



# Tudor Life

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TUDOR  
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## The Tudor Ice Age

*Kyra Cornelius Kramer*

Satire: She, Anne - *Susan Bordo*

Holiday Season of Despair - Beth von Staats

Piracy in Tudor England - Timothy J Moots

Carols - Jane Moulder

Keith Michell as Henry VIII - Roland Hui

&

Christmas Tudor Feast Days

*by Claire Ridgway*

PLUS an *Exclusive* Short Story  
"The New Year's Gift" *by* Melanie V. Taylor



# Welcome!

December 2015

**C**HRISTMAS is a time associated with interconnecting but distinct gifts like gold, frankincense and myrrh and in this edition we've stuck to that theme. Susan Bordo, whose book *The Creation of Anne Boleyn*, challenged so many of our culture's representations of Anne Boleyn has joined us with a zesty and engaging short story about Anne lifting from history into myth. Fiction is also heavily on our mind with Roland Hui's article on the little-known movie *Henry VIII and his Six Wives* and my own on the curious number of actors who've played both Tudor royals and members of Britain's current reigning family, the Windsors. Art, music, piracy, religion, clothes and fresh-off-the-press book reviews complete this edition and from everyone at *Tudor Life*, please allow me to wish you a safe and very happy holiday season.

Gareth Russell



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COVER IMAGE: Winter Landscape with Ice Skaters by Hendrick Avercamp c. 1608,  
currently held at the Rijksmuseum Amsterdam, Amsterdam



# A NOT SO LITTLE ICE AGE

*by Kyra Kramer*

**T**he Tudor Era was smack dab in the middle of the Little Ice Age, a period of colder weather in Europe followed the 300 years of the Medieval Warm Period, staring roughly around 1350 and ending about 1850. Shortly before Henry VIII died, the Little Ice Age ushered in a period of beginning of worldwide glacial expansion that lasted around three centuries.

The most likely reason for warming/cooling periods like the Little Ice Age is the Milankovitch cycles, which are predictable changes in the Earth's orbit caused by astronomical variations. One of the reasons scientists are certain (97% consensus) that global warming is real AND man-made is that

we are *supposed* to be in a cooling cycle right now and only the huge amount of CO2 humans are dumping into the atmosphere explains why we are suddenly heating up like we are in a galactic easy bake oven. The Earth has been, with the occasional centuries of warmer weather that are mere blips in

geological time, cooling over the last 6,000 years and was diving headlong into the next real ice age. This new glacial period *was* going to get here around 3500 AD, but it got seriously thrown off course by the beginning of industrialization. When humans started pumping out the CO<sub>2</sub> from our new machines, global temperatures ceased their cooling trend and started rising in *synchronization* with the rise in greenhouse gases.

The Little Ice Age was an especially big temperature dip in the general cooling trend, probably resulting from the combination of volcanic activity blocking solar radiation and changes in the oceans currents. It caused all kinds of havoc in Europe, including catastrophic food shortages and famines. If you want to know the effects of the Little Ice Age on European life and culture, I strongly recommend Brian Fagan's book *The Little Ice Age: How Climate Made History, 1300–1850*.

A particularly bitter cold “snap” lasting a few decades hit England in 1550. It would have been the winter of Henry's discontent. It also means that the reign of Queen Elizabeth I (1558-1603) occurred in conjunction with weather that was viciously cold in the winter and pathetically warm in the summer, and the constant threat of famine and disease. This makes her ability to save England from penury and disgrace just that much more remarkable. (Bring that up next time some smarmy twit talks about how Elizabeth was just “lucky”).

So how what did the Tudors do during their winters? First and foremost, they tried not to freeze to death. While fire was the primary defense against Jack Frost, Tudors could not sit by a nice blaze or brazier the whole day long. Their clothes were thus their best weapons in the war on chilblains. There is a reason that wool was such a popular material in this era; wool was your best friend when it came to avoiding blue extremities. Wool is resistant to fire, strong and durable, and a veritable thermos for your person. Due to tiny air pockets within each wool fiber, wool provides both insulation and breathability and is able to keep you warm or cool based on the external temperature. Wool can also absorb as much as 30 percent of its own weight in moisture without letting the person wearing it get ‘wet’. You know how snow melts when it gets on your clothes after trudging through it? That alone would make wool the gold standard of cloth. To

top it all off, wool is resistant to mildewing, so the clothes you have to wear all winter without washing wouldn't smell so very smelly. Wool was handy elsewhere than on the body, too. Woolen tapestries, wall-hangings, and curtains kept the polar nip outside of the Tudor abode and kept the warmed air inside.

Tudors also put their money where their mouth was, *vis-à-vis* the chill. Foods that we still consider to be Christmas fare were eaten in the cold season. This included spices and comestibles that medical professionals believed stimulated warmth, such as cinnamon, nutmeg, cloves, ginger, sugar, and animal/dairy fats. The Tudor doctors were right, by the way. Those spices, sugar, and fat all make the person who eats them feel warmer because they wither stimulate blood flow, increase blood sugar, or provide quick-hit calories. To keep up your core body temperature in very cold weather requires LOTS of extra calories, especially calories from fat. Pass me the whole milk and cookies please!

Finally, the Tudors relied on bed-sharing, canopy beds, and bed warmers to keep from dying of hypothermia in the night. Sharing a bed with as many people that could fit into it makes sense, especially



Frost Fair of 1683

for poorer Tudors. The human body generates heat. The more people in a bed, the more generated heat they can share. In fact, if two (or preferably more) people huddled together under covers they can all survive the night even if temperatures in the room drop to below freezing. It was even better if the bed had a canopy or hangings. The heat generated by the human/humans was 'trapped' inside the bedding (especially if the hangings are made of wool) and helped keep Tudors toasty. If you could afford it, you also had the option of bed warmers or even hot water bottles. Bed warmers were flat, lidded pans on a stick you could fill with coals/ash from the fire and stuff into your bed to get the cover and mattress warm before clambering in. However, you didn't

want to get the bedpan TOO warm or you'd have a very uncongenial fire to deal with in your bed. The earliest hot water bottles were more oval than cylindrical, and made more frequently from copper than glass or earthenware. The hot water bottle was wrapped in cloth or placed inside a cushy cushion-container and you could keep it in bed with you all night, enjoying its seeping heat.

Using each other's companionship and some simple technology the Tudors thus made it through the biting semi-arctic winters in the heart of the Little Ice Age.

**KYRA KRAMER**



Frost fair on the river Thames 1683

# An unmissable pre-Christmas event!

December's Guest Speaker  
is art historian

**Melanie V. Taylor**

**"Nicholas Hilliard"**

England's first artist of international renown



Melanie Taylor, show here at an art show in Paris with Claire Ridgway and Clare Cherry



## PART I: ANNE OF CLEVES HOUSE, LEWES

**A**NNE of Cleves House is a traditional Wealden style timber-framed house dating from the 1400s, situated in a picturesque village setting. It is extremely well-preserved for a building of this type. The house on Southover High Street formed part of Anne of Cleves' settlement upon the dissolution of her marriage to King Henry VIII. It was never her home but was instead an asset. It is even unclear whether Anne actually ever stayed in the property. Whatever its links with Anne, the house offers visitors the opportunity to experience life as it was in Tudor times.

Anne of Cleves House is a substantial building and, as such, would have been home to people of note, something that is reflected by the luxurious carved oak furniture within the property. It has lovely exposed timber beams and traditionally white-washed walls, and is living history at its best. It is a 'must' for any visitor seeking a real Tudor atmosphere.

### Highlights include:

- The fine medieval building
- The authentically furnished kitchen
- The garden, which features traditional plants and Tudor planting schemes
- The café and Tudor tea garden

This content is taken from **"Tudor Places of Great Britain"** by **Claire Ridgway**, available now from Amazon and all good book stores.



# TUDOR PLACES: ANNE OF CLEVES HOUSE



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# TUDOR PLACES: ANNE OF CLEVES HOUSE





# TUDOR HISTORY'S HOLIDAY SEASON OF DESPAIR

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*by Beth von Staats*

**T**HE Tudor Court of King Henry VIII was renowned for its splendor in celebrating the Holiday Season. Peers throughout the realm summoned, the invitation once royally offered could hardly be refused. The Twelve Days of Christmas, beginning with Christmas Day and onward to Epiphany Eve on January 5<sup>th</sup> to 6<sup>th</sup>, set the stage for opulent fashion, celebration, and of course gift giving, the fine art of what to gift the King, a political game for the ages. Worship, the Feast of Fools, the burning of the Yule Log, carols with dancing, gift giving and receiving, Wassail, competition among the courtiers for the King's favor and attention, and foreign diplomacy ruled the Court of King Henry VIII through the Holiday Seasons of his spectacular reign – until all came to a crashing halt during the 12 Days of Christmas of 1546 to 1547.

The year leading to arguably the Tudor Era's saddest, yet most decisive Holiday Season was dominated by the painfully tormenting final months of King Henry VIII's mortality, rife with the intrigue of immense political power struggling between Protestant and Roman Catholic rival factions. Would Thomas Cranmer, Archbishop of Canterbury; Queen Katherine Parr; Edward Seymour, Earl of Hertford; and Sir Anthony Denny fall? Or would Bishop Stephen Gardiner; Lord Chancellor Thomas Wriothesley; Thomas Howard, Duke of Norfolk; and his son, Henry Howard, Earl of Surrey drop like a stones in the gutter? Though rival factions swung to and fro throughout much of King Henry VIII's reign, the stakes were never

higher than the year leading to his death. The regency of the boy king was looming, and whoever held the upper hand not only gained power and wealth for themselves, but also decided the future of the realm – not just its governance, but also its values, culture – and most importantly, its religion.

Through the first six months of 1546, King Henry VIII was unable to settle between the factions, swaying between evangelical and conservative support. In January, Henry appointed his Archbishop of Canterbury the task of investigating the scriptural truth of several church ceremonies, inclusive of the ringing of bells on All Souls Evening and the practice of creeping to the cross on Good Friday. Were these religious traditions merely superstition after all? By mid-year, after receiving a pleading letter from Bishop Stephen Gardiner, who was away on diplomatic assignment, he decided they were not. The ailing King told Sir Anthony Denny, who had brought him Cranmer's conclusions for signing, "I am now otherwise resolved."

Within this culture of King Henry VIII's indecision and ultimate poor and last minute planning for the realm's future, his court emerged as a hot-bed of political intrigue, a literal fight of survival of the fittest. Foreshadowing the ultimate evangelical stronghold as well as his ultimate fall within the year, Henry Howard, Earl of Surrey, lost fourteen of his captains, as well as several English standards to the French at Saint Etienne. Summoned home by the King in disgrace, he was replaced by the eventual victor of if not a French War, instead the "call to war" back home, Edward Seymour, Earl of Hertford. Though victory was



Will Somers and King Henry,  
copyright British Library

ultimately his, the uncle of the heir to the throne needed to build alliances strong enough to hold the conservatives at bay, no easy feat within a court filled with such venom.

