, and explained the cause was 'the excessive powers of the Duke of Buckingham.'<sup>13</sup>

\*

The man who stabbed Buckingham in the Greyhound Inn on 23 August 1628 was John Felton. He served on the Ile de Ré and was haunted by dreams of the hideous slaughter he had witnessed there.<sup>14</sup> He was passed over for promotion. His pay was in arrears. He had debts. He read Parliament's remonstrance and decided that killing Buckingham was a patriotic duty. He thought – hoped? – he would be struck down on the spot, when he stabbed the duke,<sup>15</sup> but nobody really noticed him, so he hid in the kitchens of the inn for a few minutes, then returned and handed himself in. In fact he was committed to trial, and hanged as a murderer on 29 November.

Buckingham's body was brought back to London and buried in Westminster Abbey at night. There was minimal ceremony, since the king was worried about protests – about celebrations. Charles I wanted to put up a monument to his murdered friend, but lack of money held him back, and the



A woodcut celebrating John Felton, Buckingham's killer (National Portrait Gallery)

risk of outrage: he had not even put up a monument to his father yet. Later Kate Buckingham paid for a grand, elegant memorial by Hubert le Sueur. It now shows George and Katherine lying side by side in prayer. It can be seen today in one of the apsidal chapels in Henry VII's chapel in Westminster Abbey.

Charles I was marked for life by the delight of the English up and down the country when the news of Buckingham's death spread. It has been said that he never forgave his subjects.<sup>16</sup> Twenty years later the king approached his own Calvary. We can speculate, on that 'very cold day' 30 January 1649, as Charles I stepped on to the Whitehall scaffold, that his thoughts turned to George. After all, he was about to share his best friend's brutal destiny.

## DOMINIC PEARCE

11 Lockyer p 403

12 *Mischiefs occasioned by the Duke of Buckingham* p 375

13 Lockyer p 442

14 ODNB *John Felton*, Alistair Bellany

15 He stitched a note into his hate which explained his motives.

16 Wedgwood *Thomas Wentworth, First Earl of Strafford 1593-1641* (1961) p 72

The Dance - J. 100

**P**astime w<sup>th</sup> good company I lone & shall outtill I see  
 yonghe who lust but none demer so god be pleased & lone willt  
 I for my pastance but fynes & dance my hart is sett all  
 goodly sport for my confort who shall me let

**P**astime w<sup>th</sup> good company I lone & shall do tyl I see  
 yonghe who lust but none demer so god be pleased & lone  
 willt I for my pastance but fynes & dance my hart is

11

- sett all goodly sport for my confort who shall me let.

**P**astime w<sup>th</sup> good company I lone & shall do tyl I see  
 yonghe who lust but none demer so god be pleased & lone  
 willt I for my pastance but fynes & dance my hart  
 is sett all goodly sport for my confort who shall me let.

yonghe must fynde in baliance off good or ill in pastance  
 Company me thynly igen but all thynge & fynes to deif.  
 for godnes is cheff mastre of vices all igen who can fy.  
 but mytg and play is best of all.

Company w<sup>th</sup> honeste is veyn vices to fle.  
 Company is good & ill but evy man hath his fre willt.  
 the best enfor the worst offen my mynde shall be.  
 veyn to vs vice to refuce thys shall I use me.

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# NOVEMBER'S GUEST SPEAKER

Jane Moulder, our regular Tudor music columnist will be sharing her in-depth knowledge of the era with our members this month.



It's one you CAN'T MISS!



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Elizabeth of York (Public Domain)

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**‘NEVER WAS A BODY BURIED IN ENGLAND  
WITH SUCH SOLEMNITY AND HONOUR’:**

# **THE DEATH AND FUNERARY RITES OF ELIZABETH OF YORK**

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*by Lauren Browne*

*‘Today Thou Shalt Be With Me in Paradise’- Luke 23:43*

**S**OME people have suggested that Elizabeth of York is somewhat of an anomaly in her troublesome and chaotic family. Her story has been largely passed over for accounts of her son and his many wives, or her grandchildren’s religious policies and scandals. However, I believe that Elizabeth was not as dull as she may be perceived today. She forged a dynasty that has become one of the most fascinating eras of British history and, through her daughter, is still part of the bloodline of the current royal family.

She was the daughter, sister, niece, wife, mother and grandmother of kings and queens, and yet her story remains largely forgotten. I came across Elizabeth when writing my dissertation and have since formed a slight obsession for her. Her representation, both before and after her death, has been manipulated by those who stood to gain something by their connections to her. Despite having relatively no political power of her own, she was a very popular and well-loved queen. She was something of the Tudor Queen of Hearts, a beautiful phrase I have borrowed from Amy Licence, one of the only modern biographers of Elizabeth. At her funeral, the outpouring of grief for Elizabeth was truly moving and the only modern-day example I could, perhaps tenuously, give would be to compare

it to how people reacted to the death of Princess Diana.

Elizabeth’s death, like our own Princess Diana, was something of a shock. She was still relatively young, in good health, and the fortunes of the House of Tudor seemed to be steadfast. Henry VII and Elizabeth of York, must have felt elated as they watched the marriage of their eldest son Prince Arthur to the Spanish Princess Katherine of Aragon. From behind the latticed closet in which they watched the ceremony on the 14<sup>th</sup> November 1501, the royal couple must have felt that the future of their dynasty was finally secure. Elizabeth had fulfilled her duty in providing Henry VII, and England, with an heir and a spare, as well as two princesses whose marriages would make advantageous alliances for the realm. On this happy occasion, no one could have guessed how quickly the celebrations would end and what tragedies would befall the House of Tudor.

Just four months after his splendid wedding to Katherine of Aragon, on 2<sup>nd</sup> April 1506, Prince Arthur succumbed to a ‘moost petifull disease and sikenes’ and died at Ludlow Castle. His father was devastated by the news that his eldest son and heir had perished; ‘When his Grace understood that sorrowful heavy tidings, he sent for the Queen, saying that he and his Queen would take the painful

sorrows together...She then said... that God had left him yet a fair Prince and two fair Princesses... and we are both young enough.' Elizabeth's promise to provide Henry with another heir was quickly fulfilled and she became pregnant with her eighth child.

It seems that Elizabeth did not take the regular precautions with this pregnancy, she seems to have moved between Baynard's Castle, Richmond, and the Tower during the winter of 1502, instead of the usual confinement prescribed to women in the latter stages of pregnancy. While at the Tower, Elizabeth's labour began and it is believed that her youngest daughter, Princess Katherine, was born prematurely on 2<sup>nd</sup> February 1503. But once again, tragedy would strike at the heart of the Tudor family. On 11<sup>th</sup> February 1503, Elizabeth of York died on her thirty-seventh birthday due to complications which arose during the birth. Princess Katherine also died on 18<sup>th</sup> February, and the only mention of her in the Privy Purse expenses details money paid to Robert Lanston for flannel which was purchased for 'Lady Kateryn the Kinges doughtere.'

Within a year, Henry VII had lost his eldest son and heir, his queen and his youngest child; he was left devastated. A manuscript printed in the *Antiquarian Repertory* details how Elizabeth's 'departing was as heveye and dolorous to the kings heighness as hath been seen or heard of.' It also shows how the Queen's subjects reacted in a similar way to Henry VII when they heard of her passing. The bells of London and many more throughout England rang in remembrance of Elizabeth, and following this there came several 'solomne Dyrgies and Masses of Requiems' for the queen in every 'Religious place collegs and Churches.'

The richly detailed manuscript describes how Henry was so bereft at the passing of his wife he withdrew to his chambers and gave orders that no one should disturb him, leaving most of the funeral arrangements to his Treasurer, the Earl of Surrey, and the Comptroller of the household Sir Richard Guilford. This perhaps hints at a more loving partnership between husband and wife than others would allow for. Henry must have felt his world crashing down around him, and it seems he never really recovered from the multiple tragedies that stuck his family in less than a year.



**Public grief at Elizabeth's death rivalled that of the modern "Queen of Hearts", Princess Diana (The Daily Telegraph)**

Elizabeth's elaborate funeral rites appear to adhere to the *Liber Regie Capelle*, which was an account written in the late 1440s that details the rituals and ceremonies required for royal burial. Queens were to be buried in the same fashion as kings, but a king's funeral marked the passage of power from one king to another. Queens did not pass on power to a successor so their funeral could not serve the same symbolic purpose. However, Parsons argues that because the queen had been 'consecrated to designate her as [the king's] legitimate spouse and the mother of his lawful heir' a queen's funeral marked the end of her duty, just as a king's. The form of a queen's funeral also symbolised her dynastic importance, which was vital to Henry





**Mother of the Dynasty: Henry VII with their sons on one side and Queen Elizabeth with their daughters on other. In portraits painted in the next generation, Elizabeth was often placed next to Queen Jane Seymour to stress their role in continuing the dynasty. Her role as a mother was considered her most significant posthumous achievement. (Public Domain)**

VII's fledgling dynasty. Elizabeth's body physically represented her heritage from Edward IV as well as the hope for the longevity of the Tudor line.

Elizabeth lay in state in the chapel at the Tower of London for ten days, while men and ladies kept a constant vigil around her coffin. The Our Father was said every night for her soul and masses were sung daily. After this she made her final journey from the Tower to Westminster Abbey, the same route she would have taken on her coronation

day. The similarity of the routes represented the beginning and end of her duties, and she was crowned and buried in the same cathedral.

Her coffin was placed on a bier which was draped with white cloth on each of the four corners; signifying that she had died in childbirth. This established that Elizabeth had died through her duty to her lord and kingdom in providing them with another heir. The symbolism would not have been lost on the crowds that gathered to watch



**A study in contrasts: Elizabeth's mother, the Dowager Queen Elizabeth Woodville, who received a quiet funeral in 1492.**

her last journey or the nobles and clergymen who participated in her funeral. The imagery of the queen dying in a noble and feminine way reinforced her reputation as an ultimate example of a queen consort.

Elizabeth's funeral effigy reflected her renowned beauty, it depicted her wearing a crown, a robe of estate, as well as numerous jewels. Upon arriving at Westminster Abbey, Elizabeth's effigy was removed and carried by nobles to the hearse in the Abbey itself. Henry VII's Lady Chapel had not been completed, so Elizabeth was to be buried in a vault between the high altar and the choir, under the lantern. Her hearse was covered in over one thousand candles, and the cross and vaults of the church were draped with black cloth and lit with 273 tapers. The sober atmosphere of the cathedral draped in black and illuminated by thousands of candles must have reflected the mood of the mourners who gathered to say farewell to the Queen.

It is estimated that the total cost of Elizabeth's funeral was £2822 7s 3d, which is astronomical compared to her father Edward IV's funeral which cost £1496 17s 2d. The sheer amount of people involved, the opulence of the funeral procession and the majesty of the whole event, clearly expressed she was a popular queen.

Elizabeth Woodville's funeral was meagre compared to Elizabeth of York's. Edward IV had failed to make arrangements for the burial of his wife before he died in 1483. In February 1487, Elizabeth Woodville retreated to Bermondsey Abbey to live out the rest of her life in religious seclusion and contemplation. She died there on 8<sup>th</sup> June 1492, and was interred beside her husband as instructed by her brief will, dated two months before she died. She requested to be laid to rest 'without pompes entering or costlie expensis done thereabout.' Her coffin arrived at Windsor on Whitsunday, 10<sup>th</sup> June, and her burial appears to have been conducted on the same day. The customary Lady, Trinity and Requiem masses took place over the following three days. A contemporary chronicler commented on the low attendance to her meagre funeral, and he also stated the hearse that was used was 'such as they use for the common people.' Elizabeth Woodville has no memorial of her own and Elizabeth of York or her sisters did not provide one after their mother's death. When describing the funeral of Elizabeth of York Arlene Okerlund states 'The private, truncated, scantily attended burial services for her mother, Queen Elizabeth Wydeville, 10 years earlier bears no comparison at all.'

Henry VII had deliberated his burial plans relatively early in his reign as he had to consider his dynastic legacy. Henry VII's indenture to the abbot of Westminster Abbey, dated July 1498, states that he planned to rebuild the Westminster Lady Chapel in order to house his own burial site and the relics of his uncle Henry VI, who had gathered a growing cult after his death. The design of the Lady Chapel was intended to leave no doubt about who had commissioned it or was buried within its walls. Even Henry's piety was a propaganda coup.

In the west portal, the iconography is explicitly heraldic in nature, and combines the Beaufort portcullis, the eagle and featherlock often associated with the house of York, the greyhound and dragon, which were Henry VII's heraldic

supporters, and the Tudor rose. The will of Henry VII, which was created in 1509, left provision that Elizabeth's coffin should be reinterred after his Lady Chapel was complete.

Their tomb-chest is black and white marble with three tondos, a circular work of art, on the north and south sides. The images featured on the tondos are grouped in pairs, with Edward the Confessor and St Vincent, St Christopher and St Anne, and Mary Magdalene and St Barbara on the north side. On the south side the tondos feature St George and St Anthony, John the Baptist and John the Evangelist, and the Virgin and Child and St Michael. The inclusion of saints, although not uncommon, is a departure from the usual inclusion of heraldic iconography on tomb-chests at the time.

The tomb-chest is topped with bronze gilt effigies of the couple surrounded by angels on the four corners. The angels at the foot of tomb hold escutcheons bearing the royal arms and Henry VII's dragon badge, while those at the head hold swords. The tomb is highly ornate, once again showing the Tudors' wealth and their love of grandeur. It deviates from the meticulous instructions laid out in Henry VII's will. The over-complication of the design was due to Henry VIII, who was less understated than his father – which is really saying something!

Royal tomb effigies had undergone a considerable amount of change during the medieval period. Anne of Bohemia and Richard II set the precedent for conjugal tombs, and the 13<sup>th</sup> century Angevin tombs at Fontevault are the first examples of funerary effigies depicting the kings and their wives. The effigies of queens are all crowned, but the earlier effigies do not hold sceptres. Eleanor of Aquitaine holds a book, Berengaria of Navarre holds a reliquary and Isabella of Angoulême simply has her hands folded over her breast. Single sceptres were featured on the effigies of Eleanor of Castille and Philippa of Hainault, and Joan of Navarre holds two. Henry VII and Elizabeth of York lie together with their hands in prayer looking up to God; they had set aside the trappings of royalty and focused on their humble piety instead. The only sign of royalty that would have featured on their effigies were gilt crowns, which have been lost over time. Elizabeth's position to the right of Henry VII seems to demonstrate an intimate relationship and also reinforces her role as queen consort. In death



**Elizabeth's magnificent tomb at Westminster Abbey (Westminster Abbey)**

they are remembered together, just as they were in life and in the symbol of the Tudor rose, the combination of the houses of York and Lancaster.

There was a great deal of emphasis placed on remembering the dead during the medieval period. Purgatory had been formalised as spiritual place, rather than an idea, between 1170 and 1180 and its popularity increased dramatically when Pope Innocent IV gave the first papal description of Purgatory. Prayers for the departed helped to lessen their sufferings in Purgatory, and so the remembrance of the dead became important in their afterlife.

One form of remembrance was chantries, which were endowments to clergymen to sing a daily mass for the soul of a person. The use of chantries had developed in Europe during the late 12<sup>th</sup> century, and they were considered to be more helpful to the soul than an anniversary. Chantries were performed every day and whole families could be grouped together, meaning more prayers for the

entire family instead of a yearly anniversary each. Henry VII had commissioned chantries for himself, Elizabeth, his parents and ancestors at Westminster during his lifetime, at an extraordinary cost of £804 12s 8d per annum. He had also drawn up plans for a chantry chapel to be included in his new Lady Chapel, and the work on the bronze screen to enclose the chantry altar had begun in 1505 by Thomas the Dutchman. The solemn services and masses said for Elizabeth daily were intended to help her soul and keep her in the minds of those present.

The anniversary of Elizabeth's death was also observed annually in a solemn service in Westminster on 11<sup>th</sup> February. It is not known if Henry VII attended the anniversary services, but Margaret Condon argues that it is possible that he did. She shows that on 11<sup>th</sup> February he was 'most usually at Westminster itself or his favourite palaces of Richmond or Greenwich, both within easy reach of Westminster by barge'. As with her funeral, the extravagant anniversary services would preserve her status as a queen-consort and ensure that her reputation would be maintained long after she died.

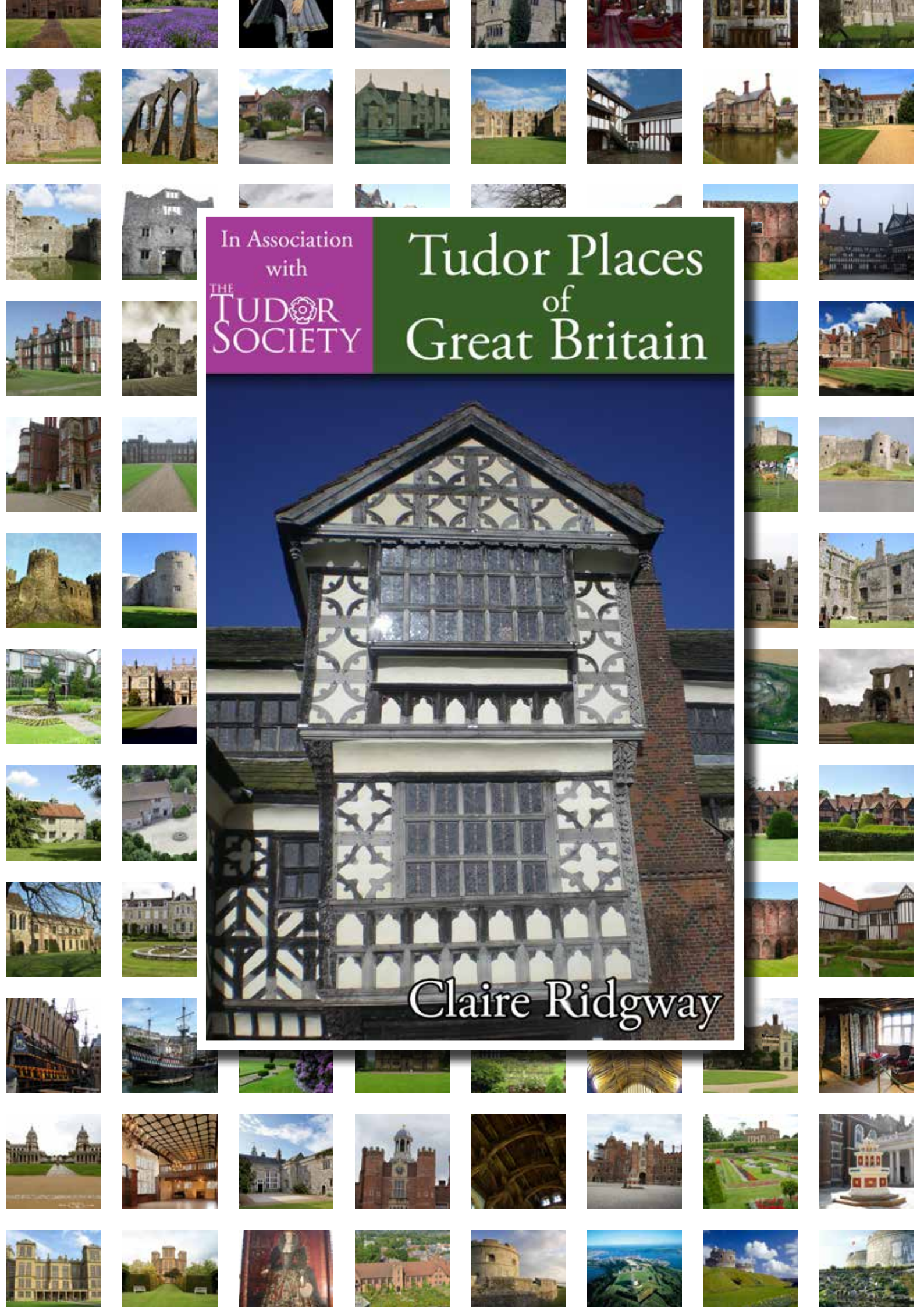
Elizabeth of York's elaborate funeral can barely be compared to that of any other queen consort, partly because hers was so well documented.

Anne Neville, who also died as a queen-consort in 1485, was interred in Westminster Abbey like Elizabeth of York. There are no accounts of her funeral or a monument marking her grave, with only £42 12s noted as the cost of her burial. The *Great Chronicle of London*, which was written in the 1530s, notes that she was buried south of the high altar in Westminster. Given the lack of sources, it is hard to say whether Elizabeth of York's funeral ceremonies were extraordinary. The *Liber Regie Capelle* notes that queens were to be buried with the same ceremonies as kings, but it is hard to prove this was followed in reality.

The sadly ironic thing I have found while studying Elizabeth of York, is that we know so much more detail about her death compared to her life. We will never really know what she was like as a person, what she thought about her position or how she was represented. What we do know is that she was a very popular Princess of England and later Queen-consort. She was laid to rest with all of the pomp of grandeur the Tudors were so famously good at, and our lasting memory of her is a consort whose main role was to be the mother of the Tudor dynasty. And what a dynasty she founded!

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# Tudor Places of Great Britain



Claire Ridgway

# MACABRE ICONOGRAPHY

*by Melanie V. Taylor*

## LA DANSE MACABRE

Tap, tap, tap – Death rhythmically  
Taps a tomb with his heel  
Death at midnight plays a gigue,  
Tap, tap, tap, on his violin.

The winter wind blows, the night is dark,  
The lime trees groan aloud;  
White skeletons flit across the gloom,  
Running and leaping beneath their huge shrouds.

Tap, tap, tap, everyone's astir,  
You hear the bones of the dancers knock,  
A lustful couple sits down on the moss,  
As if to savour past delights.

Tap, tap, tap, Death continues,  
Endlessly scraping his shrill violin.  
A veil has slipped! The dancer's naked!  
Her partner clasps her amorously.

They say she's a baroness of marchioness,  
And the callow gallant a poor cartwright.  
Good God! And now she's giving herself,  
As though the bumpkin were a baron!

Tap, tap, tap, what a sarabande!  
Circles of corpses all holdings hands!  
Tap, tap, tap, in the throng you can see  
King and peasant dancing together!

But shh! Suddenly the dance is ended.  
They jostle and take flight – the cock has crowed;  
Ah! Nocturnal beauty shines on the poor  
And long live death and equality!<sup>1</sup>

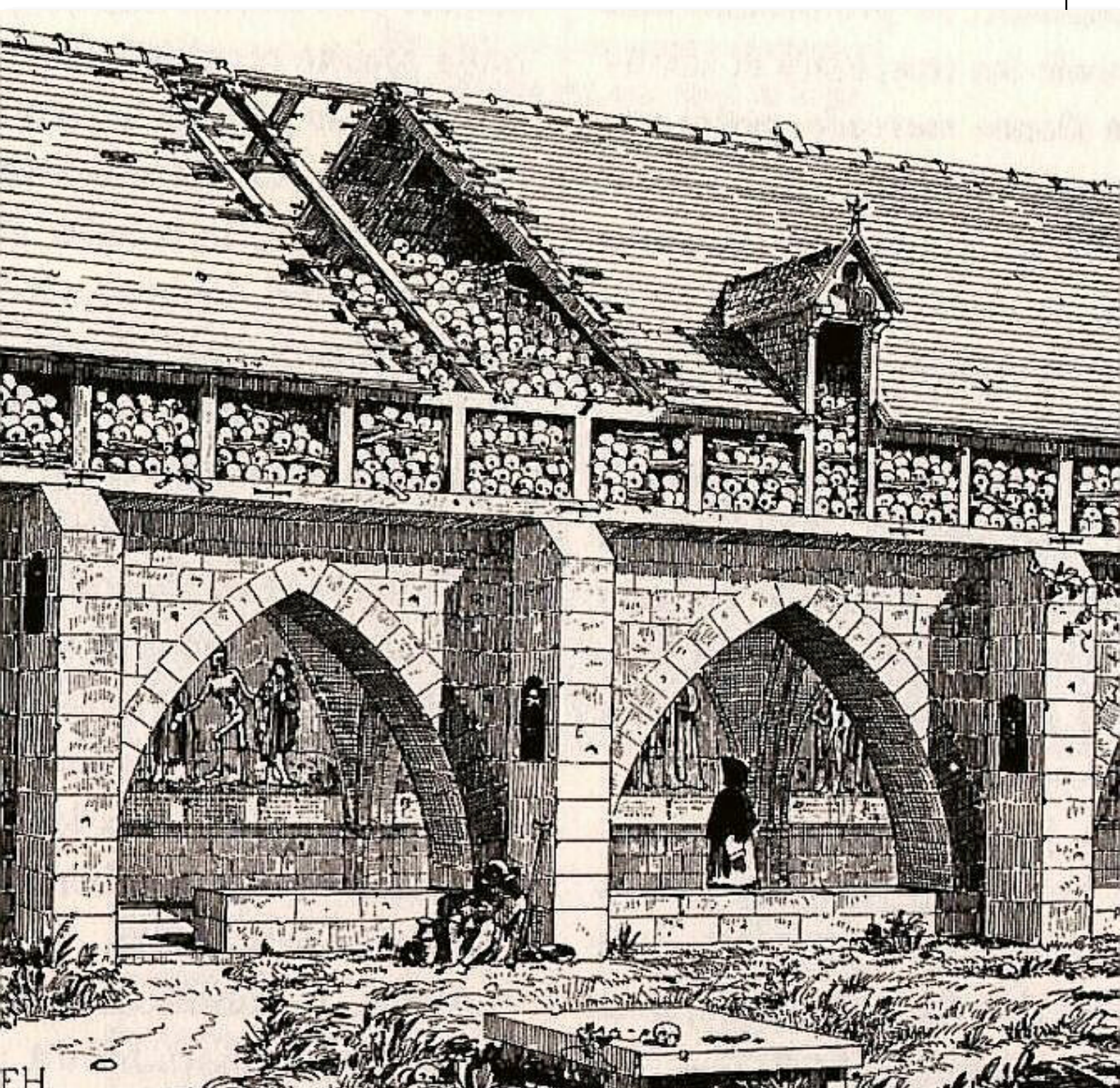
<sup>1</sup> Translation of the French poem, *La Danse Macabre*, by the 19<sup>th</sup> Symbolist poet Henri Cazalis. (Translator unknown).

**H**ENRI Cazalis based his 1872 poem on the ancient superstition that at midnight on 31<sup>st</sup> October Death calls the all dead and they rise and dance to his violin until the cock crows when the dead return to their graves and the eternal sleep – until the next year when Death plays his violin once more at midnight on the eve of All Hallows. The Celtic feast of Samhain was/is traditionally celebrated between sunset on 31<sup>st</sup> October and sunset on 1<sup>st</sup> November, which marked the end of the harvest and the start of winter. The Roman Catholic and some Protestant

Churches celebrate All Saints Day on 1<sup>st</sup> November, which suggests the idea was to absorb the Celtic festival of Samhain into the religious calendar. Modern Wiccans believe that All Hallows is the day when the veil between this world and the next is at its thinnest.

The superstition of The Dance of Death danced from midnight on 31<sup>st</sup> October until cock crow the following day has been an inspiration for artists ever since just after the Black Death.

There used to be an ancient cemetery in Paris called Le Cimetière des Innocents (the Cemetery of the Holy Innocents). This cemetery was used





for centuries and included a charnel house where the outside wall was covered with a painting of La Danse Macabre.<sup>2</sup> You can just make out the wall painting on the back wall of the cloister in this engraving.

This particular painting in Paris was the oldest that we know of and was created between August 1424 and Lent 1425 during the time of the Anglo-Burgundian Alliance when John, Duke of Bedford was in Paris as Regent for Henry VI (child king of both England and France). Unfortunately the road outside the cemetery was widened in 1669 and the wall destroyed in the process, but during the preceding centuries this long wall painting had inspired other renditions. There are records and fragments of other walls in Lubeck, Tallinin, Basel, Berlin and London, all inspired by the one in Paris.

The medieval wall in Lubeck survived from the 1440s until a new version was painted at the beginning of the 18<sup>th</sup> century. These Lubeck wall paintings were still in situ until WW2 when they were destroyed by Allied bombing. However, there are many records and photographs that tell us about that wall painting and the translations of the High German text that was beneath it. There is a 7.5 metre (approx 28ft) long painting in Tallinin, Estonia that may be by the same artist who painted the original medieval Lubeck wall. This large painting

is euphemistically referred to as a 'fragment' and is the one shown in the image.

The painting should be read from left to right and shows the 'Authority' seated in a pulpit admonishing his flock with Death seated immediately in front playing the bagpipes and wearing a decorously draped shroud across his knees. The translation of the text written on the pulpit.

I call everybody to this danse  
 Pope, emperor & all creatures  
 Poor, rich, great and small  
 Step forward, because grieving doesn't help you  
 But consider well, at all times,  
 That you bring your good deeds with you  
 And become free of your sins  
 Because you must dance to my pipe

Why is Death playing the bagpipes? Anyone who has heard bagpipes may consider the sound produced capable of waking the dead, but there is nothing more mournful than hearing a good piper playing a Scottish lament.<sup>3</sup>

Death speaks to the Pope :  
 Mr Pope, you are the highest now,  
 Let us lead the dance, I and you  
 Though you have stood in God's stead,

<sup>2</sup> <http://grande-boucherie.chez-alice.fr/Innocents.htm>  
 This website is in French. The cemetery dates from the 12<sup>th</sup> to late 18<sup>th</sup> century when it was closed because it was literally bursting at the seams. The bodies were exhumed and reburied elsewhere.

<sup>3</sup> In the Tallinin wall Death appears to be playing a *binioù kosh*, which is an ancient Breton type of pipe possibly originating from the Middle East. It is said that after The Battle of Culloden in 1748 the Scottish pipes were banned because they were considered to be a weapon of war.





An earthly father, honour and dignity received  
 From the whole world, you must  
 Follow me and become as I am.  
 Your loosing and binding, that was firm  
 The highness you will lose now.<sup>4</sup>

The Pope is followed by an emperor, cardinal, king, patriarch, constable, archbishop, baron, princess, bishop, squire, abbot, abbess, bailiff, astronomer, merchant, burgher, canon, serjeant, monk, usurer, physician, squire, lawyer, minstrel, conjuror, parson, labourer, friar, child, clerk, hermit and the king lying dead.

There were similar painted walls in Basel and Berlin, but this two cities were situated in an area of religious iconoclasm during the Reformation. In Berlin the wall painting was lime washed and was unknown until it appeared through the lime wash in 1860. Berlin was a city of 10,000 souls in the 15<sup>th</sup> century when it was created and while this 'Danse' wall painting is significant, it is not as notable as those of Lubeck and Tallinin.

In England, there was a famous 'Danse' wall painted on the wall of St Paul's Cloister and inspired by the Paris version. The monk, John Lydgate, had been to Paris and translated the words on the wall he had seen in le Cimetière des Innocents into English. Lydgate had been in Paris in 1426, during the time of the regency of John, Duke of Bedford,

and according to Stow (writing in 1603) the St Paul's wall decoration followed that of Paris. Twelve medieval manuscripts of Lydgate's translation survive and in 1554 Richard Tottel (Tothill?)<sup>5</sup> also reproduced it at the end of his edition of Lydgate's '*Fall of Princes*'. The cloisters wall at St Paul's was painted during Lydgate's lifetime.

Unfortunately the St Paul's wall only survived for a century because in 1549 it was demolished on the orders of the Lord Protector, the Duke of Somerset, and the plot laid bare. Eventually the area was made into a garden for use by the canons of the cathedral.

Those families lucky enough to own hand-scribed and illuminated Books of Hours would have found the Offices of the Dead at the back of many of these books. Sometimes there would be an illumination detailing what was in store for someone if they had not lived a good life. This link should take you to the illumination for The Mouth of Hell and Final Absolution in the Office of the Dead at the back of The Hours of Catherine of Cleves.<sup>6</sup> <http://www.themorgan.org/collection/hours-of-catherine-of-cleves/75#>. This particular Hours dates from 1440 and was illuminated in Utrecht by an artist who is known as The Master of the Catherine of Cleves Hours. These dramatic images were unique and these hand illuminated

4 This seems to be a reference to St Matthew Chapter 16 v 19. "And I will give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven, and whatever you bind on earth will be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth will be loosed in heaven."

5 Richard Tothill also published the *Anonymous Treatise on Limning* in 1573 which details how to prepare and mix pigments and vellum for illuminations. Tothill was also licensed to publish maps and charts.

6 Held in the Morgan Library, New Library.



were usually commissioned and the patron would have paid a high price.