While his court swirled in chaos around him, King Henry VIII's final year of life was laden with tormenting pain and grievous illness, a pendulum continually swinging between near certain death and rallying recoveries. While both Seymour and John Dudley, Lord Admiral in France and Henry himself in intermittent convalescence, conservatives made one last bold attempt to gain the upper hand, focusing their attentions to the Queen of England herself. Initially targeting "lower evangelicals" with potential ties to Queen Katherine Parr and her

inner-circle, such as the remarkable Anne Askew, a plot directed squarely on at the King's consort ultimately unfolded. Laying in wait patiently for any behavior of Parr that could be perceived as heretical, after unsuccessfully targeting Sir Anthony Denny and his wife, Bishop Stephen Gardiner, Lord Chancellor Thomas Wriothesley and others within the conservative faction went after the "crown jewel", the Queen herself.

If we are to believe the typically biased martyr biographer John Foxe, the King became annoyed after a theological discussion with his wife, complaining to Bishop Gardiner. With nothing – and yet everything – to lose, Gardiner suggested that Queen Katherine held religious beliefs that Henry



would not approve. In his typical fashion, Henry commanded Gardiner to investigate the allegations further. After searching the Queen's chambers and questioning her ladies, no evidence was found, so Wriothesley secured the King's stamp of approval to arrest his wife to enable her to be interrogated directly. In one of English history's delightful twists of fate, the arrest warrant was mislaid, falling out of a courtier's pocket on to the floor, whether intentionally or accidentally unknown.

John Foxe further teaches us that the arrest warrant was discovered by an ally of the Queen; thus, she was alerted of the arrest plans. Distraught

and wailing in her bed chambers, Henry heard her distress and sent his physician to find out what was upsetting the woman. Dr. Wendy advised that she seek forgiveness from the King directly. Finding her courage, Queen Katherine did just that. After assuring her husband she deferred to his authority and merely desired to distract him from his illnesses, Henry forgave his wife immediately, by Foxe's account declaring, "Then we are perfect friends again." From here, Foxe's story typically sways towards the inevitable embarrassment of a papist. He relays the next day Wriothesley attempted to arrest the Queen as she sat with her husband in the



Henry VIII in  
his death bed,  
artist unknown

Privy Garden. Enraged, Henry is alleged to have shouted at Wriothesley, beating him about the head. “Arrant knave! Beast! Fool!” Oh, the drama!

After years of tug-of-war between evangelicals and conservatives dating back to the submission of the clergy to King Henry VIII’s ultimate authority in 1532, the failure of the plot against Queen Katherine Parr in May 1546 and then the ultimate return to England of Edward Seymour ended any hope conservatives would prevail to hold control during the regency of the impending King Edward VI. In the ensuing months, as Henry’s health gradually deteriorated, conservatives began falling like dominoes one after the other, first Bishop Stephen Gardiner, and then by the approaching holiday season, the Howards, both Henry Howard, Earl of Surrey and his father, Thomas Howard, Duke of Norfolk. Tragically, Surrey, the great Tudor poet, would eventually fall to the ax, Gardiner also disgraced and Norfolk neutralized in the Tower.

By October 1546, evangelicals took control of court politics, never again relinquishing it. King Henry VIII, increasingly fragile and in painful suffering, remained isolated primarily to his privy chambers, his primary companion by choice his fool Will Somers. With Sir Anthony Denny now Groom of the Stool and Sir William Paget Principal Secretary, all access to the King was in the solid control of evangelicals. In November, Bishop Stephen Gardiner incurred Henry’s displeasure, never to regain it. As the story goes, Gardiner refused to exchange episcopal lands with the King. In actuality, with no direct access to Henry, instead Gardiner’s enemies were out to destroy him. When Gardiner wrote the King in a letter that survives agreeing to the land exchange, the offer was refused, Henry wishing he “molest us no further”.

King Henry VIII slept at his beloved Greenwich Palace on December 22, 1546, then arriving at Whitehall, where he would spend his final 12 Days of Christmas in total seclusion. With Prince Edward already Ashridge, upon Henry’s command, Queen Katherine Parr, along with his daughters, the Lady Mary Tudor and the Lady Elizabeth Tudor, left the King’s presence, spending their quiet and joyless Christmas and New Year’s at Greenwich. The court at Whitehall was closed, no holiday celebrations for the first time in Henry’s reign, the first time in many a monarch’s reign. By all reports only three, perhaps four, Gentlemen of the Chamber and the King’s physicians were allowed access to Henry, along with a few essential counselors, such as Sir William Paget, kept

nearby to keep the wheels of government moving, if just barely. There were no revelries, no dances, no gift exchanges, no Lord of Misrule and Feast of Fools, no Wassailing, and no joy. Instead, Whitehall was consumed with despair, anxiety, and great secrecy, the dying monarch’s grave condition held close to the few entrusted with his care.

Long lived the King. Long did he reign.

**BETH VON STAATS**

#### Sources:

1. Matusiak, John, *Henry VIII: The Life and Rule of England’s Nero*, The History Press, Gloucestershire, 2013.
2. Starkey, David, *The Reign of Henry VIII: Personalities and Politics*, Vintage Books, 2001.
3. Weir, Alison, *Henry VIII*, Ballantine Books, New York, 2001.

## PART 2: LEWES PRIORY

**W**HILE you are in Lewes, why not visit the ruined priory too? The priory has a long history including King Henry III installing his forces there in 1264.

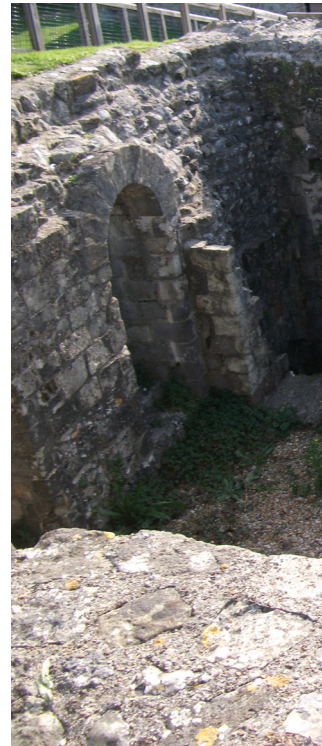
The priory was founded in 1077 and was a Cluniac order, but as you can see from these fantastic photos, it's just a ruin today. In 1537 its destruction was overseen by Thomas Cromwell and a demolition team headed by an Italian engineer, Giovanni Portinari. He did a particularly good job!

Additionally, in 1845, the Brighton and Hastings Railway Line drove straight through the site, cutting it into two, causing significant damage to the archaeology. However, an interest was ignited and today the ruins are well protected and cared for. It is now listed as a Grade I protected building, ensuring its future survival as a fascinating view into the past and the dissolution of the monasteries.





# TUDOR PLACES: LEWES PRIORY



## TUDOR PLACES: LEWES PRIORY



# SHE, ANNE

*a Satirical take on Anne Boleyn by Susan Bordo*

*For Sue Grafton and Genevieve Bujold*

SHE, Anne, sits musing about preparations for the execution they say is to come in the morning. She is troubled at the prospect that her bit of an extra fingernail, which has been gestating like a deformed fetus in the imaginations of her enemies, growing larger and more disfiguring each day, would be exposed for all as she spread her arms for the executioner's well-timed blow. She ponders which highly fashionable French execution robe would cover it most effectively. "Looking good is the best revenge," she cackled to herself (cackling being a human sound especially beloved by witches,) revealing as she did so small, feral teeth that she longed to put to best use by piercing the robust neck of her husband's chief counselor TC. Then she sighed, remembering that her days as a living body were soon to be over. She can already feel her fictional self ascending, her teeth becoming sharper,

her hair blacker, her motives meaner. There were compensations, of course. She was pleased to note that her sallow skin and moles would disappear and she would grow more beautiful over the coming centuries. Eventually, perhaps, even the sixth finger would disappear.

Interrupting her musings, a visitor to her Tower rooms! Was it her jailer, Mr. Kingston, come to blather some more about the skill of her executioner? (French – of course he was skilled! Kingston himself – an idiot who doesn't know a joke when he hears it.) Was it Cranmer, come to make her an offer of life in a convent should she agree to renounce her daughter Elizabeth's claim to the throne? Cranmer was a dear man, but didn't he know she, Anne, was a goggle-eyed whore who would as soon chop her own head off with a dull English hatchet as spend the rest of her life without a man to suck on her slender toes? Is it Elizabeth, come to pose for a painting of a tearful parting from her martyred mother? Is it her sister Mary, that simpering do-gooder (then again, might she be gulled into asking Henry to pardon her)? Perhaps it is TC himself, and they can together converse about the 21st century alchemy that would transform him, Cromwell (She never calls him "Cremuel"; sometimes "Crumb" but never "Cremuel"), from unscrupulous factotum to a warm and dryly witty man for all seasons? (Or was that TM? It is so difficult to keep the Thomas's straight as they mutate, along with Anne herself, over the centuries!)

No. The visitor is the beloved husband himself, come to make the offer of life "for old times' sake." He wants to marry again, they all know that. But he is a fool if he thinks her daughter's rights can be bought that cheaply. And – ah! – He also wants to

## AUTHOR'S NOTE:

*In July 2015, Sue Grafton, author of the Kinsey Millhone mysteries, was interviewed in **The New York Times**. When asked about her favorite reading, she replied that she "has trouble passing up books about Anne Boleyn. I keep hoping for a different ending. So far, no luck." (New York Times, July 16, 2015, "By the Book")*



Anne Boleyn in the Tower, from a Victorian sketch

know if the charges are true. Has she, Anne, really been unfaithful to him? Henry appears bleary-eyed, as though he has been on a bender; he is speaking oddly, bellowing with eyes raised to heaven, much like a preacher or a travelling actor from the north, come to court to tell tales of Arthur and Guinevere. Anne, recalling those tales, is tempted to make an argument with herself: Guinevere was queen, Guinevere was condemned, Guinevere was saved. Perhaps she, too....?

No. She, Anne, is not fooled by the poetic, impassioned performance of her husband (who also seems to have lost a bit of weight since her arrest.) She knows that future re-tellings will often make her look about anxiously as she walks to the scaffold, hoping for the savior/messenger, but she does not expect her husband to issue a last-minute pardon. She knows too that the future will often make her colder, meaner, and more grasping than she is, but rarely will it fathom her intelligence. She has “wit,” they always say. But she, Anne, this Anne, has more than wit, and she knows how to conjure a real curse. “Take it to your grave,” she tells him, excited and flushed by the perfect extravagance of her lie, “I was unfaithful to you with half your court.” Henry, who cannot bear to feel his mind waver – it isn’t Kingly or manly – does not now know what to believe.

Impotent with rage, he slaps her. She hardly cares about the sting of the slap; she faces far worse in the morrow. Actually, it is quite a delectable moment, even more soul satisfying than when, barely a breath later really, in eternal time, she will see that snake TC with his head finally off his shoulders. As for Henry, she cannot resist a final thrust, knowing it will stir the souls of later generations, with a persuasion beyond mere fact. “But Elizabeth is yours! And will rule an England far greater than any you could have built!” Henry’s expression is worth the coming blood on the scaffold.

She, Anne, wishes she could do better than this for Sue Grafton. Alas, there are some things – very few – that biographers and novelists cannot tinker with. Whore, martyr, sister from hell, exploited innocent, ambitious predator, sexual temptress, religious reformer, rebel girl – she, Anne, can see her many strange future selves displayed before her, as she awaits the hour of her execution. Fingers, moles, skin, swellings, teeth, nipples – up for grabs. The head, however, must come off. She, Anne, is as sorry about this as you are. But think on this, as you count the books on your shelf: Who, of all Henry’s wives, has lived the longest? Ha!