During the time the Paris wall paintings were being created, the age of printing was just dawning. The individual copper engravings and woodcuts created for these publications could be printed off individually in relatively large numbers. These were much cheaper than illuminated Hours so more widely available to the buying public.

Artists such as Michael Wolgemut were inspired by the subject and his image shows five skeletons apparently have a great time dancing. Wolgemut was working at the end of the 15<sup>th</sup> century and his woodcuts were more refined in execution so did not require hand colouring. This particular image comes from his series of illustrations for Hartman Schedel's *Chronicle of The World*, but Wolgemut is probably more famous as being the teacher of Albrecht Dürer.

Dürer was the first artist to have an international celebrity reputation during his lifetime. This may, in part, be due to his extraordinary talent as an artist and engraver, but also to his ability to market his own work.

This unsigned engraving dating from 1494 is now considered to be by Dürer. The title is *The Young Woman Attacked by Death* or *The Ravisher* and it is the inclusion of eryngium (sea holly) in the background that makes academibes believe the artist may be Dürer. In his self-portrait of 1493 when he was aged 22, he holds a sprig of eryngium, which Pliny thought had aphrodisiac qualities. As to whether the bespectacled creature is Death or should be given another identity may have been revealed in any words that were never placed in the empty banner above the two people. It has been suggested that the engraving may be a reference to the hanging in Nuremberg in 1489 of a man



convicted of many rapes – hence the alternative title *The Ravisher*. Either way, it is a powerful, moralising image. The other artist who may have created this engraving is known by the sobriquet, The Housebook Master.

Perhaps the one of most well known images of death and destruction by Dürer is his *Four*

*Horsemen of the Apocalypse*, which is one of fifteen illustrations that appear in his self-published 1498 version of *The Book of Revelations*.

Pestilence, War, Famine and Death charge forth trampling everyone before them. Dürer used the text from *Revelations 6*: as inspiration for this image. This is taken from The King James's version:

- 1 *And I saw when the Lamb opened one of the seals, and I heard, as it were the noise of thunder, one of the four beasts saying, Come and see.*
- 2 *And I saw, and behold a white horse: and he that sat on him had a bow; and a crown was given unto him: and he went forth conquering, and to conquer.*
- 3 *And when he had opened the second seal, I heard the second beast say, Come and see.*

**4** *And there went out another horse that was red: and power was given to him that sat thereon to take peace from the earth, and that they should kill one another: and there was given unto him a great sword.*

**5** *And when he had opened the third seal, I heard the third beast say, Come and see. And I beheld, and lo a black horse; and he that sat on him had a pair of balances in his hand.*

**6** *And I heard a voice in the midst of the four beasts say, A measure of wheat for a penny, and three measures of barley for a penny; and see thou hurt not the oil and the wine.*

**7** *And when he had opened the fourth seal, I heard the voice of the fourth beast say, Come and see.*

**8** *And I looked, and behold a pale horse: and his name that sat on him was Death, and Hell followed with him. And power was given unto them over the fourth part of the earth, to kill with sword, and with hunger, and with death, and with the beasts of the earth*

This image is full of movement and the large wood-blocks (39.1 x 28.2 cms in size) would have

been extremely difficult, and expensive, to cut. The expense was worth it because the images could be





Ecce non dormitabit neque dormiet: qui custodit israel.

Domini custodit te dominus protectio tua super manum dexteram tuam.

**D**er diem sol non uret te: neque luna per noctem. Domini custodit te ab omni malo: custodiat animam tuam dominus.

Domini custodiat introitum tuum et exitum tuum: ex hoc nunc et usque in seculum.

Requiem. an. Domini custodit te ab omni malo custodiat animam tuam dominus. Psalmus.

**D**e profundis clamaui ad te domine: domine exaudi vocem meam.

Inclina aures tue intendentes: in vocem deprecationis mee.

Si iniquitates obseruaueris domine: domine quis sustinebit.

Misericordia tua apud te propiciatio est: et propter legem tuam sustinui te domine.

Sustinuit anima mea in verbo eius: sperauit anima mea in domino.

Custodia matutina usque ad noctem: speret israel in domino.

Misericordia tua apud dominum misericordia: et copiosa apud eum redemptio. Et ipse redimet israel: ex omnibus iniquitatibus eius.

Requiem. an. Si iniquitates obseruaueris domine: domine quis sustinebit. an. Opera. ps.

Confitebor tibi domine in toto corde meo quoniam audisti uerba oris mei.

In conspectu angelorum psallam tibi: adorabo ad templum sanctum tuum et confitebor nomini tuo.



Mais maintenant  
toute hautesse  
Laissez vous  
nestes pas seul  
Peu auez de vo  
stre richesse  
Le plus riche na  
qung sinseul



le .: 209



le patriarche



le comestable

Venez noble roy  
couronne  
Renome de force  
et prouesse  
Jadis fustes en  
uironne  
De grans pom  
pes de grant no  
blesse

printed off singly. Many copies were sold. There are copies of many of Dürer's engravings in various collections around the world, including the British Museum and the Courtauld Institute in London.

Paris produced some of the most creative publishers of the time. It is thought that between 1475 and 1600, Parisian bookmakers made 1,775 printed Books of Hours. The most famous names are Philippe Pigouchet & Simon Vostre who worked together for approximately 18 years. Pigouchet was both a printer and engraver and Vostre, a printer.

In 1485 Guy Marchand published illustrated books of *La Danse Macabre* and in 1502 Vostre did the same. This marginal image from the 1502 version of Vostre's book shows Death talking to a king. Below him is the patriarch and then the connétable (constable). The publication has this type of decorated margin throughout and contains all the characters seen in the various wall paintings. This is a high status book and although it would have been cheaper than the hand scribed and illuminated books, it was still expensive.

One of the most famous 16<sup>th</sup> century designers of images of for a *Danse Macabre* has to be Hans Holbein.

Having moved to Basel in 1515, Holbein must have known the Basel wall painting of this subject. The city was also home to the great reformist religious thinkers and Holbein's work is a reworking of the medieval allegory that reflects the ideas of Erasmus, Luther, Melancthon, Calvin et al. Holbein transforms the original medieval moralising concept of *La Danse Macabre* into a satirical comment on the established Church.

I particularly like the image of the cardinal selling a papal indulgence to an unsuspecting



man hoping to buy some relief from his time in purgatory. Death's boney hand grips the rim of the cardinal's hat as if he is about to rip it from the prelate's head at the precise moment the man hands over the money.

In another image the pope crowns an emperor and Death appears twice. There are two demons assisting the skeletal spectres. The first demon holds back the curtain of the papal dias while the second hovers above a cardinal and holds what appears to be an indulgence similar to the one held by the cardinal in the previous woodcut. Is Holbein suggesting the end of the established Church and the practice of selling indulgences perhaps?

Only a pope can crown an emperor and Death appears to have come to take the pope at a crucial moment of the coronation ceremony. The emperor is bent forward about to kiss the papal foot as a sign of fealty. The Catholic House of Hapsburg were in





firm command of The Holy Roman Empire as the grandson of Maximilian I, Charles V, had been crowned emperor in 1519 and when these images were created during the 1520s the Hapsburg lands stretched across Europe.

One of the earliest documented events where a newly created vassal kisses the foot of his liege lord was in 911 AD during a ceremony in early medieval France when the Viking leader, Rollo, was given land in and around the city of Rouen.<sup>7</sup> Rollo had been leading Viking raids up the River Seine, laying waste to the surrounding countryside and eventually besieging Paris. The various accounts say how this land was granted despite the Vikings being defeated at Chartres.

Clearly the northern invaders were not going away so the Frankish king, Charles the Simple, gave this group of Vikings led by Rollo the land nearest the sea as a buffer against further invasion by the Norsemen. The terms of the treaty were that in exchange for this land Rollo and his men would convert to Christianity and Rollo would marry Charles's daughter Griselda.<sup>8</sup> When the time came for Rollo to kiss the foot of Charles the Simple, Rollo balked. **He** was not going to kiss anyone's foot so instructed one of his followers to do so in his stead. Evidently the man bent down and lifted the king's head to his mouth, thus upending the monarch and landing him on his back! The Norsemen were here to stay and despite their reputation for dealing death and destruction wherever they went, they quickly integrated into the local population by marrying the daughters of local aristocracy. Within three generations they had settled peacefully into the Christian faith and in 1066 William, Duke of Normandy, conquered England, but I digress!

We must not think of Holbein's images of La Danse as specific visual comments on the then pope, or emperor, but political comments on the behaviour of the establishment. The allegorical

message is still apparent and Death appears in scenes of every day life, reflecting the fine line between this life and the next.

Instead of the first image of the this series being The Authority – as in the frescoes, Holbein's first image is of Adam & Eve being expelled from the Garden of Eden. Death waits for them holding something akin to a modern violin. From now on, all men will die.

A further three images from Genesis follow this one. After the fifth (which depicts a crowd of skeletons) the following thirty five woodcuts show similar characters as seen in the frescoes.

Holbein had to wait until these forty-one drawings were finally printed in 1538.<sup>9</sup> His personal feelings and beliefs may show in the way he portrays members of the Catholic Church, but ordinary people are more sympathetically treated. However, the message is clear – no one escapes their fate!

In the early 15<sup>th</sup> century, picture playing cards started to appear. Card games probably came from Egypt in the late 14<sup>th</sup> century and it was in Italy, Spain and Portugal that we see the development of these. Originally the tarot deck was known as *trionfi* and used for card games, not divination.<sup>10</sup> There are cards in these packs showing similar characters to those in the wall paintings and books of La Danse. In today's taro pack, the thirteenth card of the major arcana is Death, and in the 15<sup>th</sup> century the characters such as The Emperor, the Empress, the Heirophant were used as trump cards. In particular, members of the two Milanese ruling families are portrayed in the 15<sup>th</sup> century Sforza Visconti court cards painted for the entertainment of the Milanese elite ruling family.

The Dance of Death continues to fascinate artists, musicians, choreographers and film makers including Disney who took the idea of La Danse Macabre when he produced the cartoon of *The Skeleton Dance* in 1929. Mickey Mouse also has a brush with dancing skeletons in *The Haunted House*

7 The contemporary account by Duodo says this event took place at St Claire sur Epte in the autumn of 911 and during the next 100 years or so, more land was added to the original territory creating the Duchy of Normandy.

8 The marriage to Gisela is disputed and she may not even have existed, but we do know Rollo married Poppa, daughter of Berenger, Count of Rennes.

9 Derek Wilson's book, *Holbein: Portrait of an Unknown Man* (2006) is a fabulous exploration of the life of the great man.

10 The earliest surviving book showing the use of the tarot deck for divination is *The Oracles of Francesco Marcolino di Forli*, published in 1540.



made in the same year. The 1957 film *The Seventh Seal*, directed by Ingmar Bergman, is set in Sweden at the time of the Black Death. This film has the famous scene where the knight, who has just returned from the Crusades, challenges Death to games of chess in an attempt to forestall being taken by the grim reaper. Death agrees. At various times during the story the knight is seen playing chess by himself since no one else, except his squire, can see the knight's opponent. There are various other characters and their stories reflect some of those seen in the original 15<sup>th</sup> century frescoes and the text of the medieval books. The scene shows knight and his followers being led away in a dance with Death in the lead.

Modern novels often play with the concept of dancing with Death. The fantasy novelist Neil Gaiman describes such a scene in his book, *The Graveyard Book*, where the living and the dead dance for a night. In 2003, the BBC's Big Read contest voted Sir Terry Pratchett's fourth Discworld, novel *Mort*, as the nation's best loved book. Sir Terry had used Death as a supporting character in his three previous novels, but this tale has the Grim Reaper as the central character. When Death decides he needs a holiday, he finds an apprentice, Mort, who falls in love with a princess who is destined to an early death. There are various other adventures and characters all trying to put off their own demise. It is a very long time since I read this story, but I remember wondering if Sir Terry had been inspired by the medieval texts. For some extraordinary reason I always picture Pratchett's characters dressed in Tudor costume!

Many musical composers have been inspired by the idea of creating a suitable piece for Death to lead his skeletal dancers in their annual gambol. The earliest we know of is August Nörmiger who composed *Mattasin oder Toden Tanz* in 1598 and over the



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*Sed et quiaspelique derumqui aut quam, tenimus cipsundi*

centuries there were many others – Frans Liszt, Godel Mussorgsky, Dimitri Shostakovich, Benjamin Britten and the bands Steeleye Span and Iron Maiden, to name but a few. Camille Saints Saëns was inspired by Cazalis’s poem to write his musical score in 1874. However I like also like this slightly later poem.

## MELANIE V. TAYLOR



**Melanie V. Taylor** is the Tudor Society’s regular art historian. She has written several books including “**The Truth of the Line**” which tells the story of artist Nicholas Hilliard.

## THE DANCER

A famous Conductor  
And an unknown dancer  
who came from somewhere to the great stage

### *The Conductor*

I will play for you one single dance  
Memorize that dance  
And don’t look for any other.  
And don’t think of anything else,  
Just dance and dance and dance.

Perhaps your head will spin  
And the spotlights will dim –  
Don’t pay attention,  
Just dance and dance.  
And when the new dawn begins to break  
You too will be another  
But today don’t think of anything else,  
Just dance,  
Just dance that one single dance.

### *The Dancer*

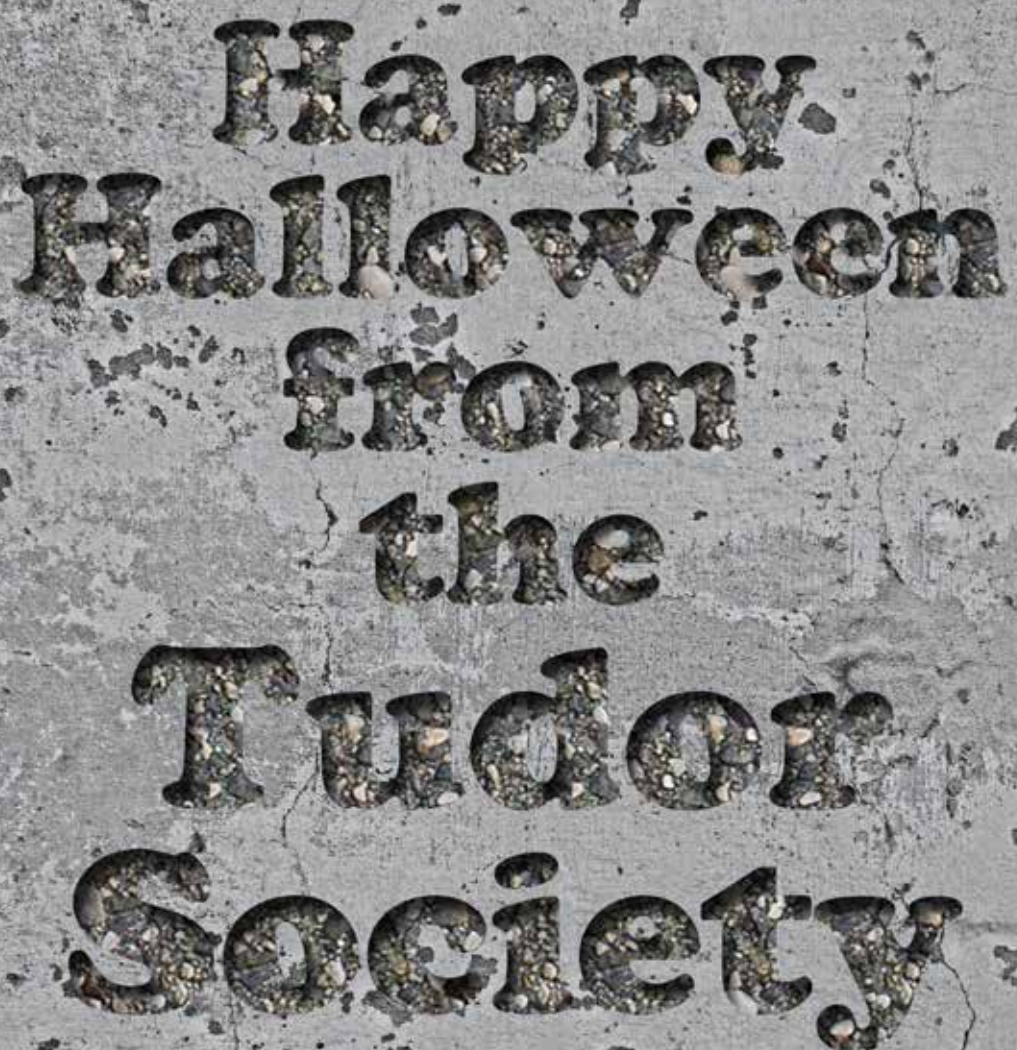
Good. We are both prepared.  
Let them raise the black curtain!  
Play for me Saints-Saëns’  
Danse Macabre.

*Vinka Mykolaitus-Putanis (1893-1967)*

Melanie has selected a piece of music that she thinks would be the perfect accompaniment to her article. You’ll



find the link to this music underneath the magazine on the Tudor Society website page.



Happy  
Halloween  
from  
the  
Tudor  
Society

# ENGLISH TUDOR ERA EXECUTION METHODS

*by Beth von Staats*

**T**o all but the most blessed living in 16<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> century Tudor England and Wales, life was laden with fear and terror. Religious to the core of one's soul, death itself, with its promise of salvation, likely did not traumatize people so much as the agony and torment brought to bear by illness and injury. Pain, excruciating pain, was a common experience of the vast majority living in the era at some point in their lives. It is within this reality that sadistic and torturous punishments for crimes committed were conjured by those with the authority to enact them, execution tactics cruel to the extreme. What follows is an admittedly partial listing of Tudor Era execution methods and the stories of those who fell victim to them.

*“He shall be drawn on a hurdle through the City of London to Tyburn, there to be hanged till he should be half dead; then he should be cut down alive, his privy parts cut off, his belly ripped, his bowels burnt, his four quarters sit up over four gates of the City and his head upon London Bridge.”*

– Execution Sentence of Saint Thomas More

## **DEATH BY HANGING, DRAWING AND QUARTERING**

As described at the sentencing of Saint Thomas More, hanging, drawing and quartering was perhaps the Tudor Era's most grisly mode of execution. Reserved for male commoners convicted of high treason, the vast majority of male Roman Catholics executed for their faith were judicially murdered in this fashion, particularly during the

reigns of King Henry VIII and Queen Elizabeth Tudor. Female “traitors” died by a variety of other methods, most commonly burning.

Invented in 1241 to punish William Maurice for alleged piracy, over 100 Roman Catholic martyrs were executed in this horrific fashion at Tyburn alone, first drawn (dragged) on a wooden hurdle throughout the streets of London, and then excruciatingly tormented. It is no wonder that a reprieve from the monarch to “reduce sentence” to beheading was viewed as “compassion”. Fortunately, or unfortunately depending at how you look at things, Saint Thomas More stepped upon the scaffold

## The Manner of Execution at Tyburn.



and was instead decapitated, his original sentence reduced in deference to his service to crown.

Beyond the Roman Catholic martyrs of Tyburn, heroes that included Catusian monks of the Henrican era and a host of priests and reclusants of Elizabeth Tudor's reign, a variety of historical figures living during the Tudor and Stuart dynasties fell victim to this gruesome end, some actually guilty of treason against the crown and ruling government. Thus, as a strong deterrent for others who might conjure a plan to upend the monarch, or simply embarrass him, Queen Katherine's former lover Francis Durham, along with Guy Fawkes and his fellow Gunpowder Plot conspirators, died "a traitor's death", a crowd of onlookers cheering the executioners on.

### DEATH BY CRUSHING

As noted above, women condemned for treason were most commonly burned at the stake. Not all were, though. Sometimes executioners were far more "creatively" sadistic in their torment. Such

was the case during the reign of Queen Elizabeth Tudor when punishing female Roman Catholic reclusants.

In 1586, Saint Margaret Clitherow, wife of a butcher, was condemned for harboring Roman Catholic priests. As the story goes, she refused to plead guilty, so to prevent a trial that might result in her children being tortured for evidence, officials decided to attempt crushing her. This evidently was a common tactic used to force a plea through torture.

Unwilling to move forward themselves, two officials charged with the task instead hired four beggars to do the deed. Saint Margaret Clitherow was stripped and laid upon a sharp rock. The front door of her home was laid upon her and then incrementally loaded with heavy boulders and stones. Heroically, the woman refused to plead guilty, eventually crushed to death by the weight placed upon her.

This particular execution reportedly angered Queen Elizabeth Tudor, who is said to have composed a letter to the citizens of York expressing

her outrage of the treatment of a woman. Because of her gender, the queen professed Clitherow should not have been executed.

## DEATH BY DECAPITATION

Beheading, the most common choice of execution method for use with condemned 16<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> century English and Welsh nobility and royalty, was introduced to Great Britain by the Anglo Saxons as a punishment for theft. Centuries later, the first noble beheaded by command of a reigning monarch was Waltheof, Earl of Waltheof, during the reign of William the Conqueror. Convicted

of treason for his role in the “Revolt of the Earls”, like later Queen Anne Boleyn in the 16<sup>th</sup> century, Waltheof was decapitated by sword.

The vast majority of beheadings in England took place at the Tower of London, the most common prison of condemned men and women of high birth. Notable exceptions include the executions of King Charles I at Whitehall and Mary, Queen of Scots at Fotheringhay Castle. Beheading was viewed as the Tudor Era’s most humane mode of execution, and research shows efficient single blow decapitations resulted in initial acute pain, followed by loss of consciousness within two to seven seconds.

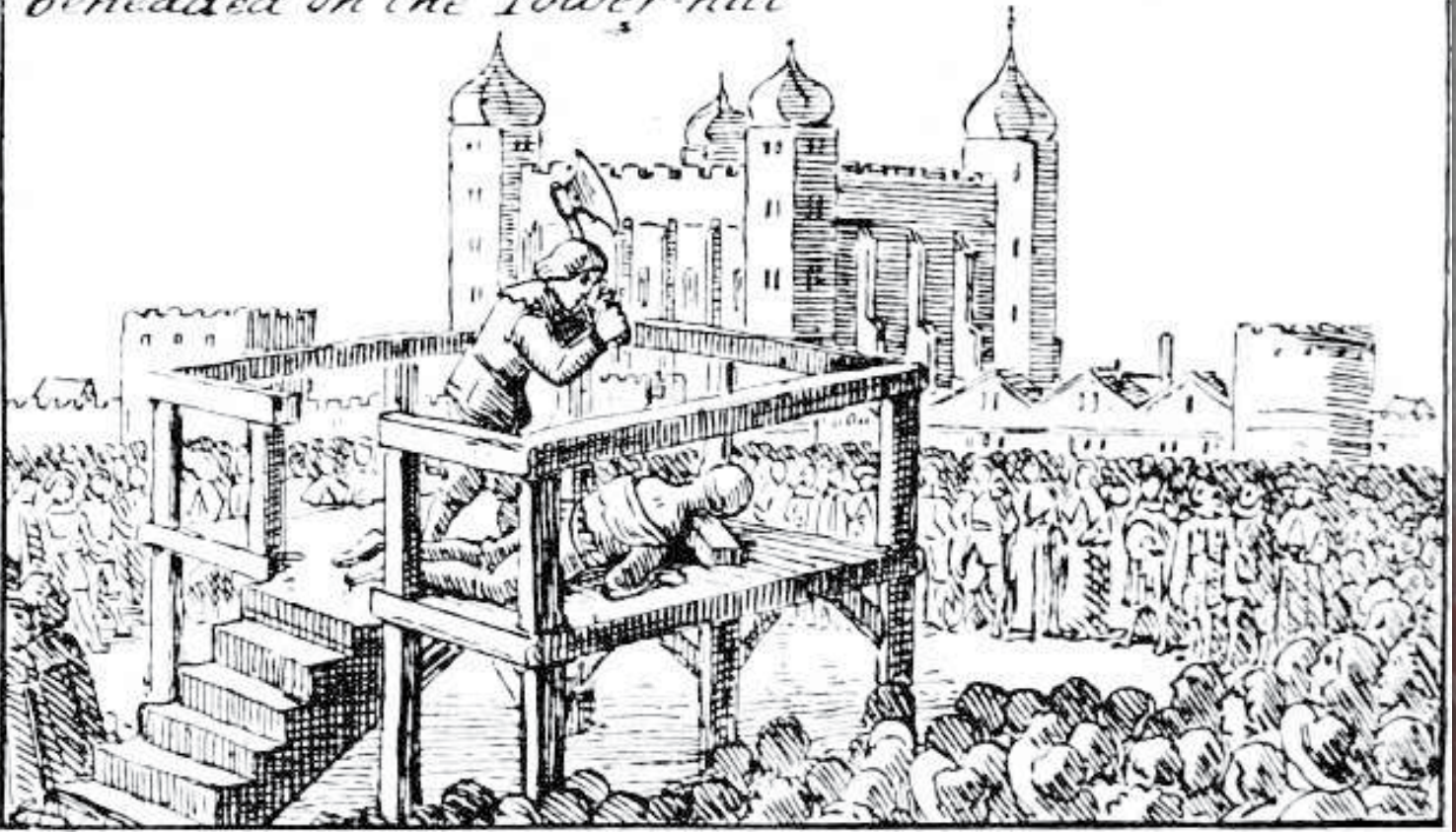
The ability of the victim to remain still, combined with the skill and experience of the



Execution of Lady Jane Grey by Paul Delaruche from the National Gallery



*The Earle of Strafford for treasonable practises  
beheaded on the Tower-hill*



Earl Strafford beheaded on tower hill

executioner, was required to insure only one blow from the most commonly used ax was needed to complete the deed. Consequently, botched executions were fairly common, especially in England where they were exacted infrequently. Sadly, several blows of the ax were needed to exact the deaths of Margaret Pole, Countess of Salisbury; Thomas Cromwell, Earl of Essex; Mary, Queen of Scots, and Robert Devereux, also Earl of Essex. Their tragic deaths were excruciatingly painful to the extreme.

## DEATH BY BOILING IN OIL

During the reign of King Henry VIII, an assassination attempt was made towards Saint John Fisher. As the story goes, the then Bishop of Rochester and several of his servants were taken ill after eating some porridge, two subsequently dying. Perhaps coincidentally, but most likely not, this

attempt on Fisher's life came just a few days after King Henry VIII was named "Supreme Head" of the Church of England, Fisher demonstrating strong opposition.

Despite Fisher's civil disobedience, the king was appalled by the course of events, particularly after Lord Chancellor Thomas More informed him that subjects were conjecturing that the Lady Anne Boleyn was behind it. Thus, he commanded his secretary, Thomas Cromwell, to draft a Parliamentary Act condemning those found guilty of poisoning others to be boiled in oil. The resulting law retroactively applied resulted in the execution of Fisher's cook, Richard Roose.

Per historical accounts, boiling in oil was carried out using a huge cauldron. To increase the torment of the condemned, the executioner sometimes used a hook and pulley system to raise and lower the victim slowly in and out of the boiling oil. This seems the most likely fate of Richard Roose, as a contemporary witness to the



*Europa videtur suavis fructus in oleo coquuntur.*

### Boiling in oil

event teaches us, “He roared mighty loud, and divers women who were big with child did feel sick at the sight of what they saw, and were carried away half dead; and other men and women did not seem frightened by the boiling alive, but would prefer to see the headsman at his work.”

Though the sight was beyond appalling, executions by boiling in oil drew huge crowds due to their infrequent use.

## DEATH BY BURNING AT THE STAKE

Though burning at the stake is most commonly attributed to Queen Mary Tudor and Saint Thomas More, this particular mode of execution was the common punishment exacted for heresy. Burning people for heresy was nothing new in Europe or in England and Wales specifically. Burning “heretics” became a customary practice as early as the 12<sup>th</sup> century throughout Europe, a statutory punishment as early as the 13<sup>th</sup> century. In 15<sup>th</sup> century England, those who followed the teachings of John Wycliffe and the Lollards were burned at the stake, religious persecution that

Oxford, with his hand first thrust into the fyre, wher with he subscribed before.



**Cranmers burning from John foxes book**

continued for over 100 years, legitimized by the Fire and Faggot Act of 1414. In England even “already dead” people were burned, John Wycliffe exhumed and burned 30 years after his death.

Over 30 burnings for heresy are verified to have taken place in the century leading to Thomas More’s Lord Chancellorship, seven burnings under his watch, and nearly 300 people burned by the command of Queen Mary Tudor. Though heresy burnings are commonly viewed as a Roman Catholic phenomenon, Evangelicals and Protestants also burned victims for their religious beliefs. During the reign of King Henry VIII, the Evangelical clergy and political elite orchestrated the demise by burning of both John Frith and John Lambert. Then during the reign of Edward VI, Protestant clergy

targeted Anabaptists Joan Bocher and George van Paris for burning, even though Parliamentary Law prohibited the practice.

If one attempts to compare excruciating victimization, perhaps England’s most abhorrent heresy burning during the Tudor Era was exacted by ironically Thomas Cranmer, Archbishop of Canterbury and Hugh Latimer, Bishop of Worcester, both later also burned to death themselves. In the wake of the Dissolution of the Monasteries, the Henrican regime had within their possession an amazing wooden Welsh idol stripped from the Village of Llandderfel. As the story goes, a prophecy foretold the idol of Derfel Gadarn, Saint Derfel the Strong, would be burned in a forest.

Blessed John Forest's execution at Smithfield was barbaric even for the era, orchestrated in a deeply symbolic event attended by Latimer, Cranmer, Thomas Cromwell and other Evangelical dignitaries. Chained at his waist and underarms, Forest was pulled above the fire and roasted slowly for over two hours as Hugh Latimer sermonized, the elaborate Welsh wooden idol of Derfel Gadarn, Saint Derfel the Strong, tossed in the fags to mock both Forest and the Roman Catholic tradition of prophecy.

## DEATH BY GIBBETING

Gibbeting is a method of execution where the condemned is hung in chains. Though the term gibbeting itself simply refers to the display of an already executed body being hung in chains to deter others from wrongdoing, during the Tudor Era, live gibbeting was utilized as a sadistic execution method. Quite simply, those condemned were hung alive in chains and left to die of thirst.

The Tudor Era's most famous historical figure executed by live gibbeting was Robert Aske. Condemned for his role in the Pilgrimage of Grace, Aske, assuming he would be hung, drawn and quartered, begged that he not be disemboweled

until he was fully dead. King Henry VIII cruelly honored his request by commanding Aske to be hung in chains on a specially erected scaffold outside Clifford's Tower. Aske's agonizing torment lasted six long days before his ultimate death.

Sadly, Cathusian monks were executed in a variety of abhorrent ways. Although hanging, drawing and quartering was the most common sadism exacted towards these gentle and heroic souls who refused to take the Oath of Succession, in May 1537, King Henry VIII ordered the execution of Dom John Rochester and Dom James Walworth by live gibbeting from the York city battlements.

## DEATH BY STARVATION

Later during the same month of May 1537, 38 Cathusians – twenty hermits and 18 lay brothers – remained living in the London Charterhouse. Commanded to take the Oath of Supremacy, eleven of the men refused, including four hermits and seven lay brothers. Sent to Newgate Prison, they were chained standing and with their hands tied behind posts. They were then simply abandoned, left to die of starvation.

## BETH VON STAATS



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<http://getbook.at/cranmer>

# Thomas Cranmer

in a nutshell



History  
"In a Nutshell"  
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MadeGlobal's **History in a Nutshell Series** aims to give readers a good grounding in a historical topic in a concise, easily digestible and accessible way.

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Beth von Staats, creator of the popular "QueenAnneBoleyn" website brings together what is known about Thomas Cranmer and clearly explains his fascinating role in English history.



Arthur Prince of  
Wales c1500, artist  
unknown

# THE ONCE AND FUTURE PRINCE

*by Olga Hughes*

IT is tempting to call King Henry VII and Elizabeth of York's eldest son Arthur the "forgotten" Tudor prince. Yet we question many things about Arthur, his birth, his health, his marriage and his death. Was Arthur really a month premature or did Henry VII and Elizabeth consummate their marriage before their wedding ceremony? What sort of king might he have made? Why did Arthur die so suddenly? And was Arthur really so sickly that he could not consummate his marriage to Katherine of Aragon, a question that would plague Katherine herself decades later? We have not really forgotten Arthur altogether, but he has a slightly mythical quality to him. He was destined for great things. His birth was a sign that the union between the house of Tudor and York was blessed by God, strengthening the new dynasty from the moment he was born. At the age of three he was betrothed to the daughter of the great Catholic monarchs, the Spanish Infanta, Katherine of Aragon, their union the ultimate alliance for the fledgling Tudor Dynasty. But Arthur's destiny was stolen from him. And his short life will ever be diminished by his notorious younger brother, the dashing young Henry who swept Arthur's widow off her feet.