**SUSAN BORDO**

**SUSAN BORDO** is Professor of Gender and Women’s Studies and holds the Otis A. Singletary Chair in the Humanities at the University of Kentucky. She is the author of several books including *The Flight to Objectivity: Essays on Cartesianism and Culture*; *Unbearable Weight: Feminism, Western Culture, and the Body*; *The Male Body: A New Look at Men in Public and in Private*; and *The Creation of Anne Boleyn: A New Look at England’s Most Notorious Queen*.



# Spot the 10 Differences...



# PIRACY, KINGS AND THE HUNDRED YEARS' WAR

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*by Timothy J. Moots*

**D**uring the Hundred Years' War (1337-1453), ports served a variety of functions for the monarch that included transporting troops to France, shipping supplies to the army based in Calais, and continuing trade within both England and the continent. The increase of overseas trade throughout the later Middle Ages increased the amount of risks that traders encountered, such as storms leading to shipwrecks and dissatisfaction of journeys leading to mutinies. Another risk that affected trade was piracy. Robin Frame in *A Social History of England* (2006) noted 'particularly in the late fourteenth and early fifteenth centuries, the seas were invested by pirates'. Piracy was a risk that was intrinsically connected to war and royal policy. To the extent that Edward Lewis in his 1937 article on the subject noted, 'piracy and warfare were continuous and frequently indistinguishable'. However, there was little subsequent research on the subject of piracy specifically in relation to the Crown's policy and how it contributed to piracy during the Hundred Years' War. Piracy and the policy also significantly impacted England's eastern ports at this time.

Direct enemy raids on the eastern port towns could have influenced these towns' economic decline in the late fourteenth and fifteenth centuries. Examples in the Patent and Close Rolls point towards the towns of Scarborough and Great Yarmouth suffering to a greater extent. During the Hundred Years' War, the Scarborough dwellers were exposed to blockades and harassments of both their fishing vessels and visiting vessels, and suffered a raid

from the Scots that resulted in the loss of their ships, deaths of several Scarborough seamen, and captured men. Sub-standard protection of Scarborough was one reason that led the townsmen to rise during the Great Revolt of 1381. Yet, there is evidence that suggests grants were issued by the government to try and defend Scarborough. In May 1378 the crown recognized that the town 'is in a situation of great peril on the sea coast'. Later, in October 1378,



**Dame Flora Robson as Elizabeth I and Errol Flynn as a privateer in “The Sea Hawk” (1940). Elizabeth I’s privateers are the most famous in English history, but as Timothy Moots shows, the policy was already two centuries old by Gloriana’s time. (Public Domain)**

the Crown issued an order for expenses to be paid for Scarborough Castle, undoubtedly adding to the protection of the town. Likewise, in the Patent Rolls, the Earl of Northumberland was appointed to survey Scarborough ‘touching the condition of the castle and its defects... in respect of its equipment, artillery, turrets and buildings’. In Yarmouth there was a review of the towns defences in 1386: to ‘survey the state of Great Yarmouth and take order for its defence’. Later that year, examinations were made at both Southampton and Yarmouth to ‘put it in a state of defence against the threatened invasion of the French, by repairing and fortifying the walls and dykes, and arming and arraying its men’.

Not only did the Crown order the town of Yarmouth to be fortified, but it also armed and arrayed the men in a manner similar to conscription. The Crown recognised that these towns were enemy

targets or had already been subjected to frequent attacks. Looking at the other port towns such as Boston, Ipswich, Hull and Lynn, they did not suffer the same casualties and there is little evidence in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries that the towns experienced raids by the enemy or by pirates sponsored by the enemy. They did not petition to the King or receive grants, or at least grants were not recorded in fortifying them against raids or arming the men for defence against invasion.

Piracy could have affected some eastern port towns more than others due to the specialisation of trade activities. Boston, Lynn, Ipswich and Hull were all prominent in the wool trade and even though they declined in population and wealth in the late fourteenth to mid-sixteenth centuries, there were minimal petitions to poverty or grants against taxes imposed on these towns during the Hundred Years’ War. However, the towns of



King Henry IV, who seized the throne in 1399, encouraged piracy (Public Domain)



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### Scarborough Castle (English Heritage)

Scarborough and Yarmouth specialised in fishing, especially the latter that was extremely reliant on its herring fair. Due to the nature of the fish trade, Scarborough and Yarmouth were increasingly at risk from piracy, as they had to sail into waters more frequently than their rivals in order to conduct their economic activities. Their fishing was constantly threatened by blockades and piracy, and this no doubt disrupted the consistency of their economic pursuits. The frequency of attacks upon the townsmen of Scarborough led them to petition to Richard II, 'pray for the boor burgesses and people of your town of Scarborough: whereas the said town stands open to the sea, and from one day to the next is attacked by barges and various other ships from Scotland and from France, and by the Flemings'.

To counteract the raids upon the fishing fleet, the people told King Richard that 'the poor burgesses have bought a barge and a balinger for their defence against the said enemies'. The upkeep was expensive and the town had to call for aid in order to arm their balinger and barge to protect their fishing. Even though fishing activities were particularly vulnerable to disruptions caused by piracy, these attacks must have affected all port towns to a certain extent. The port towns of Boston, Lynn, Ipswich, and Hull were repeatedly retained in ports or told to travel collectively across the channel. There was a call to all towns under Richard

II to supply ships to suppress piracy, which were to assemble at Bishops Lynn; this included a specific call to merchants from Boston, Hull, Ipswich and Yarmouth. Ships being assembled to suppress piracy from the eastern port towns indicate that it was becoming a serious problem for trade.

The King may have encouraged piracy as an unofficial form of policy in order to aid these towns in this period. It was a case of fighting fire with fire. The likes of S. P. Pistono in his 1975 article 'Henry IV and the English privateers' have investigated Henry IV and the English privateers in the south and western ports. Moreover, the late Plantagenet Crown's foreign policy was undoubtedly influential in terms of the frequency of piracy in the fifteenth century, indicating that piracy was encouraged by the Crown to attack its enemies' shipping and disrupt economic activities. The English government did this by allowing subjects to undertake such acts through granting licences. Commissions were only made to investigate piracy committed on the Flemish by Englishmen from Hull and Scarborough 'because of the men of Flanders are of the king's friendship'. Meaning that the Crown chose to redress English piracy only at a time when the Plantagenets had an alliance with Flanders. Furthermore, the lack of comparative redress to French shipping, and no mention whatsoever about the eastern port towns, indicates that piracy was

incorporated into the Crown's foreign policy more often than it was punished. In 1402, when the English were at war with the Scots, a ship was taken from the Scots by Thomas, Earl of Arundell and Henry de Percy le Fitz.

This is not to suggest that the Crown had a uniform policy of encouraging piracy only when it suited it. There were different policies from varying monarchs. Although it has convincingly been argued that Henry IV encouraged piracy on enemy shipping, his son Henry V attempted to stamp it out. Piracy led to dissatisfaction among foreign merchants, allies and aliens visiting England. Henry V's aims in regards piracy are best represented in the Parliamentary Rolls under Henry V with the Statute of Truces. The ultimate aim of the act was to ensure that foreign shipping was not attacked during times of truces and piracy was ultimately suppressed by Henry V with a ruthlessness and thoroughness unequalled by any western European medieval king. The statute may have had trade repercussions for the towns' trade with foreigners. Henry V was expanding his country's navy and with the increase of royal ships being used by the monarch, there was no justifiable reason to grant licences for piracy. However, following the reign of Henry V, and the sale of most of the royal ships to pay off the debts created by the attempted conquest of France, the government of Henry VI began to issue licenses for English pirates once again. As many English coastal townsmen regarded piracy as a legitimate form of self-help, piracy was once again employed by their monarchs as a method of allowing them to substitute the loss of trade.

Piracy undertaken by England's enemy can be argued to have had an economic effect on the eastern ports. The Crown relied heavily on indirect taxation in order to fund the Hundred Years' War, so it had to encourage ships to export goods in order to receive revenue. For instance, merchants from Boston petitioned the King and successfully asked for redress when their ship *le George* was taken at sea by men of Lubek, Hamburg, Wissemmer and Rustok, resulting in the loss of substantial merchandise worth up to £860. In the years 1429-35 then, the Crown was responding aggressively to piracy committed against the England and providing aid to the town and merchants of Boston, which in turn frequently provided funding to the King for his wars.

The increase in piracy in the eastern port towns and grants of licence from the Crown helped encourage men to take up piracy or privateering from those towns which were suffering economic decline in the Hundred Years' War. Evidence of townsmen committing piracy as a group can be seen in Scarborough in 1413, which allows one to argue that the towns were in poverty and only remained a source of valuable taxation by being allowed to bolster their incomes through piracy. With examples of goods being stolen worth up to £300, and others being the sum of £200 one can see why this route was ideal for the townfolk. Privateering was useful to the kings of England and their subjects in a period of war, uncertainty and economic decline.

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King Henry V, the famed warrior who worked tirelessly to limit English piracy.

# HENRY VIII AND HIS SIX WIVES – THE FILM

*by Roland Hui*

Henry VIII and Catherine of Aragon at the revels celebrating the birth of the new Prince.



**E**XTRAVAGANT, lusty, tyrannical, and larger-than-life, Henry VIII, the King who married six times, created his own Church, and outdid *Alice in Wonderland's* Queen of Hearts in lopping off heads, was tailored made for the movies. He was brought to the silver screen in Ernest Lubitsch's *Anna Boleyn*, with famed German-Austrian actor Emil Jannings in the role, and in 1933, Charles Laughton played the King in the well received *The Private Life Of Henry VIII*. (Laughton played Henry again in 1953 in *Young Bess*.) Later, prominent actors including Frank Cellier (*Nine Days A Queen*), James Robertson Justice (*The Sword And The Rose*), Robert Shaw (*A Man For All Seasons*), and Richard Burton (*Anne Of The Thousand Days*) would also give their take on 'Bluff King Hal'.

Television too saw the potential of Henry VIII as a crowd pleaser. In 1970, the BBC produced a six part miniseries of his life in relation to his succession of queens. *The Six Wives Of Henry VIII* was a hit with audiences. Critically acclaimed as well, it won many awards, including an Emmy and a BAFTA for Australian actor Keith Michell (who sadly passed away in November of this year) in the title role.

Hoping to duplicate the success of the series on the big screen, in 1971, EMI Film Productions set out to make a film version of it re-titled *Henry VIII And His Six Wives*. Michell, whom many agree gave the definitive portrayal of Henry VIII – from a handsome young ruler of 19 to the obese autocrat of his later years – was the producers' first and only choice for the starring role.

However, six new actresses were signed on to play Henry's queens. The most well known were Jane Asher (as Jane Seymour), Charlotte Rampling (as Anne Boleyn), and Lynne Frederick (as Catherine Howard). Both Asher and Rampling had appeared in a number of motion pictures, while Frederick was a promising young star on the rise.<sup>1</sup> Rounding out the cast were Bernard Hepton, repeating his television role as Archbishop Cranmer; Michael

Gough, best known for his many appearances in British horror films and later as Alfred the Butler in two *Batman* movies, as the Duke of Norfolk; and the prolific Donald Pleasence as Thomas Cromwell.

Whereas the series was written by a team of six individuals (one per wife), the script this time around was assigned to only one screenwriter – Ian Thorne who had penned the *Jane Seymour* episode. Thorne was probably picked because his sensitive treatment of Henry VIII's third wife had won him the prestigious Prix Italia for 'Best European TV Drama' for the year 1970. Waris Hussein, who had a number of movie and television credits under his belt, directed the picture.