It is inevitable that comparisons will be drawn between Arthur and Henry, even though we know so little about Arthur. We might guess Arthur was Henry VII's favourite, his heir and the apple of his eye. We do know that the young Prince Henry drove Henry VII to distraction. In 1504 Hernán Duque professed that 'it is quite

wonderful how much the king likes the Prince of Wales', but he also noted that 'it is not only from love that the king takes the prince with him; he wishes to improve him'. Reginald Pole claimed that Henry VII had 'no affection or fancy unto [Prince Henry]', and the young Henry drove his father into rages, which left him in a trancelike state, 'his eyes closed, neither sleeping nor waking'. The Spanish ambassador Fuensalida claimed that the king fought so violently with his son 'as if to kill him' before shutting himself away for several hours to let his seizure pass.<sup>1</sup> We never hear of violent quarrels between Arthur and his father. Certainly, Arthur lived apart in his own household, but there are no reports of irresponsible conduct. As far as we know Arthur was the model prince, intelligent, graceful and handsome. We know that Arthur's death, followed by his mother's death in childbirth a year later, would destroy Henry VII emotionally. Henry now had to invest all his hopes in his younger son. Perhaps young Prince Henry would never measure up to his eldest brother. And it is always tempting to wonder what sort of king Arthur might have made.

Arthur's parents began to prepare him for his role from his birth. Henry and Elizabeth travelled to Winchester in late September of 1486 to await his arrival. The couple was blessed with a boy, born in the city believed to have been the capital of the mythical Camelot and the site of the legendary King Arthur's castle. The baby was, of course, named after the Once and Future King. They celebrated in the streets as wine filled the fountains, bonfires roared and the *Te Deum* was sung at Winchester

<sup>1</sup> Matusiak, John *Henry VIII: The Life and Rule of England's Nero*, History Press, 2013 pp. 48

Cathedral. Arthur's birth was not only a symbol of hope, but of the healing of a nation.

But Arthur could remain blissfully oblivious from responsibility for a little while. Like all royal babies, he spent his first years in the nursery. He had a nurse named Katherine Gibbes and two royal cradle rockers, one named Agnes Butler, all who would have undergone a strict screening process. Lady Elizabeth Darcy, who had managed the royal nursery under Edward IV, returned to look after the new prince. Lady Darcy would later be granted a pension of £20 from the prince's Duchy of Cornwall Estates and 420 gallons of red wine per annum.<sup>2</sup>

But even if the baby's first year passed fairly uneventfully, it was not long before Arthur was required to take on his ceremonial positions. At the age of two negotiations for his betrothal to Katherine of Aragon had begun. Arthur was made a Knight of the Bath on the 29th November 1489, and the following day created Prince of Wales. Arthur received his basic literacy from an unknown teacher until around the age of four, when Master John Rede took over his education. Master Rede had been headmaster of Winchester College for six years and would later become warden of New College, Oxford. Rede's contemporaries included the leading Greek scholar in England, William Grocyn, the future Archbishop of Canterbury William Warham and humanist grammarians William Horman and John Stanbridge. Arthur would have been receiving the most advanced educational ideas available in England.<sup>3</sup> Italian poet Bernard André accounted for twenty-four classical and renaissance authors that prince Arthur had read, featuring works from authors such as Homer, Ovid, Thucydides, Suetonius, Caesar, Pliny, Virgil, and Cicero; and fifteenth-century humanists such as Guarino, Leto and Perotti.<sup>4</sup>

Invested as a Knight of the Garter at the age of five, Arthur was also gifted with an expensive bow

around this time. We know little about any martial training Arthur may have received and his positions as warden of the Marches was as a figurehead. But the six year-old Arthur's household was a different matter. Around 1489, Arthur's independent household and council was being established at his seat in Ludlow, Wales. Arthur's council was led by John Alcock, bishop of Worcester, but young Arthur was nominally master of his own household. Henry VII deliberately placed no noble in charge of his son's household, Arthur had no superior guardian, and learned to command and reward his servants under the supervision of a few household officers. We might speculate that young Prince Henry would have benefited from this independent upbringing. Henry grew to be the exact opposite of his quiet, self-possessed elder brother.

It has been suggested that Arthur started taking on the role of benefactor at a young age.<sup>5</sup> His nurse Katherine Gibbs received a £20 per annum and his rocker Agnes received £3 6s 8d. The villagers of Farnham received a license to establish a chantry without paying the usual fee, as Arthur had been nursed there. Over the years Arthur gave many members of his household offices on his estates. Arthur was learning to "use the patronage at his disposal to build political loyalty."<sup>6</sup>

As is usual with those who died young, Arthur is often thought of as frail and sickly. However reports tells us of a handsome young prince, "taller than his years would warrant, of remarkable beauty and grace",<sup>7</sup> who danced "right pleasant and honourably".<sup>8</sup> Arthur's magnificence was displayed in his ceremonial entrances into towns where he was always greeted with plays and pageants, wine and gifts.<sup>9</sup> Arthur spent much time at Tickenhall Manor at Bewdley, and his father's houses of Woodstock, Windsor and Richmond. Arthur provided sophisticated hospitality, with a lutanist, organist and poet in his household, and learned to

2 Gunn, Steve 'Prince Arthur's preparation for Kingship' *Arthur Tudor Prince of Wales: Life Death and Commemoration*, Boydell Press 2009 pp. 7

3 *Ibid*

4 Fox, Julia, *Sister Queens: Katherine of Aragon and Juana of Castile*, Phoenix 2012, pp. 47

5 Gunn, Steve 'Prince Arthur's preparation for Kingship' *Arthur Tudor Prince of Wales: Life Death and Commemoration*, Boydell Press 2009 pp. 11

6 *Ibid*

7 Hepburn, Frederick, 'The Portraiture of Prince Arthur and Katherine of Aragon' *Arthur Tudor Prince of Wales: Life Death and Commemoration*, Boydell Press 2009 pp. 38

8 Gunn, pp. 9

9 Gunn, Steve, Monckton, Linda, 'Arthur Tudor, the Forgotten Prince' *Arthur Tudor Prince of Wales: Life Death and Commemoration*, Boydell Press 2009 pp. 2



give lavish gifts in the style of his father's court. His collection of tapestries may have included a set with red, white and Tudor roses and the arms of King Arthur, of which fragments survive at Winchester College.<sup>10</sup>

All of this paints a very different picture than the one we are used to. We seem to always think of Arthur in terms of his marriage and death. Arthur pales, not only in comparison to his brother Henry VIII, but to his long-suffering widow Katherine of Aragon. But once Arthur had been a prince of Wales, the great hope of his dynasty, intelligent, graceful, handsome and looking forward to his married life. A surviving letter from Arthur to Katherine, written in Latin and with probably a little help from his tutors, shows the courtly dance between the young couple.

*Most illustrious and most excellent lady, my dearest spouse, I wish you very much health, with my hearty commendation.*

*I have read the most sweet letters of your Highness lately given to me, from which I have easily perceived your most entire love to me. Truly those your letters, traced by your own hand, have so delighted me, and have rendered me so cheerful and jocund, that I fancied I beheld your Highness and conversed with and embraced my dearest wife. I cannot tell you what an earnest desire I feel to see your Highness,*

*and how vexatious to me is this procrastination about your coming. I owe eternal thanks to your excellence that you so lovingly correspond to this my so ardent love.*

*Let it continue, I entreat, as it has begun; and, like as I cherish your sweet remembrance night and day, so do you preserve my name ever fresh in your breast. And let your coming to me be hastened, that instead of being absent we may be present with each other, and the love conceived between us and the wished-for joys may reap their proper fruit.*

*Moreover I have done as your illustrious Highness enjoined me, that is to say, in commending you to the most serene lord and lady the King and Queen my parents, and in declaring your filial regard towards them, which to them was most pleasing to hear, especially from my lips. I also beseech your Highness that it may please you to exercise a similar good office for me, and to commend me with hearty good will to my most serene lord and lady your parents; for I greatly value, venerate, and esteem them, even as though they were my own, and wish them all happiness and prosperity.*

*May your Highness be ever fortunate and happy...<sup>11</sup>*

If only Arthur's wish had come true.

10 Gunn pp. 12

11 Mumby, Frank Arthur. (2013). pp. 8-9. *The Youth of Henry VIII: A Narrative in Contemporary Letters*.

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The website **nerdalicious.com.au** is an online magazine covering pop culture, movies, history, tv, science and more. **Olga Hughes** has a BA in Fine Art and is currently studying Literature. She lives in South Gippsland with her partner C.S. Hughes.



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# THE DEATH AND SURVIVAL OF EDWARD II

*by Kathryn Warner*

**E**DWARD II, born in 1284 and often known as Edward of Caernarfon after his birthplace in North Wales, is without doubt one of the most unsuccessful kings England has ever produced. The fourth son of Edward I and his Spanish queen Eleanor of Castile but the only one to survive childhood, his reign of nineteen and a half years from July 1307 to January 1327 was a turbulent period which saw endless quarrels and armed conflicts with his barons, obsession with his male favourites, loss to Robert Bruce at the battle of Bannockburn in 1314 and war with his brother-in-law Charles IV of France, until finally Edward's queen Isabella lost patience. Following the queen and her ally Roger Mortimer's successful invasion of England in September 1326, Edward II was forced to abdicate his throne to his fourteen-year-old son Edward III in January 1327, and on 21 September that year was said to have died while being held in honourable and comfortable confinement at Berkeley Castle in Gloucestershire. (Contrary to popular myth, the former king was not abused and mistreated at Berkeley, but was given good food and wine and had servants.) His funeral took place at St Peter's Abbey, now Gloucester Cathedral, on 20 December 1327.

The one thing that almost everybody thinks they know about Edward II is that he was tortured to death by having a red-hot poker inserted inside his anus. The rationale normally given for this atrocious act is either that it would have killed Edward without leaving a mark on his body so that his death could be presented as natural, or that it was a punishment for his (presumably) having been the passive partner in sex acts with other men. From the late fourteenth century until the present



King Edward II (Public Domain)

day, this is the tale most commonly told about the death of the unfortunate former king; it appears in Christopher Marlowe's *c.* 1592 play about Edward and in almost every book ever written about him until recent times, when historians have begun to question the narrative. The red-hot poker is in fact almost certain to be a myth, and, curiously, it may even be that Edward II did not die at Berkeley Castle in September 1327 at all.

News of Edward's death at Berkeley Castle was taken to his son Edward III, then not quite fifteen years old (he was born on 13 November 1312) at Lincoln on the night of 22/23 September 1327.



Christopher Marlowe's play "Edward II" has helped keep legends about his death alive (Daily Telegraph)

The young king immediately began disseminating news of the death, which was at first said to have been the result of natural causes. The response was fairly muted; it seems as though few people mourned much for the death of their former ruler. Edward III, his mother Queen Isabella and much of the English nobility and episcopate attended Edward II's funeral in Gloucester three months after his death. In October 1330, now almost eighteen and the father of a son and heir, Edward III overthrew his mother's regency and took over the governance of his own kingdom. At a parliament held at Westminster the following month, the cause of Edward II's death was given as murder for the first time, though the method by which the former king was meant to have been killed was never stated officially. Two men, a knight of Somerset called Sir Thomas Gurney and a man-at-arms called William Ockley, who may have been Irish, were found guilty of Edward II's murder and sentenced to death in absentia. Ockley disappeared; Gurney died in Spain in 1333. Edward II's custodian Thomas, Lord

Berkeley was found innocent of any complicity in the former king's death, and Berkeley's father-in-law, Queen Isabella's 'favourite' and co-regent Roger Mortimer, earl of March, was convicted on fourteen charges and executed on 29 November 1330. One of the charges was that of having had Edward II killed.

In the absence of any official evidence as to the cause of Edward II's sudden though perhaps not entirely unexpected death, fourteenth-century chroniclers filled the gap with their own imagination or rumours they had heard, and gave the date of death variously as 20, 21 or 22 September 1327 (Edward III and his mother Queen Isabella kept the anniversary as the 21st). The *Annales Paulini*, the annals of St Paul's Cathedral in London, say only that Edward died at Berkeley Castle with no more details; Adam Murimuth, a royal clerk who had known Edward II well and who was the only chronicler in the south-west of England in 1327, wrote at first rather cryptically that Edward was killed 'by a trick' or 'as a precaution' (*per cautelam*

*occisus*), and later wrote specifically that he was suffocated; the *Anonimale* thought he died of illness; and several continuations of the French *Brut* wrote that Edward died *de grant dolour*, ‘of great sorrow.’ Over thirty years later in c. 1360, Sir Thomas Gray, whose father had been captured while fighting for Edward II at Bannockburn in 1314 and served in the retinue of Edward’s last and most powerful ‘favourite’ Hugh Despenser the Younger in the 1320s, could write in his *Scalacronica* that Edward died “by what manner is not known, but God knows it.” The monk who wrote the *Chronicle of Lanercost* in the 1340s hedged his bets by saying that Edward died “either by a natural death or by the violence of others.” The *French Chronicle of London* says that Edward was “vilely murdered” but doesn’t say how; the Wigmore chronicler was sure the former king died of natural causes; the Lichfield chronicle says he was strangled; and the Peterborough chronicle says he was well in the evening but dead by morning. Chronicles which do give the notorious ‘red-hot poker’ story are the *Brut* in the 1330s – the earliest reference to the story, but written in the north of England geographically distant from Berkeley Castle – the *Polychronicon* of the 1350s, written by a monk of Chester, and Geoffrey le Baker in Oxfordshire also in the 1350s. The Bridlington chronicler wrote that he did not believe the rumours he had heard of Edward’s death, presumably also a reference to the red-hot poker. Chroniclers of the later fourteenth century tended to copy the poker story, and over time it became the ‘accepted’ version of events, to the point that nowadays, few people who have heard of Edward II and his murder are aware that there is any dispute over the matter. The tale is repeated endlessly but wrongly as ‘fact’ on social media and online articles.

The wide variation of causes of Edward II’s death given in fourteenth-century chronicles points to the fact that none of them knew what had really happened to Edward. And the story gets even stranger. In the late nineteenth century, a letter was discovered in an archive in Montpellier, France. It was written in the late 1330s or thereabouts by an Italian priest and nobleman called Manuele di Fieschi, appointed bishop of Vercelli in 1343, to Edward III, and it explained in great detail how Edward II had escaped from Berkeley Castle in 1327 and later made his way to Corfe Castle in Dorset, to Ireland and then to the Continent, where he visited Pope John XXII in Avignon and later settled at a hermitage identifiable as Sant’Alberto di Butrio in the diocese of Pavia in northern Italy. Presumably Edward died there, or was still living there when Fieschi wrote his letter. As hilariously implausible as this sounds, there is much in the letter which could not have been known to an outsider; it states correctly that Edward II tried to sail from Chepstow in October 1326



Edward II’s tomb  
at Gloucester  
Cathedral (Public  
Domain)



after Queen Isabella's invasion, for example, a fact which appears in no chronicle and is only known to modern historians from Edward's last chamber account, which fortuitously survives in a library in London. To this day, it is widely believed in Italy that Edward II died in that country, and there is other evidence that he did not die at Berkeley Castle in 1327.