Putting Henry VIII on the big screen demanded higher production values than the original series allowed. Whereas the television episodes were filmed like plays – in small studios, often with minimal scenery, the film made use of elaborate large scale sets. Actual historical properties, such as Hatfield House and Allington Castle, were used as shooting locations, while the interiors of the long gone palaces of Westminster, Richmond, Greenwich were convincingly recreated on big soundstages.

Great care was given to the costumes as well. Unlike more recent Tudor-themed productions – *The Tudors* and *Reign* come to mind – where the designers were evidently given *carte blanche* to create Tudor-inspired fantasies which often look nothing like what was actually worn in the 16th century, *Henry VIII And His Six Wives* took great pains to ensure authenticity. The film's costumes on the whole were well researched and historically accurate, many of them copied from contemporary paintings and such. They were also improved upon from the TV show. Whereas financial constraints had forced costume designer John Bloomfield to make do with what resources he had at hand for the series – mostly 'cheap heavy materials' decorated with paints, resins, fibre pens, and screen print to create the illusion of sumptuous court dress<sup>2</sup> – the movie's bigger budget

1 Jane Asher is also well known for her former relationship with Paul McCartney of The Beatles. Lynne Frederick's later celebrity was in her marriages to actor Peter Sellers and to journalist David Frost. Her untimely death at the age of 39 in 1994 was attributed to issues with substance abuse.

2 *Masterpiece Theatre: A Celebration Of 25 Years Of Outstanding Television* by Terrence O' Flaherty, QKED Books, San Francisco, p. 25.

allowed him to build richer and more magnificent pieces suitable for a motion picture.

Authenticity was equally important when it came to the film's music. The late David Munrow, an expert in Early Music, contributed pieces that had the distinction of being 'scored entirely for historical instruments'.<sup>3</sup> The soundtrack includes music from the Tudor period, along with some medieval and Renaissance inspired compositions by Munrow himself.

Unlike the television series which was presented chronologically, from Catherine of Aragon's arrival in England in 1501 to Catherine Parr's widowhood in 1547, the film, with Henry VIII as its focus rather than his wives, unfolds in flashback. The movie opens in December 1545. The King, six times married, much aged and in poor health, but still the wonder of all Europe, addresses what he knows will be his last Parliament. Far from the tyrant many of his subjects have come to know him as, Henry appears as the loving and magnanimous ruler; a father to his nation. He thanks the Lords and Commons for a grant to further his war with France, and he reminds them how, in his reign of almost forty years, he has preserved peace in the realm. Bidding them all to live in 'charity and concord' with one another, the old King then hobbles away not to be seen again.

The film then shifts to Henry VIII on his deathbed. As King, his dying is a public affair. He is surrounded by his court and is attended to by his last wife Catherine Parr and his daughter Princess Mary.<sup>4</sup> When he is told that he has not long to live, and that he should 'weigh his past life and to seek for God's mercy', Henry reminisces. His first memory is of himself as a young man, good looking and athletic, jousting in celebration of the birth of his son by Catherine of Aragon. The couple are very much in love, and at the revels following, a jubilant Henry wears golden letters with their initials upon himself.

3 Liner notes from the album *Henry VIII And His Six Wives: Music From The Film Soundtrack* (Angel, 1972). David Munrow also provided music for *The Six Wives of Henry VIII* and for *Elizabeth R*. His career was sadly cut short by suicide in 1976.

4 In actuality, neither of the two ladies were present at the King's deathbed.

Of the many actresses who have portrayed Henry VIII's first queen, Frances Cuka is arguably the most successful in actually looking like her. The historical Catherine was fair, not stereotypically Spanish as most filmmakers imagined her to be, that is with dark hair and an olive complexion



(think Greek actress Irene Papas in *Anne Of The Thousand Days*).

Besides her appearance, the film also defined her character well. The actual Catherine, though she was generally submissive to her husband as convention and religion expected her to be, was also tough and forceful during the many difficult times

in her life. The movie has an excellent scene showing Catherine's strong nature when provoked. During an argument with the King where he reproves her for *her* inability to give him a living son, an exasperated Catherine shoots back, "Then give me a healthy child!" Henry is absolutely dumbfounded, and a look crosses his face that perhaps Catherine

Henry VIII and  
Anne Boleyn  
(disguised as the  
Ethiopian Queen).





Henry VIII with  
Catherine Howard.

is speaking the truth. The fault might actually be *his*. This exchange between the couple is entirely fictitious, but we can imagine that it was something Catherine might actually have felt.

By the mid 1520s, Catherine was dowdy and ageing, and this could not be more evident than in the introduction of the King's new love. After repeated miscarriages (except for the singular joy of the Princess Mary in 1516), the King and Queen make yet another religious pilgrimage in hopes of a son. At prayers, Henry looks in disappointment upon a sorrowful Catherine as she venerates a statue of the Virgin and Child in desperation. The scene then changes to that of a young woman bathed in sunshine coming over a rise with two hounds at her side. She is most striking with her slender figure, her dark looks, and her black hair flowing behind her.

Every story needs a villain – or in this case a villainess – and in *Henry VIII And His Six Wives* it is Anne Boleyn. For her part in triggering the English Reformation, Anne is a controversial figure with opinion both for and against her. On one hand, she was 'that virtuous Queen' as described by the martyrologist John Foxe, and on the other, 'the scandal of Christendom' who destroyed all that was good in the kingdom and herself in the end. The film script evoked an Anne Boleyn of the latter, and Charlotte Rampling played her as such. "Anne wasn't a nice girl, I'm afraid, and had dangerous qualities of spitefulness and arrogance," the actress was quoted as saying.<sup>5</sup> Besides being jealous and demanding, she is also too flirtatious for her own good. The movie gives the impression that Anne

<sup>5</sup> *Henry VIII And His Six Wives* publicity press book (Anglo-EMI Film Distributors Limited).



Henry VIII with Catherine Parr, Princess Mary, Princess Elizabeth and Prince Edward.

was indeed guilty of the charges of adultery later brought against her.

That Anne Boleyn is *not* a nice girl is evident by her physical flaws. Attractive though Rampling's Anne is, she is of bad character as suggested by the rudimentary sixth finger on her hand, and by the mole on her neck, both which she takes pains to hide. Whether the real Anne Boleyn was 'deformed' as such (as described by the Elizabethan Catholic polemicist Nicholas Sander) remains uncertain. Nonetheless, the filmmakers clearly chose to have their Anne in this manner to present her in a negative light.<sup>6</sup>

How different Henry VIII's wives were from one another is again obvious with the introduction

of the lady who would become his third. At a masque where a wild-like Anne Boleyn, decked out in an exotic costume of red and gold, and her face blackened as the Ethiop Queen, scandalizes the court by mocking the late Cardinal Wolsey,<sup>7</sup> Jane Seymour (Jane Asher) is shown as a demure, plain looking young woman dressed in virginal white standing at the sidelines. Her soft-spokenness while in conversation with the King is in marked contrast to her mistress. Seeing her husband attracted to her lady-in-waiting, the Queen becomes unhinged and breaks into maniacal laughter, shocking all those around her.

After the tempest that was Anne Boleyn, Jane Seymour was Henry VIII's calm after the storm.

<sup>6</sup> Interestingly, other presentations with Anne Boleyn as the antagonist – for example, *A Man For All Seasons* (1966), *The Other Boleyn Girl* (2003 and 2008), and *Wolf Hall* (2015) – did not feel it necessary to malign her with any sort of physical blemishes.

<sup>7</sup> The masque was based on a real performance at court. Its mocking of the unpopular Cardinal Wolsey was actually well received, and the production was later printed up by the Duke of Norfolk, no friend to the disgraced churchman.



**An accomplished singer as well as an actor, Keith Michell released an album featuring modern day songs on one side and 16th century compositions on the other.**

From his point of view, he could not have asked for a better spouse. Jane is kind, gentle, and devout. She reconciles her husband to his estranged daughter Princess Mary (Sarah Long), and she cries mercy for those in rebellion to his government. Before Anne Boleyn's downfall, Jane had even spoken kindly of her, telling the King she had no wish to come between him and his wife.

A woman of great piety, one of Jane's chief pleasures as a girl was to visit the Abbey of Hailes to see the Holy Phial containing the blood of Christ. As fate would have it, when she later becomes Queen, the Abbey is suppressed and the Phial confiscated. It is discovered to be trick. The truth is brutally revealed to Jane by the King, angry and disillusioned by the abuses within the Church. His rage causes Henry to breakdown, and he begs his wife to ease his doubts otherwise he would lose himself entirely. It is a powerful scene, even if it gave some viewers *déjà vu*. Ian Thorne had taken it directly from his script for the television episode on Jane Seymour.

The tragedy of her premature death is relieved by the comedy of her successor Anne of Cleves (Jenny Bos). The story of Henry VIII's fourth Queen seemed to have been a challenge to past screenwriters. Historically, the match was short lived and relatively uneventful in comparison to

the drama of the King's other wives. To boot, Anne could only speak her native German. To alleviate such problems, *The Private Life Of Henry VIII* had Anne of Cleves already knowing English, and she was put in a storyline of trying to get out of her marriage in order to wed her actual true love. Likewise, in *The Six Wives Of Henry VIII*, Anne was a competent English speaker who was equally determined to escape the royal bedchamber.

In truth, Anne of Cleves was determined to be Queen of England. Her divorce in 1540 was upsetting, and incredible as it was, she had even hoped that Henry VIII would take her back. Thus the film is accurate in regards to Anne's desire to be married,<sup>8</sup> though her scenes are played for laughs. When Anne is presented to the King, she is excited and entirely oblivious to his distaste for her. She is made to appear unattractive with a pocked marked face and an unceasing grin ("She smiles at me. Indeed she *never* stops smiling at me. From morn till night she is perpetually smiling. It's enough to make a man run mad!" Henry later complains to the Duke of Norfolk).<sup>9</sup> When Anne, expecting to be kissed by her fiancé, shuts her eyes and puckers her lips, Henry gives her a quick peck on the hand instead. Then as Anne rattles on in Dutch,<sup>10</sup> Henry, obviously annoyed, declines Cranmer's offer of an interpreter. There is further farce on their wedding

<sup>8</sup> On the other hand, the novelization of the film (*Fontana Books*, 1972), written by Maureen Peters based on Ian Thorne's screenplay, has Anne equally disliking the King.

<sup>9</sup> From the novelization of the film, pg. 145.

<sup>10</sup> The movie had Anne speak Dutch (rather than German), in which actress Jenny Bos is fluent in.

night. The King, already in dismay, is aghast when one of her maids passes before him. She is seen carrying her mistress' hair – actually a wig. When Anne finally emerges, she is again smiling, and is very eager to consummate the marriage!

Much more screen time is given to the story of Henry VIII's fifth Queen. In contrast to *The Six Wives Of Henry VIII's* interpretation of Catherine Howard as a greedy, conniving, and cold blooded creature (she is not opposed to murder to get her way),<sup>11</sup> the film version gives a more sympathetic portrayal. Here, Catherine (Lynne Frederick) is of a kinder nature. She is very childlike and rather naive. Even her flirtation with the King at their first meeting is entirely innocent – out of amusement, like a teenager looking for a little fun. Catherine has no desire to be Queen, but when it is evident that the King has taken a fancy to her, she is forced to marry him by her ambitious uncle the Duke of Norfolk.