In January 1330, William Melton, archbishop of York and formerly a close friend and ally of Edward II, wrote a letter to his kinsman Simon Swanland, mayor of London, telling him that 'our liege lord Edward of Caernarfon is alive and in good bodily health, and in a safe place.' This was over two years after Edward's funeral, which Melton had almost certainly attended. Melton asked Swanland, a draper, to provide cloths, cushions, belts, bags and riding equipment for the former king, and pledged the large sum of £5000 to help free Edward. Also in 1330, on 19 March, Edward II's half-brother Edmund of Woodstock, earl of Kent (maternal grandfather of Richard II) was executed for treason against his nephew Edward III after plotting to free his half-brother from Corfe Castle. Many dozens, probably hundreds, of men across England and Wales joined the earl, including several lords and sheriffs and the bishop of London. The plan was to remove Edward from Corfe and take him to the earl of Kent's castle at Arundel in Sussex, and from there apparently abroad somewhere. The archbishop of York asked the mayor of London to provide £200 in gold coins, in limited circulation in England but widely used on the Continent, to be given to Edward, indicating that some plan was afoot to send him abroad after his release from captivity. Donald, earl of Mar, nephew of the Scots king Robert Bruce and also formerly a close friend of Edward II, promised the archbishop of that he would bring an army of 40,000 men to England to help effect Edward's release. A large number of influential men strongly believed in 1329/30 that the former king was still alive, and acted on this belief, despite the risks: Archbishop Melton was indicted

before King's Bench, others were imprisoned and some fled the country, and many men saw their lands and goods confiscated. Whether they were correct in believing that Edward II was still alive is unclear; but evidently they thought they had good evidence that he had not died at Berkeley Castle in September 1327 after all, even though some of them had attended his funeral. At the parliament of November 1330 which condemned Thomas Gurney and William Ockley to death for murdering the former king, Edward's custodian in 1327, Thomas, Lord Berkeley, claimed that until he came to the present parliament three years later he had not known the former king was dead. It was on the information of Lord Berkeley's letter in September 1327 that the young king Edward III had immediately begun disseminating news of his father's death.

And so we see that the reality of Edward II's death, or not, is far more complex and fascinating than the lurid and disgusting story of anal torture by red-hot poker. What is the truth of his ultimate fate? Whether he died at Berkeley Castle in September 1327, or survived to live out his final years as a hermit in a remote Italian monastery, we will probably never know for sure. Most historians are still convinced that he was somehow murdered at Berkeley, though almost certainly not by the traditional poker, though a growing minority, including myself, are researching and exploring the exciting possibilities that Edward II lived on for a dozen or more years after his official death. Edward was the most eccentric of kings, a man who loved the company of his lowborn subjects and who took part in activities such as digging ditches, thatching roofs, swimming and rowing. It is somehow fitting that we should not know when, or where, or how, this most unconventional man, whose reign was an utter failure but whose personality continues to fascinate 700 years later, died.

**KATHRYN WARNER**

# SHAKESPEARE'S PLAYS IN ALPHABETICAL ORDER

## Can you name them from the clues?

- 1602 Comedy - Main character Helena: A\_\_\_ W\_\_\_ T\_\_\_ E\_\_\_ W\_\_\_
- 1606 Tragedy - Set in Rome and Egypt: A\_\_\_ A\_\_\_ C\_\_\_
- 1599 Comedy - Orlando and Rosalind star - "all the world's a stage": A\_\_\_ Y\_\_\_ L\_\_\_ I\_\_\_
- 1589 Comedy - the story of two sets of identical twins accidentally separated at birth: C\_\_\_ O\_\_\_ E\_\_\_
- 1607 Tragedy - features the life of the legendary Roman leader Caius Marcius: C\_\_\_
- 1609 Tragedy - features the king of Britain and his wife and daughter Imogen: C\_\_\_
- 1600 Tragedy - The Tragedy of H\_\_\_, Prince of Denmark
- 1597 History - features Falstaff and Prince Hal (in two parts): H\_\_\_ I\_\_\_
- 1598 History - famously has the Battle at Agincourt: H\_\_\_ V\_\_\_
- 1590 History - begins with the death of Henry V (in three parts): H\_\_\_ V\_\_\_
- 1612 History - features, amongst others, Anne Boleyn: H\_\_\_ V\_\_\_
- 1599 Tragedy - features Marcus Brutus and this Roman emperor: J\_\_\_ C\_\_\_
- 1596 History - dramatises the reign of this king of England, son of Henry VII and Eleanor: K\_\_\_ J\_\_\_
- 1605 Tragedy - depicts the descent into madness of the title character: K\_\_\_ L\_\_\_
- 1594 Comedy - A tale of Ferdinand, the King of Navarre and three companions: L\_\_\_ ' L\_\_\_ ' L\_\_\_
- 1605 Tragedy - The Scottish play: M\_\_\_
- 1604 Comedy - features, amongst others, the pimp Pompey Bum: M\_\_\_ F\_\_\_ M\_\_\_
- 1596 Comedy - well know for featuring Shylock the moneylender: M\_\_\_ O\_\_\_ V\_\_\_
- 1600 Comedy - stars John Falstaff at the same time as "Henry IV": M\_\_\_ W\_\_\_ O\_\_\_ W\_\_\_
- 1595 Comedy - features Theseus, Oberon and Titania: M\_\_\_ N\_\_\_ ' D\_\_\_
- 1598 Comedy - A film adaption starred Branagh as Benedick, Emma Thompson as Beatrice:  
M\_\_\_ A\_\_\_ A\_\_\_ N\_\_\_
- 1604 Tragedy - features a moorish general and his wife Desdemona: O\_\_\_
- 1608 History - The king of Antioch, offers the hand of his daughter: P\_\_\_
- 1595 History - Spans only the last two years of this king's life: R\_\_\_ I\_\_\_
- 1592 History - "Now is the winter of our discontent": R\_\_\_ I\_\_\_
- 1594 Tragedy - The epitome of a tragic love story: R\_\_\_ A\_\_\_ J\_\_\_
- 1611 Comedy - The stormy tale of sorcerer Prospero: T\_\_\_
- 1607 Tragedy - The fortunes of an Athenian of this name: T\_\_\_ O\_\_\_ A\_\_\_
- 1593 Tragedy - The fictional story of a general in the Roman army: T\_\_\_ A\_\_\_
- 1601 Tragedy - Ends with the death of the noble Trojan Hector: T\_\_\_ A\_\_\_ C\_\_\_
- 1599 Comedy - Viola is shipwrecked on the coast of Illyria: T\_\_\_ N\_\_\_
- 1594 Comedy - Proteus finds Valentine in love with a Duke's daughter, Silvia:  
T\_\_\_ G\_\_\_ O\_\_\_ V\_\_\_
- 1610 Comedy - Features Leontes, King of Sicilia, and Polixenes, the King of Bohemia: W\_\_\_ ' T\_\_\_

**Who knew Shakespeare wrote so many plays?  
GOOD LUCK!**

## TUDOR PLACES: SHAKESPEARE'S BIRTHPLACE



**I**F you ask a member of the British public to name people from the Tudor period, you're sure to get "Henry VIII" and "Elizabeth I" back as answers. You may also get "Anne Boleyn" due to the popularity of "The Tudors" series, "The Other Boleyn Girl" novel and "Wolf Hall". However, if you speak to many people from other countries, particularly China and Japan, you might be surprised to also hear "Shakespeare".

Though William Shakespeare is loved by everyone, he somehow just doesn't spring to mind when you think about the Tudors.

This week's Tudor Places feature is the wonderful Shakespeare's Birthplace which is in the centre of Stratford-upon-Avon. It's the easiest

of the five wonderful Shakespeare-related places to visit, with the exterior of the building being on full view to the public on a pedestrianised street. The best times to visit, if you're not paying to enter, are early morning or later in the afternoon. During the middle of the day the attraction can be very busy with coach-loads of tourists wanting to have their photos taken in front of such an iconic building.

John Shakespeare and his wife Mary (née Arden) were wealthy enough to own the largest house on Henley Street. This was the house where William Shakespeare was born and lived until his mid-twenties. When John Shakespeare died in 1601 William inherited the house. He leased part of the property and it became an inn called the





# irthplace

Maidenhead (and later the Swan and Maidenhead). The inn remained until 1847. When William Shakespeare died, he left the house to his eldest daughter Susanna, and when she died she left it to her only child, Elizabeth. The house passed through their family and relations until it was purchased by the Birthplace Trust in 1847, who have owned and cared for the property ever since.

If you choose to enter the building, tickets can be booked online or bought on the day at the purpose-built reception and visitor centre. There is a café, a Shakespeare-focused exhibition and beautiful gardens. The house/birthplace itself is, of course, fascinating to visit and like all things related

to Shakespeare and Stratford, there is the obligatory gift shop too!

From 26 November – 19 December 2015, from 4.30pm until 6.00pm, there is also an “all immersive light show” at the birthplace. It’s free (we believe) and might well be fun for families!

Don’t forget to visit Holy Trinity Church which is a fifteen minute walk from the birthplace (just ask for directions!) where you can see William Shakespeare’s grave too! Why not also book into the Royal Shakespeare Company Theatre for a play in the evening and make it a completely Shakespeare themed day?

**ANDY CROSSLEY**



# TUDOR PLACES: SHAKESPEARE'S BIRTHPLACE



# NOVEMBER FEAST DAYS

## **1 NOVEMBER – THE FEAST OF ALL SAINTS**

All Saints Day was celebrated on 1<sup>st</sup> November every year. It was a feast day in honour of all the saints and martyrs and was established because there were not enough days in the year to commemorate the lives of all the saints. Pope Urban IV said of it: “Any

negligence, omission and irreverence committed in the celebration of the saints’ feasts throughout the year is to be atoned for by the faithful, and thus due honor may still be offered these saints.”

## **2 NOVEMBER – THE FEAST OF ALL SOULS**

The day after the Feast of All Saints was the Feast of All Souls, a time to remember the souls in Purgatory who might not have masses or prayers being said for them. Bells would be rung the night before All Souls Day to comfort the souls and to let them know that

they were being remembered and then masses were said for them on All Souls Day. Bread was baked in honour of these troubled souls and it was given out to the poor in the hope that the act of giving on behalf of these souls would help them get out of Purgatory.

## **11 NOVEMBER – MARTINMAS**

11<sup>th</sup> November was the Feast of St Martin of Tours, a 4<sup>th</sup> century Hungarian born man who grew up in Pavia, Italy, and who knocked on the door of his local Christian church at the age of 10, begging to be made a catechumen, i.e. one who is receiving training in doctrine and discipline before baptism. Martin followed his father into the Roman army at the age of 15 and a story tells of how, when he was about eighteen years of age, he cut his woollen cloak in half with his sword and gave half to a beggar to keep him warm. He then had a dream where he saw Christ surrounded by angels and wearing the half of the cloak that Martin had given to the beggar. Christ then turned to his angels and said, “Martin, as yet only a catechumen, has covered me with his cloak.” This dream caused Martin to be baptised and to give his life to God. Martin then found that his Christian conscience was incompatible with his duties as a soldier. He refused to fight at a battle, saying “I am a soldier of Christ. I cannot fight”, and was jailed for a time for cowardice. He spent the next few years living as a monk.

In 361, he was consecrated as Bishop of Tours, in France, after being tricked by the people of Tours. He was not interested in becoming the new bishop, but the people wanted this charitable and pious man as their bishop and so tricked him into visiting Tours to visit a sick woman. When Martin arrived in the city the people surrounded him, forcing him to accept their will. Martin felt it was his Christian duty to convert non-Christian to the faith, and so travelled from house to house speaking to people about Christianity. He was also committed to destroying pagan places of worship. It is said that when he tried to persuade some pagans to fell a pine tree they worshipped, they agreed to do so but only if Martin stood directly in its path. He agreed and as it started to fall he made the sign of the cross and the tree miraculously missed him.

Martin died on 8<sup>th</sup> November 397 (or somewhere between 395 and 402) and was buried on 11<sup>th</sup> November in the Cemetery of the Poor.

In medieval and Tudor times, Martinmas was the traditional day for slaughtering animals. The Tudor

Monastery Farm team explain: “This served two purposes. It took the strain off of the farms in trying to keep alive large animal stocks and it ensured a good source of meat throughout the winter months.” It wasn’t just farms that would keep and slaughter animals, it was common for families to have a family pig that would be killed at Martinmas and the meat salted to preserve it. In her book “The Tudor Housewife”, Alison Sim writes: “If the pork was salted hot, it took two ounces of salt for each pound of meat, plus another two ounces of saltpetre. If the pork was soaked in brine instead, then the brine had to be strong enough for an egg to float on it. According to my own experiments, that meant using at least five ounces of salt for each pint of water. No wonder salt was treasured.”

The old English and Spanish saying “His Martinmas will come as it does to every hog” (A cada cerdo

le llega su San Martín), meaning “he will get his comeuppance”, refers to the Martinmas slaughter. Where I live in Andalusia, “la matanza”, the annual slaughter of pigs, is still carried out around 11<sup>th</sup> November and it is still traditional for families in rural areas to rear a pig annually for meat. Families and friends get together for the slaughter. I’ve never been to one – I’m not sure I fancy it – but it’s supposed to be a combination of celebration and work. Spaniards pride themselves on every bit of the pig being used, hence the Andalusian phrase “the only part of a pig you can’t eat is its squeak/squeal”, so as the carcass is butchered sausages are made, blood is drained for “morcilla” (blood sausage), and parts that need eating straight away are cooked and eaten, washed down with plenty of homemade wine and beer.

## 17 NOVEMBER – ACCESSION DAY

Accession Day was celebrated throughout the reign of Elizabeth I and the reigns of many of her successors, and commemorated the day that Elizabeth I came to the throne on 17<sup>th</sup> November 1558. As well as Accession Day, it was also known as Queen Elizabeth’s Day or Queen’s Day and was celebrated with the ringing of bells, processions, the burning of an effigy of the Pope, and special tilts in which knights not only jousted but also dressed up and took parts in special pageants involving poetry and theatre.

## 30 NOVEMBER – THE FEAST OF ST ANDREW

This was the feast of St Andrew the apostle, who is also the patron saint of Scotland. In Mary I’s reign, it became a day to celebrate the reconciliation of England and the papacy due to it being the anniversary of that reconciliation in 1554.

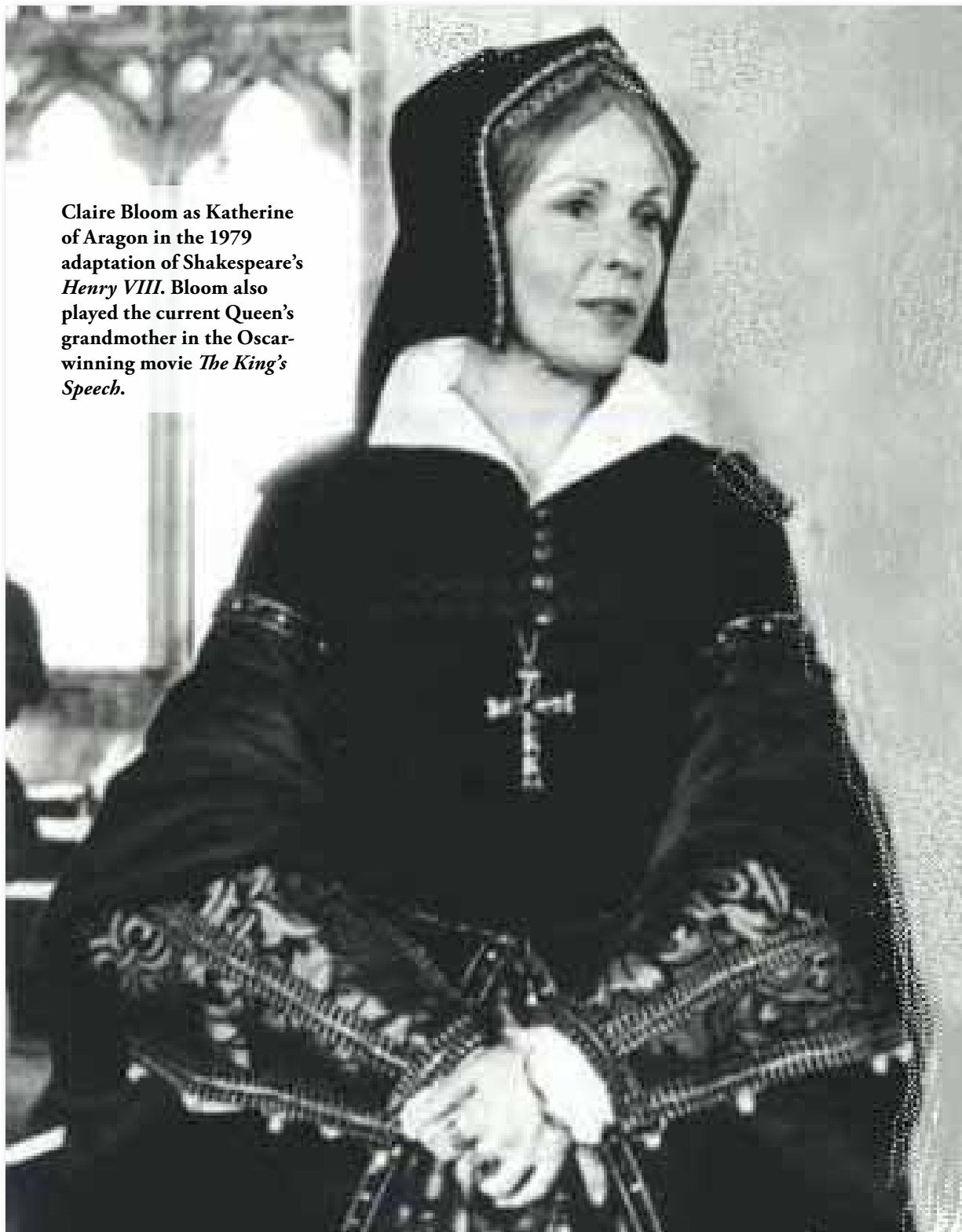
## CLAIRE RIDGWAY

San Martín y el mendigo  
by El Greco. Background  
adjusted by Tim Ridgway



## THE CROWN: THE TUDORS, THE WINDSORS AND THE SILVER SCREEN

Claire Bloom as Katherine of Aragon in the 1979 adaptation of Shakespeare's *Henry VIII*. Bloom also played the current Queen's grandmother in the Oscar-winning movie *The King's Speech*.