Catherine makes the best of it, and is rewarded by the honours, attention, and fine clothes and jewels befitting a queen that her besotted husband piles upon her. However, she finds Henry's lovemaking repulsive. When he fondles her during their visit to the North, Catherine is seen grimacing in disgust. She clearly prefers the company of Henry's young and handsome attendant Thomas Culpepper, and in the film, there is no question as to the nature of their relationship. When Archbishop Cranmer confronts the young Queen with accusations of infidelity, her violent collapse betrays her guilt.

Perhaps the misconception that Catherine Parr was one of Henry VIII's less interesting wives gave her less screen time. This is a shame as scholarship into Catherine's life confirms her as an individual of considerable abilities. A woman of great religious zeal, Catherine was an author of spiritual works, and in recognition of her intelligence and good judgment, she was appointed Regent by the King during his absence at war with the French. However the film only focuses on her influence in the domestic sphere. Catherine (played by Barbara

Leigh-Hunt) brings peace to Henry VIII's final years by being a good wife and a loving stepmother to his children.<sup>12</sup> In this assurance of calm, the old King breathes his last.<sup>13</sup>

Released in 1972, *Henry VIII And His Six Wives* had the prestige of a Royal Command Performance attended by the Queen's daughter Princess Anne. However, the film did not prove as successful as its TV forerunner. With audiences favouring more fashionable pictures with gritty, cutting edge, or offbeat storylines and themes (such as *The Godfather*, *Last Tango In Paris*, *Cabaret*, and *Deliverance*, all released that same year), *Henry VIII And His Six Wives* seemed hopelessly outdated. It was largely ignored by critics, and it was not the box office hit the producers had hoped. Decades afterwards, the movie remains a curiosity, and is still little known beyond a handful of Tudor enthusiasts. This is unfortunate. As a piece of entertainment, it succeeds with good storytelling and splendid visuals. Its strength is its historical accuracy, which is largely correct. In light of the recent trend to contemporize the 16th century for a more 'hip' audience, *Henry VIII And His Six Wives* is refreshing. Director Waris Hussein had not seen fit to reinterpret or reinvent history to invigorate it. His Henry VIII was the Holbein image come to life, not Jonathan Rhys Meyers' Elvis strutting about Hampton Court in black leather pants as seen in *The Tudors*. And even with the sexual liberation of the 1970s, there was no desire to titillate viewers with a naked Catherine Howard on a swing.<sup>14</sup>

With the renaissance of Tudor themed movies and television thanks to Shekhar Kapur's *Elizabeth* back in 1998, and continuing interest in England's most famous royal family after the present day House of Windsor,<sup>15</sup> hopefully *Henry VIII And His Six Wives* will be re-evaluated and recognized as a commendable piece of work – on par with its television predecessor.

**ROLAND HUI**

11 In the television version, Catherine Howard was played by Donald Pleasence's daughter Angela Pleasence.

12 The novelization of the film adds more to Catherine Parr's story including her famous near arrest for heresy from arguing theology with the King.

13 *The Six Wives Of Henry VIII*, less sympathetic to the King, includes the tradition of him uttering in remorse

or in terror of the monks he had persecuted during his reign.

14 As seen on *The Tudors*, Season 3, episode 8.

15 For example, Thomas Imbach's *Mary Queen Of Scots* (2015), the television adaptation of Hilary Mantel's *Wolf Hall*, and the ongoing series *Reign*. There has also been many Tudor themed theatrical productions as of late.

# THE NEW YEAR'S GIFT

*A Festive Story by Melanie V. Taylor*

## NOVEMBER 1575

"Mr Hillyarde, as the one most gifted in capturing the likeness of the living I wish you to undertake a special commission."

Nicholas bowed low in acknowledgement. He had been summoned to the private royal apartments and found the queen alone. It was not the first time he had been summoned for a private audience, but it was unusual that not even Mistress Teerlinc was in attendance.

"Ma'am, it would be a pleasure." He could not refuse his royal patron despite it being November and the light being poor, or that his order books were overflowing with commissions for miniature portraits and jewellery all required by Christmas and New Year.

Queen Elizabeth stood looking out across the palace gardens. The cold weather had come early and the neatly trimmed box hedges were rimed with frost. The stark dark outline of the low hedge against the sandy coloured gravel of the path appealed to her sense of order. She watched as a member of the court walked down the path and through the arch in the equally neatly trimmed high yew hedge. This was a garden of tightly managed plants, trimmed into patterns to please the eye. Beyond the formal gardens, the hunting park abounded with deer. For a fleeting moment she wondered what it was like at Enfield, but it was only a few months since she had been there and it would be unwise to take too much time indulging herself at one specific hunting lodge.

Nicholas noticed she was twisting the ring with the hidden portraits of herself and the woman she had come to look on as a mother. He had made

it as a gift only the year before. Mistress Teerlinc had told him Elizabeth wore it always and when the queen was thinking deeply, she twisted it round and round her finger.<sup>1</sup> He wondered what was going through her mind.

"I would like you to paint a portrait of both myself and Lord Robert, of sufficiently small size that they will fit in a ring."

"Ma'am, the images within your own ring are enamelled."

"Mr Hillyarde, I realise the delicacy of your art requires a certain licence. What is important is that these are realistic portraits of us both."

"Do you wish me to create the ring also?"

Elizabeth laughed. "Mr Hillyarde, that goes without saying, but it is not to take the eye."

It was now clear why the queen's gentlewomen were not in attendance. The detail of this conversation was sufficient to cause more gossip than their private audience. "Would you like me to entwine the letters E and R on the outside?"

The queen smiled at his suggestion.

"You will make the catch as hidden as this one?" Elizabeth held up her hand and the diamonds in the top glittered in the morning sun.

"Perhaps I should bring you some designs so you can choose?"

"Oh, I nearly forgot. I would like an enamelled phoenix on the reverse, in much the same way as this."

"What size should I make this ring?"

"Large enough to fit your own forefinger, Mr Hillyarde."

Nicholas looked down at his hands. His right hand was slightly more developed than his left, but

<sup>1</sup> This ring is known as The Chequer's Ring. We do not know who made it, but it is possible it was Nicholas Hilliard.



they were not large hands. Years of working precious metals by squeezing pliers, lifting small but heavy crucibles with long tongs had given him a right hand grip that was like a viper. His fingers were not yet swollen with old age and he had never suffered from chilblains. But it was not in his interest to push for more detail. If the queen had wanted him to know the identity of the eventual recipient she would have told him. Perhaps it was Lord Robert?

"You don't need to bring the designs yourself. Give them to Mistress Teerlinc."

"Thank you, your majesty." Nicholas bowed and withdrew recognising his audience was at an end.

## SOME DAYS LATER

"Nicholas, I believe you have some paper for the queen?" Levina Teerlinc was seated in Hilliard's private quarters.

"Levina, I've had to make some assumptions for the design of this piece."

Levina waited for him to continue.

"I asked as to what size I should make the band and was told to make it to fit my own forefinger. Either the intended recipient is a woman with very large fingers, which is possible, or it is a man. Not knowing who is going to wear it is making it rather difficult to come to any specific design."

"Hmm. So what have you done?"

Nicholas handed her a sheaf of papers each with a different design. Some were very obviously for a woman, others more masculine in style.

"I would show her these." Levina sifted out the more overtly feminine designs and tore them up. "Whoever is to receive this must not get ideas above their station."

"I could have sold those to someone else."

"No, Nicholas. You should never sell a design you have considered for the queen."

"How would they know?"

"You know how the gossips are! If I had shown them to her, someone would have managed to see them and I've told you thousands of times, you must have the utmost discretion in everything you do for her majesty, and that includes destroying ANY designs you have done for her."

He sighed. He had thought that when he had finished his training, Levina would stop telling him what to do, but her reminders about discretion continued whenever the queen requested anything from him.

"So, Nicholas. This one seems the most appropriate." Levina was examining a design for a very simple ring, with the required letters entwined and cut into the surface. "I like it. How will it open?"

"I'm not sure? I haven't decided. How did you know it had to open?"

"I didn't. You just told me." Levina poked him in the chest.

"So not because I've done a sketch showing a hinge and various catches on the reverse?"

Mistress Teerlinc laughed. "Quite so! Because this ring is going to open and you are famous for your portraits immediately I know this is a love token."

"It could be a poison ring."

Levina snorted. "You are far too transparent!"

"If I can't trust you, Levina, then I can't trust anyone. You are the only one I ever discuss my work with and how else am I to know what's in the royal mind since I only ever get messages via you. It was a big surprise to be summoned to the palace and now you are pressing to see my designs and then telling me off for discussing them with you. It seems I can't win!"

"I was just as surprised when she told me to come and see you."

"So you have no idea who this might be for?"

"No."

"The ring is the easy part. The portraits need to be tiny. Do you have a good glass I could borrow?"

"You can have mine with pleasure. In the meantime I will take these designs to the queen."

After Levina left Nicholas sat and wondered whether she was really as unaware of this latest royal commission as she professed.

## MID DECEMBER 1575

The month had been relatively storm free and there had been some bright, sunny, but cold days. Nicholas was grateful for these as it was usually nigh on impossible to paint during the winter months. He had taken advantage of the days of good light to paint as many portraits as possible before the weather changed. Since he had painted both the queen and Robert Dudley often he was able to produce their initial outlines very quickly and was now completing the final details. His brushes were made up of one or two, or at most, three hairs. He had made these from squirrel hair as this held the paint well.<sup>2</sup> The vellum was of the finest quality and the two tiny finished ovals sat side by side on the same piece so were unlikely to get lost.

Levina had, as ever, been correct and the queen had chosen the simplest design. He had received a demand for a minor change to the initial design; the queen now wanted the phoenix to sit within an initial letter, but had not been specific as to which one. Nicholas had asked Levina for an idea after doodling all sorts of ideas. His teacher had worked through several with him, then suggested he use an antique A as used by Susannah Horenbout because it stood for Alpha, the first letter of the Greek alphabet and its use would pay tribute to a fellow artist as well as making the statement that the queen was the first lady of England. The round shape of the ring would be the O for Omega, the last letter of the Greek alphabet and a reference to Elizabeth as the last of the Tudor line.

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<sup>2</sup> These would be from the red squirrel. The grey squirrel was not introduced into England until the 19<sup>th</sup> century.

Nicholas had never met Levina's late cousin, but Levina had shown him her work, which was of the highest quality. Evidently the great Albrecht Dürer had bought one of Susannah's works way back in 1521 and ever since then she had used Dürer's A, with its bar across the top, as one way of identifying her work. Hillyarde's black enamelled phoenix now sat in the middle of the base of the A with the raised wings forming a V shaped cross bar and tiny enamelled red flames underlining the letter.

The whole creative process had gone quicker than he had hoped and he was now ready to place the portraits inside the ring. The portraits were the size of his little finger nail and, despite their minuteness, were good likenesses. The queen was dressed in black, with a ruff and a veil. Dudley also wore black and both wore a sombre expression. Nicholas thought it was obvious these portraits were not painted from life, but that had never been part of the commission. Despite there being no sittings, these were good likenesses.