This autumn, the Internet has been abuzz as Netflix, the production company behind *House of Cards* and *Orange is the New Black*, announced that it was investing £100 million to make a six-series drama about the life and reign of Queen Elizabeth II. Called *The Crown*, Claire Foy was widely tipped for the lead role, after her critically acclaimed stint as Anne Boleyn in the television adaptation of *Wolf Hall*. Strangely, Foy is by no means the first actress to play members of Britain's current royal family and their Tudor predecessors. Many actors have played members of Henry VIII's immediate or wider family, then gone on to play different royals in other productions. To mark production beginning on *The Crown*, here is a (hopefully) fun and (certainly) incomplete list of some of the silver screen's royal cross overs.

**GARETH RUSSELL**



Merle Oberon's co-star in *The Private Life of Henry VIII* was the young British actress Binnie Barnes who played Henry's fifth wife, Queen Catherine Howard, in the movie which spent much of its time focusing on her heavily romanticised storyline. In 1950, Barnes played Empress Catherine the Great of Russia in the movie *Shadow of the Eagle*, about a pretender who rises to challenge Catherine after she seized the Russian throne in 1762.







**1** German actor Emil Jannings played Henry VIII in *Anna Boleyn*, a German silent movie that was one of the most expensive of its genre and a sizeable artistic achievement considering the financial hardships in post-war Germany. Jannings also played two emperors of Russia – taking the title lead in another silent epic about Peter the Great and appearing as Tsar Paul I in 1928's *The Patriot* (above right).

**2** Merle Oberon launched her career when she gave a deeply moving performance of an elegant Anne Boleyn on the day of her execution. She played Anne in 1933's *The Private Life of Henry VIII* and twenty-one years later another crown landed on Oberon's head when she played Empress Josephine of France in *Désirée*.

**3** Many of Bette Davis's biographers paid her the compliment of saying that the character of Elizabeth I was the closest to Davis's own personality. The Hollywood icon often cited Elizabeth as one of her favourite roles and she played her twice – once in *The Private Lives of Elizabeth and Essex* (1939) and again in *The Virgin Queen* (1955). However, she was also nominated for an Oscar for her depiction as Carlota of Belgium, a nineteenth-century princess who reluctantly found herself Empress of Mexico when her husband was encouraged to take the throne by his European allies. Carlota's blazing row with Emperor Napoleon III and her prayer scene are rightly considered highpoints of Davis's career.

**4** Every bit as witty and acerbic as Bette Davis, Katharine Hepburn later admitted that she found the character of Mary, Queen of Scots, who she played in the 1936 movie *Mary of Scotland*, to be absolutely insufferable. The movie bombed, but in 1968 Hepburn returned to royal courts in triumph when she dazzled as Eleanor of Aquitaine, a twelfth-century queen of England, in the movie adaptation of *The Lion in Winter*. The critics savaged *Mary of Scotland*, but *The Lion in Winter* opened to rave reviews.



5



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**5** The beautiful Jean Simmons brought fire and vigour to her Elizabeth I in the 1953 adaptation of Margaret Irwin's bestselling novel, *Young Bess*. The same movie also saw Charles Laughton make his celebrated return to the role of Henry VIII, for which he had won an Oscar in 1933. Simmons played Désirée, Queen of Sweden and Norway in *Désirée*, one year after production wrapped on *Young Bess*. In *Désirée*, Simmons played a real-life aristocrat who became a queen in Scandinavia through the machinations of Napoleon Bonaparte.

**6** With her strawberry blonde hair, Annette Crosbie was one of the very few actresses to look anything like the real Katherine of Aragon when she played her in episode 1 of the BBC's acclaimed drama, *The Six Wives of Henry VIII* (1970). Five years later, she was praised again for her performance as Queen Victoria in the BBC series *Edward VII*, about the life of Victoria's eldest son.

**7** For Vanessa Redgrave, it was a reverse case to Katharine Hepburn's portrayal of royals. Her earlier performance as the title character in *Mary, Queen of Scots* (1971) scored her an Oscar nomination and even her brief cameo as Anne Boleyn in the movie adaptation of Robert Bolt's play *A Man for All Seasons* was memorable. However, while they praised her performance as an ageing and ailing Elizabeth I in the 2011 conspiracy thriller *Anonymous*, critics were not so kind about the movie itself. Redgrave's style and presence saw her playing other powerful royal females – including Elisabeth of Russia, a cross-dressing and glamorous Romanov princess who ruled her country as empress from 1741 to 1762. This performance was made in the television movie *Young Catherine*, set in the waning years of Elisabeth's reign.



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**8** Crosbie's co-star Dorothy Tutin has the distinction of playing two of England's fieriest and most controversial queens in the same year. She appeared as Anne Boleyn in the first two episodes of *The Six Wives of Henry VIII* and as Henrietta-Maria of France, the wife of King Charles I, in the extremely long movie *Cromwell*. Tutin's performance as Henrietta-Maria was superb and helped by her close physical similarities to the original Queen.

**9** Another *The Six Wives of Henry VIII* alum – this time Anne Stallybrass, who played Edward VI's mother Jane Seymour, in episodes two and three. Jane was portrayed as sweet, kind and essentially good, as well as being wracked by guilt at the death of Anne Boleyn. Twenty-three years later, Stallybrass took part in a far less deferential movie when she played Queen Elizabeth II in the controversial TV movie *Diana: Her True Story*, a movie based on the tell-all book about the princess's marriage by journalist Andrew Morton.

**10** The young and lovely Lynne Frederick gave a touchingly vulnerable performance as Catherine Howard in the 1972 movie *Henry VIII and his Six Wives*, which hoped to turn the success of the BBC's series into a profitable cinematic release. A year before landing the role of Catherine, Frederick had already played a young royal whose life ended in tragedy when she filmed as Grand Duchess Tatiana of Russia, Tsar Nicholas II's second daughter, in the Oscar-winning adaptation of Robert K. Massie's bestselling biography *Nicholas and Alexandra*.

**11** Helena Bonham-Carter's first major role was as England's tragic 'nine day queen' in the 1986 movie *Lady Jane*, which focused mainly on a sentimentalised interpretation of her marriage to Lord Guildford Dudley. She returned to the Tudors when she played Anne Boleyn in a 2003 television movie, but won an Oscar nomination for her take on the late Queen Elizabeth the Queen Mother in 2011's smash hit *The King's Speech*.



12



13



**12** Robin Williams announced Judi Dench's Oscar win in 1999 with the words, 'There's nothing like a dame!' She won for her bewitching portrayal of Elizabeth I in *Shakespeare in Love* (1998), but she had also been nominated the year before for *Mrs Brown*, in which she played Queen Victoria as she struggled to come to terms with her husband's sudden death.

**13** Another actress moving from Jane Seymour to the current Queen is Emilia Fox. ITV pulled no punches in their depiction of Henry VIII when they showed Fox's Jane Seymour suffering domestic abuse at her husband's hands in episode 2 of *Henry VIII* (2003). In 2009, she played the young Queen Elizabeth II in part 1 of the docu-drama series, *The Queen*. In each new episode, the Queen was played by a different actress. Fox's episode focused on the Queen's succession and the crisis posed by her sister's love affair with a divorced war hero.

**14** When he's playing an uncle, Jim Broadbent is not nearly as nice as when playing a father. The *Bridget Jones's Diary* and *The Iron Lady* actor played a modernised version of Elizabeth of York's uncle, the Duke of Buckingham, in *Richard III* (1995) and then the future Queen's curmudgeonly uncle, King William IV, in *The Young Victoria* (2009).

**15** *Downton Abbey* fans might recognise theatre actress Jane Lapotaire from her performance as a dispossessed Russian aristocrat (pictured) fleeing the revolution in Series 5 of the smash hit show. However, Princess Irina was a social stepdown for Lapotaire who had previously played the Empress of Russia, Marie of Denmark, in the 1975 television show *Edward VII*. She also played Eleanor of Aquitaine in *The Devil's Crown* and Cleopatra, twice. In 1986, she gave a nuanced and fascinating portrayal of Queen Mary I in *Lady Jane*. (Above left)







19

**16** *Game of Thrones*' favourite villain, Lord Tywin Lannister, haunted the corridors of power in the fictional kingdom of Westeros, but Charles Dance also played another man hungry for success when he depicted Henry VIII's cousin Edward, Duke of Buckingham in part of the British television series, *Henry VIII* (2003). A young Charles Dance got his break by playing the British heir to the throne, Eddy, Duke of Clarence in the 1975 series *Edward VII*. The real Prince Eddy died in the influenza pandemic of 1892.

**17** Miranda Richardson's portrayal of Elizabeth I – or 'Queenie', as she likes to call herself – as a demented, psychopathic flirt is comedy gold. She played the role in the second series of the BBC comedy *Blackadder*, about a down-on-his-luck aristocrat struggling to advance at Elizabeth's court. Richardson displayed a different set of acting chops in 2003 when she gave a gut-wrenchingly moving and understated performance as the current Queen's grandmother, Queen Mary of Teck-Athlone, in the BBC mini-series *The Lost Prince*, about the Queen's late uncle, who suffered from autism and epilepsy.

**18** *Harry Potter* fans will instantly recognised French actress Clémence Poésy as Fleur Delacour, a young witch who first appeared in the fourth instalment in the franchise. She has played more terrestrial characters – including Mary, Queen of Scots in part one of *Gunpowder, Treason and Plot* (2003) and then a fourteenth century queen of England, Isabelle de Valois, in the BBC's recent adaptation of Shakespeare's history plays – produced under the collective television name, *The Hollow Crown*.

**19** Jonathan Rhys Meyers may not have been the right colouring or height to play Henry VIII in all four series of Showtime's smash hit series *The Tudors*, but his casting certainly generated interest in the show. A few years earlier, Rhys Meyers had played King Philippe II of France, a twelfth century monarch, in the television remake of *The Lion in Winter* (left), in which he co-starred with Glenn Close and Patrick Stewart.



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22



**20** Joely Richardson was a fantastic choice to play Katherine Parr in the final series of *The Tudors*, which focused on Katherine's intelligence and religious faith. It was an elegant and arresting performance from Richardson, who went on to play Katherine's stepdaughter, a young Elizabeth I, in flashback scenes in the critically-panned movie *Anonymous* (2011). Ten years before and Richardson had played Queen Marie-Antoinette of France in *The Affair of the Necklace* (left).

**21** Like Helena Bonham-Carter, British actress Natalie Dormer has also played queens Anne Boleyn and Elizabeth Bowes-Lyon. Dormer's performance as Anne in the first two seasons of *The Tudors* provoked praise from fans and critics, with her final episode garnering particularly positive feedback. In 2011, she appeared as the current Queen's mother in Madonna's directorial debut, *W./E.*, about the abdication crisis of 1936.

**22** Dame Helen Mirren is famous for playing Elizabeth I and Elizabeth II in the space of less than a year. The Channel 4 drama *Elizabeth I* focused on Elizabeth's final two decades in power, while Mirren went on to win an Oscar for playing Elizabeth II in *The Queen* in 2006 and a Tony Award for reprising the role on Broadway in the 2014 play *The Audience*. However, she had also previously been nominated for an Oscar for her performance in *The Madness of King George* (right), where she played the German princess Charlotte of Mecklenburg-Strelitz as she faces her husband's struggle with mental illness.





**23** After Emilia Fox left *Henry VIII* in episode 2, the rest of the episode focused mostly on the rise and fall of Catherine Howard, who was played by up and coming actress Emily Blunt. Today, Blunt is best known for her appearances in *The Devil Wears Prada*, *Into the Woods* and her Golden Globe-nominated performance as Britain's queen and empress in *The Young Victoria* (2009).

**24** In 2007, British actor Steve Waddington appeared in the first few episodes of *The Tudors*, where he played Henry VIII's estranged and doomed cousin Edward, Duke of Buckingham, who was executed for treason in 1521. Years earlier, he had played Henry and Buckingham's mutual ancestor: Steve Waddington's first ever performance in cinema was when he played the title character in Derek Jarman's movie *Edward II*, a movie adaptation of the sixteenth century play that focused on the King's passionate love affair with the Earl of Cornwall. The screenwriters of *The Tudors* even managed to work in a little in-joke about it when the character of Buckingham looks over a balcony with disgust at Henry's court. 'This should be mine,' he says. 'I'm a descendant of King Edward II.' Of all the ancestors to pick, they made sure to pick that one.

**25** And last but not least, it's Claire Foy, who's pictured on the left as a brittle and enigmatic Anne Boleyn in *Wolf Hall* (2015), a six-part BBC adaptation of Hilary Mantel's novels *Wolf Hall* and *Bring up the Bodies*. The picture on the right shows Claire Foy on set at Ely Cathedral in her latest role as the future Queen Elizabeth II in Netflix's forthcoming political drama, *The Crown*.

# MELANCHOLIC MUSIC

*by Jane Moulder*

“The Funerals”, “Last Will and Testament”, “The Image of Melancholy”.

These don't sound the happiest of tune titles! Despite their names, they are in fact all dance tunes which can be found in a collection of music by the composer Anthony Holborne which was first printed in 1599. You won't be surprised to learn that they are not the liveliest of dances but instead they are slow, steady pavanes. The music is, in fact, gorgeous, but not what you would play if you wanted to cheer yourself up and have a good time!

These tunes, and many others like them, were all the rage during 16<sup>th</sup> century England and that is because melancholy, and being melancholic, was

extremely fashionable. Holborne was writing for an eager audience wanting slow, sad music to enhance their feeling of despair and depression.

Melancholy was a particularly widespread affliction in Elizabethan England; especially amongst the educated classes. It seems to have been reserved more for men than for women (who had more of a penchant for hysteria) and poets, playwrights, artists and musicians all produced works to reflect how they, and their patrons, were feeling. Below is a typical example of the poetic genre.

## A brieft of sorrowe

*Muse of sadness, neere death's fashion,  
Too neere madnesse, write my passion.  
Paines possesse mee, sorrows spill me,  
Cares distress me, all would kill mee.  
Hopes have fail'd me, Fortune foil'd mee,  
Feares have quail'd me, all have spoil'd mee.  
Woes have worne mee, sighes have soakt mee,  
Thoughts have torne mee, all have broke mee.  
Beauty strooke me, love hath catcht mee,  
Death hath tooke mee, all dispatcht mee.*

*Nicholas Breton, Melancholike Humours (1600)*

William Shakespeare also explored melancholy in many of his works and the following quotation is by Jacques in “As you Like it”.

*I have neither the scholar's melancholy,  
which is emulation; nor the musician's,  
which is fantastical; nor the courtier's, which  
is proud; nor the soldier's, which is ambitious;  
nor the lawyer's, which is politic; nor the lady's,  
which is nice; nor the lover's, which is all these:  
but it is a melancholy of mine own, compounded  
of many simples, extracted from many objects,*



**Melancholia by Albrecht Dürer**



The Four Humours, taken from a Tudor medicinal

*and indeed the sundry contemplation of my travels, in which my often ruminatiō wraps me in a most humorous sadness.*

It is clear from both of these two quotes that today's modern view of depression does not fit with the Elizabethan's "melancholia". It was a complex concept and was written about in a numbers of studies between 1560 and the late 1620's. Melancholy was one of the four humours, the others being sanguine, phlegmatic and choleric. The accepted view was the all four humours existed in the body and they needed to be kept in balance to achieve the perfect temperament. The humours could be controlled by a variety of methods such as eating and drinking various foods and carrying out certain activities or actions.