He had decided to place the queen in the base and Robert Dudley in the lid, with each protected with a sliver of rock crystal. Cutting the crystal to fit had been terribly difficult, but he had finally achieved it and fixed the two transparent pieces in place with a seal of fine gold wire. By putting the queen in the base meant that she would be the first portrait to be seen.<sup>3</sup>

Tonight he had accepted Levina's invitation to join her family for the feast of St Nicholas, the patron saint of children. Even though they were Protestant the Teerlincs liked to celebrate this particular feast day and Nicholas was looking forward to sitting down with the family. He hoped a small wooden sabot filled with sweetmeats would, as in many previous years, be at his place at the table.

He gave the ring a final polish and checked the lid closed properly now the portraits were



inside, then wrapped it in blue silk before placing it in a small turned wooden box and slipping it into his pocket.

## EARLY JANUARY 1576

Lord Burghley was pleased to see the queen in such high spirits. The Christmas revels had been enjoyed by all and he wondered what the following months would bring. As Elizabeth's most trusted statesman Sir William had managed to steer the country to peaceful seas, avoiding wars and more importantly, together with the exploits of England's privateers and successful trading, the once empty Treasury coffers were now filling, albeit slowly. There was no immanent royal marriage, but he knew that was unlikely to happen no matter how hard Parliament pressed or the queen pretended she was 'in love' with the latest candidate for her hand.

<sup>3</sup> These two exquisite miniatures were sold at Bonhams in November 2009 for £72,000 (inc premium). They measure 10mm high ie just under the ½ inch.

Now Christmas was over he was free to return to Theobalds near Ware and he would visit Enfield Chase on his way. Sir John Astley (and his late wife) was devoted to the queen. Sir William remembered Sir John's wife with affection. Many times over the years he had wondered how she had put up with Elizabeth's moods. Like Sir William, the Astleys had been with Elizabeth through good times and bad and there were no royal secrets hidden from himself or Sir John.

The journey was not long, Enfield Chase being only thirteen miles or so from Westminster. Theobalds was only a few miles further on, but because it was January and the days were short, Sir William would stay the night at the royal hunting lodge. He was looking forward to enjoying some venison from the royal chase.

"Sir William, welcome." Sir John grasped the younger man's hands in his own. "come and warm yourself by the fire."

Sir John had first served the queen's father as a Gentleman Pensioner and now was an important member of Elizabeth's court as her Master of the Jewel House. Sir William ruminated on how another Master of the Jewel House had been instrumental in bringing down the queen's mother and thought it mildly ironic that a distant Boleyn relative now held the post, even if he was only related by marriage.

Sir William made himself comfortable in front of the fire.

"John, how's our charge?"

"Doing well, William. He's a quick study, but it's a shame we don't have the benefit of Ascham to unravel the mysteries of rhetoric and grammar to him. However, Southron is doing a fine job. Our charge is quite fluent in Latin, Italian and strangely, he finds Spanish easy, but he struggles with ancient Greek. When it comes to gentlemanly pursuits, our young man takes after his father and is a fine horseman as well as doing well with the sword."

The following morning Sir William shook hands with a serious fourteen year old.

"Sir William." The young man nodded in acknowledgment of the older man's presence, and stood with his hands on his hips. In many ways Sir William thought he resembled his maternal grandfather, especially in the way his eyes constantly shifted from person to person. His hair colour

came from his mother's side and he mused that the arrogance could come from either parent.

Sir William remembered how similar his own son Thomas had been at this age. Now a mature man, Thomas had been knighted and appointed High Sherriff of Nottingham in the last year. His second son, Robert, was twelve and, despite his disability, was showing similar signs of rebelling against his father's authority that Sir William knew would pass as Robert matured. More positively, Robert was very aware of politics and the delicacy of foreign diplomacy. Sir William hoped he would attend Cambridge as he had a keen mind and the family coffers were well able to fund a degree.

It seemed a shame Sir John's charge was not destined for university since from all reports he showed a genuine ability for languages and had an enquiring mind, but it had been determined that he was to be brought up as a gentleman.

"I understand you are quite a horseman."

"Sir William, riding gives me a sense of freedom I don't feel I'm allowed."

"When you were made a Ward of Court you became my charge and until you are of age, you will have to remain here at Enfield."

"Sir William, who were my parents? All Sir John ever says is that he never knew them. Mr Southron says the same, but I don't believe either of them. Did you know them?"

"As the Chancellor the Court of Wards, many children come under my care. I chose Sir John as your guardian and Mr Southron for the day to day care of you."

"I hardly remember Lady Katherine. Did she know my mother, Sir John?"

"I believe she may have when she was young." Sir John's reply was safe. "We married in 1545 and Lady Katherine decided she wanted to live somewhere away from the bustle of London."

"When I'm of age, I'd like to go abroad."

This statement caught both men off guard. They had not considered their charge might want to travel.

"I spent some time in Padua during the reign of Queen Mary and I can tell you that Europe is not a friendly place for Protestants." Sir John's reply was intended to dissuade the boy.

"Did you leave Lady Katherine here?" the young man asked. Sir William, more used to the



wiles of foreign diplomats using obscure questions to get some grain of useful information, could not understand why there seemed to be no consistency or direction to these questions.

Sir John nodded. "Unfortunately, I was not able to take her with me, but she was safe enough in England."

"Time will pass soon enough young man. In the meantime keep up with your studies. Sir John tells me that you are gaining some fluency in modern languages."

"I like the musicality of the Latin languages, but find Cyrillic script difficult to remember, so my Greek is not so good. I prefer studying the Latin texts and I particularly envy Cicero his friendship with Atticus."

"Have you been studying Cicero's letters?"

"I have and I think I would have liked Atticus."

"Why?" Sir William asked, intrigued that the letters between two ancient Romans had caught this young man's imagination.

"He was an equestrian knight, so I think he must have been a good horseman. Sir John gave me a copy of Xenophon's book on horsemanship because he thought it might help me with my Greek. He had to order it from Venice and I would love to see that city."

Again the jump of direction, but this time Sir William thought he could follow the line of thought. Clearly, here was someone who was interested in history.

"I may well be wrong, but I believe Atticus ended his days in Athens as an Epicurean while in Roman society he was what Xenophon would have called a Master of Horse. Hopefully your Greek studies will be easier now you have a book more appealing to your tastes. I remember having to translate great tracts of Xenophon's writing on the Peloponnesse Wars and finding it extremely tedious." Lord Burghley's reminiscences of his own Greek studies bored the young man.

Just before getting into his coach, Sir William reached into the folds of his surcoat and brought out the little wooden box.

"John, you will know when it is the most appropriate moment to give this. I hope he understands . . ."

Sir John examined the tiny portraits. "I presume this is by young Hillyarde?"

Sir William nodded. "Nicolas has great talent, but then I don't suppose Mistress Teerlinc would have suggested him as her successor if she didn't think he was up to the job."

"It's a shame Levina's health is not good, otherwise I'd ask her to visit here like she used to."

"I have all her sketches done as our charge grew." Sir William remembered how Mistress Teerlinc would visit first Enfield then Theobalds each year with a sketchbook full of drawings recording how this young lad had progressed.

"Is Hillyarde to be trusted?" Sir John asked as he turned the ring in his hands. He looked closely

at the enamelled letter A with its tiny black phoenix rising from its bed of red flames.

“Our young artist is not yet on my payroll, but remember who taught him. Like her, I believe discretion is his middle name.”

## 1588 : THE BEGINNING OF SEPTEMBER

Nicholas was not surprised to find Sir Francis Walsingham with Sir William, but he was surprised to see them both looking so solemn. It was not long since the defeat of the Spanish Armada and Spain no longer posed a threat, so their long faces suggested something was newly amiss. Nicholas wondered why it might involve him.

“Gentlemen, is it not good to see our queen so happy. Our enemies are defeated and our navy is victorious, but your faces tell me you are not celebrating.”

Reaching across the desk Sir William placed a small wooden box in front of the artist.

Nicholas recognised it immediately. He retrieved the ring and opened the engraved top. A younger queen than now and her then Master of Horse looked back at him.

“Gentleman, I haven’t seen this ring for many years, but I don’t understand.”

“We received it from Spain this morning.”

Sir William’s explanation only deepened the mystery. The most powerful man in England reached inside a drawer and this time produced a locket. Nicholas opened it and looked at the man who had had come to his workshop only a few years before calling himself Arthur Southron. He read the enigmatic motto, *Attici Amoris Ergo* and thought about the apparently nonsensical translation, ‘by, with, from or through the love of Atticus’.

“I thought this was to be given to Sir John Astley?”

“It was.” Sir Francis confirmed it had been safely delivered.

“I would like you to add the date of 1588.” Sir William said.

“Why?” Nicholas asked.

“The Phoenix is dead!” Sir Francis murmured softly. “England’s Rex quondam Rex futuris is no more.”<sup>4</sup>

These words confirmed the real identity of the man Nicholas had known as Arthur Southron., but had long suspected had another more familiar name.

“Philip of Spain murdered him in revenge for our navy defeating his precious Armada, but we have yet to tell the queen.”

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<sup>4</sup> Rex quondam rex futuris translates as The Once and Future King and pertains to King Arthur of legend,

who, according to the myth, will come again when England has need.

**Melanie Taylor** is the author of *The Truth of the Line* published by MadeGlobal Publishing and available through Amazon and all good book stores. It is also available as an audio book, narrated by Claire Ridgway.



*The Truth  
of The  
Line*  
Melanie V Taylor

# Claire Ridgway

## Tudor Cooking

### White Leach (Leech)

Have you been watching the series of Tudor cooking videos I've been making recently? I've been enjoying tasting food cooked from recipes from the Tudor era - they have all been excellent so far!

**Leech (leach)** was often part of the "banquet" course at feasts and was a sweet made from milk, sugar and rose-water, like a jelly or blancmange. In the Elizabethan book *The Good Housewife's Jewel*, Thomas Dawson gives a recipe for white leach:

"Take a quart of new milke, and three ounces weight of Isinglasse, halfe a pound of beaten suger, and stirre them together, and let boile halfe a quarter of an hower till it be thicke, stirring them all the while: then straine it with three spoonfuls of Rosewater, then put it into a platter and let it coole, and cut it into squares. Lay it fair in dishes, and lay golde upon it."

A modern version of this recipe featured on an episode called "Eat like a King" on Food Network Specials and was courtesy of Maureen Poole, Tudor Food Expert:

- 5 sheets leaf gelatin, or generous 1/2-ounce powered gelatin
- 1 English pint creamy milk (English pint = 20 fl. ounces: American pint = 16 fl. ounces)
- 1 tablespoon rose water
- 2 ounces sugar

If using powered gelatin, sprinkle it on 4 tablespoons of the milk in a small bowl. Stand basin in very hot water until gelatin dissolves. Heat the remaining milk with the rose water and sugar and add gelatin. Stir gently until sugar dissolves. If using leaf gelatin, soften in water for a few minutes before adding to milk and stirring until dissolved. Pour into flat dish and leave to set. Turn out of the dish and cut into lozenge shapes. Decorate with sugared flowers, or, if you wish to impress, edible gold leaf.

CLAIRE RIDGWAY



Quiz Answers!  
Did you spot them all?



ghost story winner



Every year, historical fiction author, Wendy J. Dunn, and Natalie Grueninger, author of *In the Footsteps of Anne Boleyn*, run a Tudor Ghost Story competition. This year the Tudor Society is proud to be able to publish the winning entry in this month's Tudor Life Magazine. Yes, we know that *last month was the spooky edition, but this is just the way it's all worked out!*

We hope that you enjoy "A Skeleton of a Ship in the Ghost of Water" and as Natalie says, that it gives you the shivers. (Ed: Claire Ridgway hopes you find it more frightening than the original medieval stories she shared in her "Claire Chats" video!)

Congratulations to **Katherine Marcella** for winning this year's contest and thank you for sharing your scary story.

# A SKELETON OF A SHIP IN THE GHOST OF WATER

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*by Katherine Marcella*

*October 11, 1982*

"Come on Louise! We'll miss the whole thing if you don't hurry!"

"I can't pedal any faster in this rain gear. Can't I take it off?"

"No, you can't. Someone will spot your school uniform and report us to Mrs Martin. Then we'll all get in trouble."

"We're going to be in trouble anyway."

"No, we won't. Anne will just say it's history and she wanted to see it, and Mrs Martin will excuse us as long as nobody else reports us."

"This is too much trouble. Can't we stop and have tea? Who wants to see some old shipwreck anyway?"

"Well, Anne wants to see it. If we stop for tea, we'll be too late. And you want to see Prince Charles don't you? He's there."

"Okay," Louise sighed and started pedaling again.

"And make it fast. Anne's probably already there."

Louise and Jane were both breathing heavily when they pulled up to the agreed-upon spot close to Southsea Castle. Anne Doyle was waiting on the shore, sitting on the grass with her knees pulled up, her arms wrapped around them. Her gaze was out to the water where a giant crane was being deployed to lift what was left of Henry VIII's flagship, the *Mary Rose*.

Louise glanced around the area and pouted. "Where's Prince Charles? There are too many boats to see where he is. Does my hair look okay?"

Jane elbowed her in the ribs. "Wherever he is, he's not going to be watching you, so who cares about your hair?"

Anne heard them and tore her eyes away from the crane. "I think he's on the barge. Did you bring the binoculars?"

Louise dug into her pocket. "Here they are!"

Jane looked at them disdainfully. "I thought you were bringing proper binoculars. Those are opera glasses."

"It's all we had. Mum bought them at a charity shop. She calls them binoculars."

"Well, I guess they'll have to do when there's something proper to look it. It shouldn't be long now."

Louise yelled, "There it goes! Right there!" The huge structure had been slowly inching its way upward. Now the yellow frame supporting what was left of the recovered ship broke the water. A screech of boat whistles and horns sounded, and a canon boomed from the castle near them causing Louise to drop the binoculars onto the sand.

"Here, give me those!" Maybe it was the urgent tone in Anne's voice or maybe because she hadn't been able to spot Prince Charles, but Louise passed them over immediately.

Anne lifted them and focused on the remains of the ship.

"That's what I thought. They never had a chance," she spoke softly. "The command to close the gun ports wasn't given or was ignored after they fired from the port side. They were turning to fire the starboard guns at the French. But the wind gusted and tipped them too far. They heeled over, took on water, and sank."

"That's it? Jane was skeptical. "They weren't blown up? They just fell over? Then why didn't the sailors just swim away?"

"A few swam off or clung to her mast, but most couldn't. They were trapped below decks by the anti-boarding nets."

"The what?"

"The ship had netting to prevent the French from coming aboard if they got close enough. But it just trapped the crew inside and they drowned like rats."

"How could you possibly know that? You weren't there."

Anne lowered the binoculars and stood up. "Come on. That's all to see. There's time for tea and a sausage roll before we start back if you'd like."

Louise's eyes lit up as she righted her bicycle.

Anne smiled to herself. She had handled that well.

\* \* \*

*19 April 2001*

"Fourth form, we'll have twenty minutes here before we go down to the museum. Use your time wisely."

I ignored the general murmurs of assent and pressed my nose to one of the large windows. The screens on the other side blocked out most of the view. Cupping my hands around my eyes to cut out the side light helped. What was left of the *Mary Rose* was propped up on scaffolding in a darkened room. Sprays of water and chemicals shot out at her from several directions and lingered in the air as billows of heavy mist. The ship was backlit by one weak light that shone through the gaps of her planking. The planks themselves poked up like broken ribs.

It looked like the skeleton of a ship in the ghost of water. Oh, that was a good one. I'd have to remember it to tell Mum. Maybe she could use it in one of her books.

As my eyes adjusted to the dark, I could see movement: just scamperings along the planks at first. But when I concentrated I could pick out people standing where the decks would have been. They must be the conservators. But they didn't look like conservators, and, surely the wreck wouldn't support all that weight. Re-enactors? They seemed to be wearing costumes. No, that would have been silly. They would have gotten all wet. I sighed. I had really been hoping there was a rational explanation,

but I knew there wasn't one. These people were the crew of the *Mary Rose*.

I should have expected it. Sudden violent deaths lead to spirits unable or unwilling to make a transition. That's what Mum thought. They continued with their lives as they always had, not wanting to admit they were dead. I watched them, fascinated with how absorbed they seemed to be with whatever it was they were doing, as if the entire ship was still there...

"Daft Lucy is seeing ghosties again!" The shriek echoed down the broad viewing gallery. I tried not to hear the laughter that followed. I should be used to it by now, but it still hurt.

"Fourth form, queue up. And that means you too, Betsy Waller and Lucy Hughes. We'll walk down to the museum."

I took my place in the queue and refused to acknowledge the sharp poke in my ribs or the hiss in my ear. *Daft Lucy!* Mum was right. I should never have told anybody what I could see.

\* \* \*

*28 July 2015*

"Excuse me ... are you all right?"

The sound pounded me in waves. I heard words but couldn't make sense of them. I was too deep, the distance too crushing. The sound – or was it a light now – was too far above, flickering, now here, now there. I tried to focus on it and claw my way up, hand over hand, arm over arm, feet kicking wildly. After what seemed an eternity, I broke the surface to find it wasn't light or sound. A man's face swam into focus. It was a longish face, regular features, and topped with a thatch of dark blond hair. The blue eyes staring at me showed concern.

I opened my mouth but managed to produce only a low moan. Maybe if I could figure out what had happened ... I was on a bench, seated but doubled over, elbows to knees, shaking and gasping for air. The papers I had been carrying were scattered across the floor around my feet.

"Take your time." His voice was soothing.

I nodded and started to release my cramped muscles one at a time, stretching arms and legs until I could sit up straight. I was still gasping, so I shifted my attention to breathing.

"Yes, that's it. Deep breaths. Do you think you can stand up? I'll help you. Come on, I think I have just what you need."

I still couldn't trust my voice, but I let myself be led into one of the restoration labs in the lower floors of the Mary Rose Museum where my rescuer sat me down carefully at a large work table. He then moved quickly to a small kitchen area where he put a kettle to boil on a gas ring and pulled together a tray of tea things

I was better by the time my rescuer brought the tea tray to the table and poured two mugs out.

"No lemon, I'm afraid. I hope milk will do. And I suspect you haven't have had lunch, have you?" He looked me carefully in the face. "No, I didn't think so. You must have sugar then and a ginger biscuit or two." He spooned sugar in my mug and opened the biscuit tin, shaking out several biscuits on a plate that he pushed across to me.

"Oh, I'm sorry, I haven't introduced myself ... Jeffrey Elkins." He extended a hand.

I took it immediately. "Of course, one of the metallurgists from Cambridge. You're here early. The project isn't starting up until next week. I managed a small smile at the surprise on his face. "I wrote up the press release last month. I didn't know any of the team had arrived already."

He lifted his mug to me. "And you must be L.A. Hughes, Public Relations and Media Enquiries?"

I laughed. "Obviously." That was what my badge read. "Though I generally go by Lucy Hughes. And I owe you an apology and an explanation. I've just always had a bad reaction to seeing blood. I try to avoid it, but I can't always, so sometimes ..."

"You see them, don't you?"

*Daft Lucy. Daft Lucy.*

"I don't know what you mean." My voice sounded tight, the words clipped. "As I said, I've always had a bad reaction to seeing blood. The doctors say it isn't serious, but I get very light-headed. And I need to thank you for helping me. That was kind of you. This tea is delicious." I took a swallow. "It is exactly what I needed." I smiled as my mother had always suggested and tried to change the subject. "Is it a private blend?"

"There's no blood out there. It's just residual. It's attached to that rather wicked-looking saw that went into the temporary display case this morning,

the one you must have walked past to get to where I found you."

Jeffery Elkins fingered his own tea mug and spoke softly. "The man whose blood you saw was a gunner named John Cobb. His hand and forearm were crushed when a canon broke loose and pinned his arm against one of the timber frames, or a 'futtock' as he calls it. The wound developed gangrene, and the surgeon on the ship had to amputate it to save his life. Something went wrong though – I suspect they didn't cauterize it properly – and he bled to death. That's why you see all the blood."

"How could you have known that?"

"The common term for it is psychometry. I can't physically see anything, but I can read histories, memories if you will, attached to objects. That saw belonged to a barber surgeon. And no, it wasn't the *Mary Rose's* surgeon. He acquired these instruments after the death of the previous owner, the one who did the amputation. I'm not sensing any later memories than the one you can see and I can – for lack of a better word – intuit. I generally don't talk about it much. I don't think most people could understand. It's nice when I find somebody who can."

My words gushed out. "He was a strong man, John Cobb, barrel-chested, with thick arm muscles. He had skimpy blond hair pulled back behind his ears and a reddish complexion and close-clipped beard. I think they had to get him drunk before the amputation. He looked glassy-eyed, almost unconscious. And, as you said, there was a lot of blood." I shuddered slightly. "Poor man."

"Don't you have a great deal of difficulty working here? There must be a lot of them around?"

I nodded. "More than you probably expect. But it's not bad. Most drowned, so there's no blood. The ones still here generally just go about their business and don't interact with any live people. I occasionally see one look up with a puzzled expression, as if he's suddenly become aware of the visitors and wonders what is going on. I can't get any information from them like you can and like my mother can."

"So you inherited it?"

"Yes, I believe so. She writes popular history books under her maiden name, Anne Doyle. She uses her ability for that. You'll have to meet her

some time when she comes down to Ports—.” I caught sight of my watch and cursed under my breath. “I’m going to be late for a meeting ... My papers?” I looked around me.

“Here.” He handed me my folder. “I picked them all up. I’m afraid I might have stepped on some of them though.”

“That’s not a problem. It was just some notes I had made. They’re replaceable.” I rose to leave. “Thank you. You helped me more than you know.”

He smiled. “Do come back again for tea. In fact,” he paused, “Would you like to go out for a glass of wine after work one day next week.

“Yes, I’d like that.” *In fact I’d like that a lot*, I thought as I headed for the lift and up to the main level.

I loved the new museum. It was so much larger than the one from my school days. The ship, now free of its water and chemical bath, was the centerpiece, as she had once been of Henry VIII’s navy. The main level was always busy in summer. I inched my way through the crowds, marveling at the variety of languages to be heard. Some studies on the bones of the crew members suggested that

many weren’t English. And Admiral George Carew, the commander of the *Mary Rose* the day she sank was reported to have complained, “I have the sort of knaves I cannot rule!” Perhaps the ship’s decks sounded like the museum now did?

One voice floated up from the cacophony: a child’s voice, a small boy, American I thought. He was behind me, near the *Mary Rose* herself. I didn’t turn around. I didn’t need to.

“But there *are* pirates there! There are! Can’t you see them? They’re all over the ship. Why can’t you see them?”