It could be said that the late 1500's were not an easy time for England as the political situation was very tense with conflicts with the Netherlands,

Spain, France and Ireland. There had also been a series of very poor harvests leading to famine and plague, resulting in riots in some parts of the country. The overall result of the economic and political situation was high inflation and very low wages. One would assume then, that melancholia would afflict all of society – and both sexes. But as stated earlier, it seemed to be the preserve of the male elite and the intellectual classes. Melancholy was considered to be the least desirable of the four humours and it seemed to be associated with genius and the life of scholarship. Poets, writers and composers were thus prone to dark moods and they seemed to take great delight in being melancholic! They began to see it as their own special attribute and it became an essential element of their art.

Sufferers from melancholy were much satirised in plays and writings and it was sometimes seen as an affectation. Those afflicted with it had a tendency to

dress in black, which was a fashion imported from Italy, and they were always complaining about their life, their lot, and everything! But they obviously had the wealth to travel abroad for their clothes and to buy their books or their art. The early fashion for melancholy seems linked to travellers who had returned from Italy with affected Italianate airs and graces. Their new manners were not appreciated by society back home in England and thus melancholy set in. In fact, Rosalind's retort to Jacques' explanation of his melancholy was "A traveller! By my faith you have great reason to be sad!".

Whilst there were numerous composers and musicians who, along with Anthony Holborne, wrote mournful, sad music to reflect their melancholic state, it is John Dowland who will be most associated with sadness. The titles of some of his works give a very clear indication of his state of mind: "Come, heavy sleep", "Flow my Tears", "Forlorn Hope", "In Darkness let me dwell" and "Seaven Lachrimae (tears) figured in Seaven Passionate pavans". The lyrics of Flow my Tears, a lute song, give a clear indication of his mood:

*Flow, my tears, fall from your springs!  
Exiled for ever, let me mourn;  
Where night's black bird her sad infamy sings,  
There let me live forlorn.*

*Down vain lights, shine you no more!  
No nights are dark enough for those  
That in despair their last fortunes deplore.  
Light doth but shame disclose.*

*Never may my woes be relieved,  
Since pity is fled;  
And tears and sighs and groans my weary days, my  
weary days  
Of all joys have deprived.*

*From the highest spire of contentment  
My fortune is thrown;  
And fear and grief and pain for my deserts, for my  
deserts  
Are my hopes, since hope is gone.*

*Hark! you shadows that in darkness dwell,  
Learn to contemn light  
Happy, happy they that in hell  
Feel not the world's despite.*

John Dowland viewed himself as melancholic and he coined the motto "Semper Dowland, Semper Dolens" or Always Dowland, Always Doleful. One of his earliest compositions was the "Melancholy Pavane" – a taster of things to come!

Not much is known about his early life but it seems that in 1580 he travelled to Paris to serve the English ambassador to the French court, Sir Henry Cobham. It's believed that whilst in France Dowland became committed to the Catholic faith, and he held strong religious beliefs for the rest of his life. It was his allegiance to Catholicism that both influenced his



**A melancholic man. Presumed to be Sir Philip Sidney.**



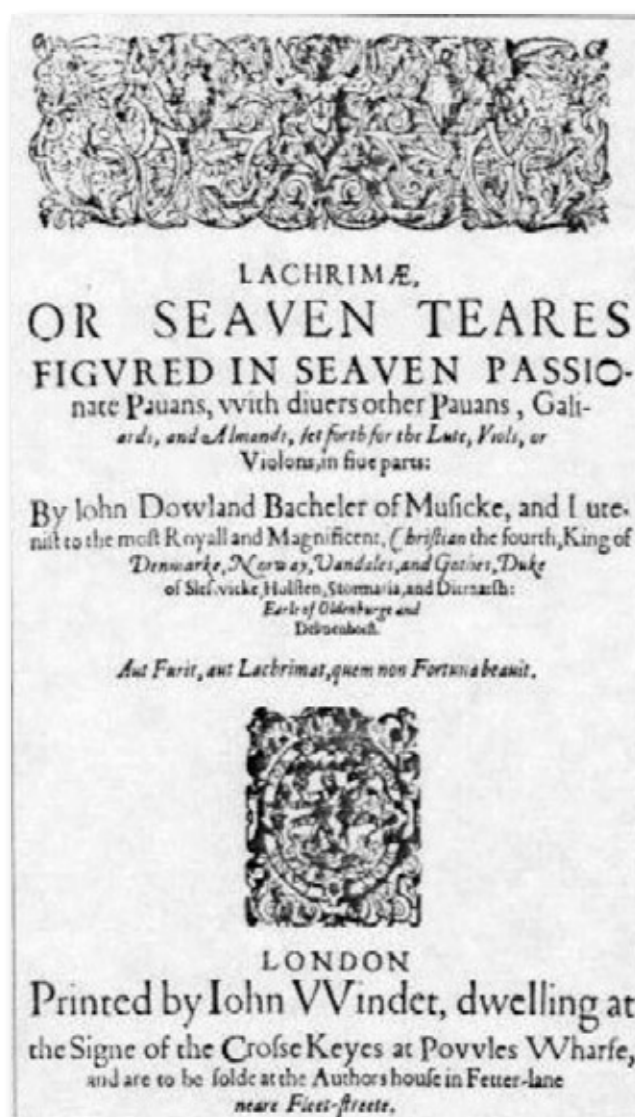


music and, he claimed, affected his rise through the English, protestant, court. Dowland travelled extensively throughout Europe throughout his life, including Italy, and he was always complaining that his talents were never recognised at home. On returning to England his initial attempts to secure a position with Elizabeth's court failed and so he moved to Denmark to work for Christian IV. Dowland was not alone as an English musician having to find employment abroad and this was the fate of many of his Catholic contemporaries. It seems, though, that Dowland was held in high regard and was paid handsomely by Christian IV.

I have always wondered whether Dowland's melancholy was born in Denmark. The bestselling book, "Music and Silence", by Rose Tremain was apparently inspired by the legend of the court musicians being kept in the wine cellar. They lived their lives in a network of cellars and tunnels underneath the state rooms, being required to play on command according to the King's wishes. Christian IV would demand music to accompany his early morning breakfast. Servants would then sweep back a rug would to reveal a grille over the wine cellar and the musicians would be expected to promptly start playing music! Being kept in a damp, dank, dark cellar would be more than enough reason to develop melancholia! What is for certain, according to Danish royal records, is that Dowland led a revolt by the musicians demanding better conditions. Eventually Dowland's behaviour and various misdemeanours led to his dismissal and he returned to England. Dowland eventually reached the court and became lutenist to James I and he remained a royal servant until his death in early 1626.

The *Seaven Teares* or *Lachrimae* was published whilst he was still at the Danish court and he dedicated the work to Queen Anne of Denmark. The title page carries the mournful words "*He whom Fortune has not blessed either rages or weeps*". In his dedication to Anne he states,;

*And though the title doth promise teares,  
unfit guests in these joyfull times, yet no doubt  
pleasant are the teares which Musicke weeps,  
neither are teares shed always in sorrow, but  
sometimes in joy and gladnesse.*



Despite Dowland's promise of some happy tears, my experience of playing these wonderful pieces, is somewhat different. They are truly mournful!

The seven tears are:

- *Lachrima Antiquae* – Old tears
- *Lachrima Antiquae Nova* – Old tears renewed
- *Lachrima Gementes* – Sighing tears
- *Lachrima Tristes* – Sad tears
- *Lachrima Coactae* – Forced tears
- *Lachrima Amantis* – A Lover's tears
- *Lachrima Vera* – True tears

Dowland was certainly living up to his own motto of being always doleful! His music is his lasting legacy and always worth listening to if you are in need of some quiet, introspective contemplation.

**JANE MOULDER**



Melancholy *by*  
Domenico Fetti, 1621



# The first page of “Much Ado About Nothing”, printed in the Second Folio of 1632

## SHAKESPEARE’S PLAYS IN ALPHABETICAL ORDER

All’s Well That Ends Well (1602)  
 Antony and Cleopatra (1606)  
 As You Like It (1599)  
 Comedy of Errors (1589)  
 Coriolanus (1607)  
 Cymbeline (1609)  
 Hamlet (1600)  
 Henry IV, Part I (1597)  
 Henry IV, Part II (1597)  
 Henry V (1598)  
 Henry VI, Part I (1591)  
 Henry VI, Part II (1590)  
 Henry VI, Part III (1590)  
 Henry VIII (1612)  
 Julius Caesar (1599)  
 King John (1596)  
 King Lear (1605)  
 Love’s Labour’s Lost (1594)  
 Macbeth (1605)

Measure for Measure (1604)  
 Merchant of Venice (1596)  
 Merry Wives of Windsor (1600)  
 Midsummer Night’s Dream (1595)  
 Much Ado about Nothing (1598)  
 Othello (1604)  
 Pericles (1608)  
 Richard II (1595)  
 Richard III (1592)  
 Romeo and Juliet (1594)  
 Taming of the Shrew (1593)  
 Tempest (1611)  
 Timon of Athens (1607)  
 Titus Andronicus (1593)  
 Troilus and Cressida (1601)  
 Twelfth Night (1599)  
 Two Gentlemen of Verona (1594)  
 Winter’s Tale (1610)

How did you do in the quiz? Isn’t it amazing how much the Tudors are still in our lives today?!

# NOVEMBER'S ON THIS

<p><b>1 November</b> 1530 Henry VIII sent Sir <b>Walter Walsh</b> with <b>Henry Percy</b>, Earl of Northumberland, to Cawood Castle to arrest Cardinal <b>Thomas Wolsey</b> for high treason</p>	<p><b>2 November</b> 1470 Birth of <b>Edward V</b>, son of <b>Edward IV</b> and <b>Elizabeth Woodville</b>, in Westminster Abbey sanctuary during his father's exile.</p>	<p><b>3 November</b> 1568 Death of <b>Nicholas Carr</b>, physician, classical scholar and Pegasus professor of Greek at Cambridge.</p>	 <p>Portrait of Thomas Wolsey, c. 1520</p>	
<p><b>7 November</b> 1541 Archbishop <b>Thomas Cranmer</b> and the Duke of Norfolk went to Hampton Court Palace to interrogate Queen <b>Catherine Howard</b>, and to arrange that she should be confined to her chambers there. Catherine burst into tears and became hysterical so Cranmer decided to come back the following day.</p>	<p><b>8 November</b> 1543 Birth of <b>Lettice Knollys</b>, daughter of Sir <b>Francis Knollys</b> and <b>Catherine Carey</b>, granddaughter of <b>Mary Boleyn</b>.</p>			
<p><b>14 November</b> 1501 <b>Catherine of Aragon</b> married <b>Arthur, Prince of Wales</b> at St Paul's Cathedral. A stage, measuring 12 feet by 350 feet, had been erected in the cathedral.</p>	<p><b>15 November</b> 1597 Death of <b>Robert Bowes</b>, member of Parliament and <b>Elizabeth I's</b> English Ambassador in Scotland, at Berwick.</p>	<p><b>16 November</b> 1585 Death of <b>Gerald Fitzgerald</b>, 11th Earl of Kildare and an Irish peer, in London. His body was taken to Kildare and buried there in February 1586.</p>	<p><b>17 November</b> 1558 Henry VIII's eldest child, Queen <b>Mary I</b>, died. She was just forty-two years-old. On Mary's death, her twenty-five year-old half-sister, <b>Elizabeth</b>, became Queen.</p>	<p><b>18 November</b> 1531 Birth of <b>Roberto di Ridolfi</b>, merchant, banker and conspirator, in Florence, Italy.</p>
<p><b>23 November</b> 1503 Death of <b>Margaret</b>, Duchess of Burgundy (<b>Margaret of York</b>), daughter of <b>Richard, 3rd Duke of York</b>, and sister of <b>Edward IV</b> and <b>Richard III</b>. She died at Mechelen in the Low Countries. Margaret was buried in the house of the Recollects, or the Observant Franciscans.</p>		<p><b>24 November</b> 1542 The Battle of Solway Moss between England and Scotland. The Scots were forced to surrender.</p> 	<p><b>25 November</b> 1626 Death of <b>Edward Alleyn</b>, Elizabethan actor, patron, theatre builder and founder of Dulwich College and Alleyn's School.</p>	
<p><b>29 November</b> 1530 At around 8am, Cardinal <b>Thomas Wolsey</b> died at Leicester Abbey. Wolsey cheated the axeman, the King and the men who had conspired against him and, instead, died a peaceful death in a house of God. After confession he said these words: "I se the matter ayenst me howe it is framed, But if I had served god as dyligently as I have don the kyng he wold not have geven me over in my grey heares"</p>				

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# DAY IN TUDOR HISTORY

<p><b>4 November</b> 1530</p> <p>Walter Walsh and Henry Percy, Earl of Northumberland, arrived at Cawood Castle and arrested Cardinal Thomas Wolsey</p>	<p><b>5 November</b> 1514</p> <p>Mary Tudor, sister of Henry VIII, was crowned Queen of France. She had married King Louis XII at Abbeville on the 9th October 1514. The marriage was rather short-lived, as Louis died on the 1st January 1515</p>		<p><b>6 November</b> 1541</p> <p>Henry VIII abandoned Catherine Howard, his fifth wife, at Hampton Court Palace. Claims that Catherine had two sexual relationships during her time in the Dowager Duchess of Norfolk's household had been proved true.</p>	
<p><b>9 November</b> 1518</p> <p>Queen Catherine of Aragon gave birth to a daughter. We don't know the full details of what happened, but either the baby was stillborn, or did not survive very long.</p>	<p><b>10 November</b> 1536</p> <p>Death of Sir Henry Wyatt, politician, courtier, Privy Councillor and father of Sir Thomas Wyatt. He acted as an executor of Henry VII's will.</p>	<p><b>11 November</b> 1541</p> <p>Catherine Howard was moved from Hampton Court Palace to Syon House where she was "examined touching Culpeper"</p>	<p><b>12 November</b> 1555</p> <p>Stephen Gardiner, Bishop of Winchester and Mary I's Lord Chancellor, died. He was laid to rest at Winchester Cathedral.</p>	<p><b>13 November</b> 1536</p> <p>Murder of Robert Pakington, member of Parliament, while making his way to mass at St Thomas of Acre Chapel. He was shot dead by an unknown assailant.</p>
<p><b>19 November</b> 1563</p> <p>Robert Sidney, 1<sup>st</sup> Earl of Leicester, courtier, patron of the arts and poet, was born at Penshurst in Kent.</p>	<p><b>20 November</b> 1591</p> <p>Sir Christopher Hatton, Elizabeth I's Lord Chancellor died aged fifty-one. Elizabeth I had nicknamed him her "mouton" (sheep).</p>	<p><b>21 November</b> 1559</p> <p>Frances Brandon, Duchess of Suffolk, died at Richmond. She was buried in St Edmund's Chapel, Westminster Abbey, on the orders of her cousin, Queen Elizabeth I. Her second husband, Adrian Stokes, erected a tomb in her memory.</p>		<p><b>22 November</b> 1538</p> <p>Burning of John Lambert, Protestant martyr, at Smithfield in London.</p>
<p><b>26 November</b> 1533</p> <p>Henry Fitzroy, the Duke of Richmond and Somerset, married Lady Mary Howard at Hampton Court Palace. Henry Fitzroy was the illegitimate son of Henry VIII by his mistress Elizabeth (Bessie Blount), and the King openly acknowledged that he was his father.</p>	<p><b>27 November</b> 1582</p> <p>The eighteen year-old William Shakespeare married the twenty-six year-old Anne Hathaway.</p>	<p><b>28 November</b> 1489</p> <p>Birth of Margaret Tudor, Queen of Scotland and consort of James IV. Margaret was the eldest daughter of Henry VII and Elizabeth of York</p>		
<p><b>30 December</b> 1529</p> <p>On St Andrews Day, Catherine of Aragon confronted her husband, Henry VIII, about his treatment of her. The King replied that she had no right to complain, "for she was mistress in her own household, where she could do what she pleased". After further words on the matter, the King then "left the room suddenly" and Chapuys described him as "very disconcerted and downcast".</p>				

Background Image:  
Holy Trinity Church Yard,  
Stratford-upon-Avon, © Daniel Lang

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