“Aidan, please. I need some coffee before we catch the train back to London.” That was almost certainly his mother.

“But there *are* pirates. I can see them!

“Listen, we’ve seen the whole museum and you know this was a war ship. It never had pirates on it.” I could hear her exasperation. “You watch far too many pirate movies. That’s why you see them all the time where there aren’t any. Maybe one day you’ll realise the truth is far more interesting than those movies.”

*Yes, maybe one day, everybody will realise that...*

Daughter of a U.S. Air Force pilot, **Katherine Marcella** grew up all over North America and Europe. A fascination with all things Tudor took root early and never left.

She likes to think of herself as a “Tudor whisperer,” though software engineering pays the bills. Now living in suburban Washington D.C., she splits her spare time between genealogy research and trying to finish her first novel, a thriller set against the backdrop of the Spanish Armada.

# A Shakespearean Christmas Banquet

BY OLGA HUGHES

You may find more sweethearts than sweets in William Shakespeare's works. Although there are few lengthy descriptions of food and feast in Shakespeare's plays, they are heavy in food imagery - a candied tongue, a bitter sweetening, a sharp sauce, a withered pear. Here and there we see mentions of pies and pasties, buttered eggs and beef and mustard, strawberries and apples and warden pears and fines herbs. Despite the fact they ate many dishes we

would now find unpalatable, there are many humble and comforting culinary delights of of Elizabethan England that we still enjoy today.

The word 'banquet' had two meanings in the Elizabethan era. One was, as we recognise today, a grand meal. The second meaning was for a dessert course of luxurious sweets, eaten in a different room from the dining room. The idea developed from the aristocracy in the middle ages, who would retire to another room to allow the dining hall to be cleared and the servants to eat. As 'servants' often included the nobility

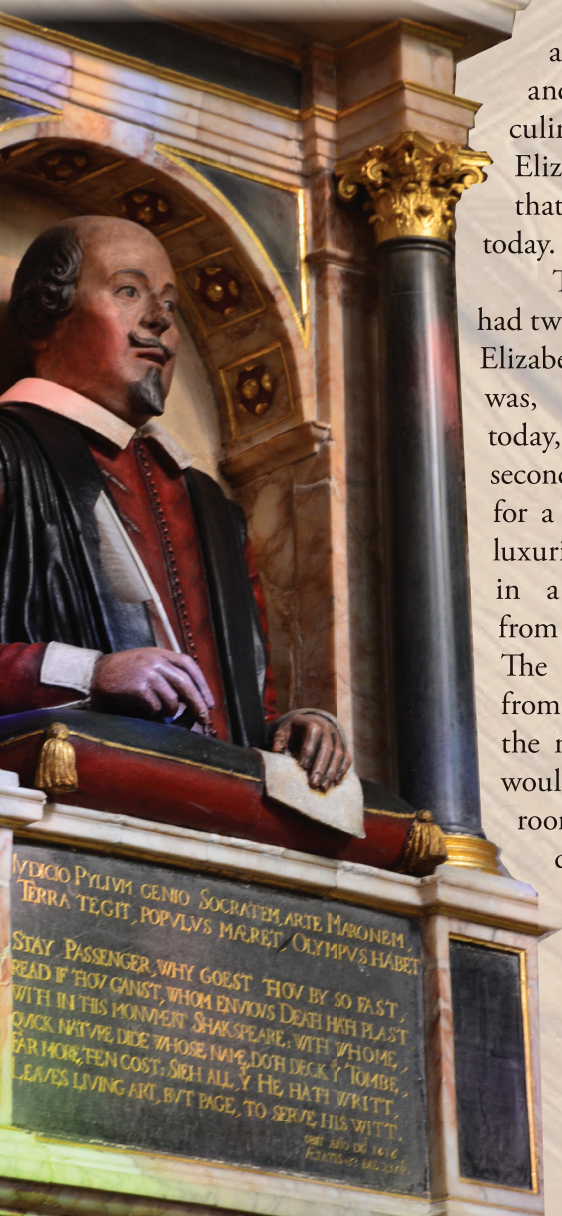
serving in ceremonial positions, guests would wait until the servants had finished their meal. This was called the 'void', and thus the separate course of wine and spices, and later dessert, evolved.

The aristocracy, of course, found ways to develop the banquet into a spectacular culinary adventure, building elaborate banquet houses to host them. Bess of Hardwick's Hardwick Hall boasts six banqueting houses on the roof. Sir John Thynne had four built on the roof of Longleat house. John Parkinson describes a wonderfully unique banquet house nestled in an ancient lime tree.

*And I have seen at Cobham in Kent a tall or great bodied Lime tree, bare without boughes for eight foote high, and then the branches were spread round about so orderly, as if it were done by art, and brought to compose that middle Arbour: And from those boughes the body was bare againe for eight or nine foote (wherein might be placed half a hundred men at the least, as there might likewise in that underneath this) and then another rowe of branches to encompass a third Arbour, with stares made for the purpose to this and that underneath it: upon the boughes were laid boards to tread upon which was the goodliest spectacle mine eyes ever beheld for a tree to carry.<sup>1</sup>*

A magical sight indeed. Modern families might have to make do with a lovely centrepiece, but good food and good company is, of course, the most important element of your banquet. So now in the 'void' we clear the table, wash the dishes and have a rest after a big meal, before we brew a pot of tea and lay the table for dessert. Here are some sweet ideas inspired by the Bard for an Elizabethan-style holiday banquet.

1 from *Paradisi in Sole* in Sim, Alison, *Food and Feast in Tudor England*, Sutton 1997, pp. 139



# Strawberries

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Henry V

*Ely: The strawberry grows underneath the nettle,*

*And wholesome berries thrive and ripen best  
Neighbour'd by fruit of baser quality*

Real strawberries, rather than the metaphorical sort, also feature in *The Tragedy of King Richard III*, in the infamous meeting that led to the summary execution of Lord Hastings. The Bard based his scene on Sir Thomas More's account of it, with Richard sending the Bishop of Ely to his garden to fetch some strawberries.

## To Make a Tarte of Strawberries Thomas Dawson, 1596

*Wash your strawberries, and put them  
into your Tarte, and season them with  
sugar, cinnamon and Ginger, and put  
in a little red wine into them.*<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>2</sup> Dawson, Thomas, *The Good Housewife's Jewel*, Southover Press 1996. pp. 75

## No Bake Strawberries and Cream Tart

250g plain sweet biscuits  
2 teaspoons ground ginger  
1 teaspoon ground cinnamon  
150g unsalted butter  
250g cream cheese, softened  
1/2 cup sour cream  
1/2 cup icing sugar  
500g small strawberries, hulled  
2 tbsp red wine (fruity)  
2 tbsp sugar

Combine strawberries, sugar and wine in a bowl. Cover with cling film and leave to rest for 30 minutes.

Melt butter. Process biscuits, ground ginger and cinnamon in a food processor until finely crushed. Add melted butter until combined. Press mixture into a 20cm flan tin and chill for 30 minutes.

Beat cream cheese, sour cream and icing sugar with an electric mixer until smooth. Spoon mixture into the prepared pastry case. Top with strawberries. Refrigerate overnight for best results.

# Warden Pears

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*clown:I must have saffron to colour the  
warden pies; mace; dates?--none, that's out  
of my note; nutmegs, seven; a race or two of  
ginger, but that I may beg; four pound of  
prunes, and as many of raisins o' the sun.*

*-Winter's Tale, III*

Warden pears were a type of hard pear that had to be cooked before eating. They are thought to be named after the Cistercian Abbey of Warden in Bedfordshire. They were popular as they stored well for long periods, and were most often used in pies and preserves.

## To make a Tarte of Wardens, Thomas Dawson, 1596

*You must bake your Wardens first in a Pie, and  
then take all the wardens and cut them in four  
quarters, and core them, and put them into  
a Tarte pinched, with your Sugar, and season  
them with Sugar, Cinnamon and Ginger,  
and set them in the oven, and put no core on  
them, but you must cut a cover and lay in the*

*Tart when it is baked, and butter the Tarte  
and the cover too, and adorn it with sugar.*<sup>3</sup>

Wardens are very difficult to find now, but any pear should do for this recipe.

## ‘Warden’ Pie

### For the Pastry:

250g plain flour  
1/2 cup caster sugar  
140g chilled butter, chopped  
1 egg, beaten lightly  
2 tsp iced water (approx)

### Filling:

6 pears, peeled, cored, sliced  
30g sultanas  
1 tbsp currants  
1/3 cup sugar  
1/2 tsp ginger  
1/4 tsp cinnamon  
1/8 tsp nutmeg

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3 *Ibid* pp. 73

## A Plum, A Cherry, A Fig

*Constance: Give grandam kingdom, and it  
grandam will*

*Give it a plum, a cherry, and a fig:  
There’s a good grandam.*

*King John II, I*

Fruits, fresh and preserved, were increasingly popular in Elizabethan times. Thomas Dawson mentions quinces, gooseberries, peaches, melons and ‘pompones’, lemons, oranges and ‘pomecitrons’, apples, wardens, strawberries and edible flowers. He gives simple instructions for preserving fruit.

**To preserve all kinds of fruits, that they shall not break in the preserving of them, Thomas Dawson, 1596**

*Take a platter that is plain at the bottom,  
and lay sugar in the bottom, then cherries or  
any other fruit. And so between every row you  
lay, throw sugar. And set it upon a pots head  
and cover it with a dish, and so let it boil.*<sup>4</sup>

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4 *Ibid* pp. 108

Combine pears, sugar and spices in a bowl and leave to rest.

To make the pastry: place flour and butter in a food processor and process until crumbly. Add egg and enough water for the dough to form a ball. Turn out onto a floured surface and knead lightly until smooth. Wrap in cling film and refrigerate for 30 minutes.

Divide pastry dough into two, one piece larger than the other. Roll out base to line a 24 cm pie dish, allowing excess to overhang. Gently place the filling in the case. Roll a 25 cm circle for the pastry top. Crimp edges of pastry together with your fingers. Chill for 30 minutes. Preheat oven to 180°C/160°C fan forced.

Brush top of pie with beaten egg and sprinkle with caster sugar. Cut four small vents in the centre of the pie and bake for 45 minutes or until golden brown.

The secret to a really good mixed fruit crumble is not over-cooking the fruit, so you get a burst of flavour with each bite.

## Festive fruit crumble

### Filling:

400g apples, peeled, cored and cut into chunks  
400g plums, stoned, cut into wedges  
300g cherries, frozen or fresh, whole, pitted  
200g figs trimmed and quartered  
2 tbsp sugar  
1 tsp lemon zest  
lemon juice, to taste

### Topping:

150g (1 cup) plain flour  
100g (1/2 cup, firmly packed) brown sugar  
100g chilled butter, chopped  
50g (1/2 cup) rolled oats  
60g (1/2 cup) chopped walnuts

Preheat oven to 180°C/160°C fan forced. Combine the flour, sugar, butter and oats in a bowl. Rub the butter into the flour mixture until crumbly.

Stir in the walnuts. Spoon fruit into a baking dish, top with sugar, lemon zest and juice. Scatter

crumble topping over the fruit. Bake for 45 minutes or until topping is golden and fruit is bubbling.

## Syllabub

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*Falstaff: Give me a cup of sack: I am a rogue,  
if I drunk to-day.  
- Henry IV, I, II*

Falstaff is very fond of sack, a sweet fortified wine imported from Spain. Syllabub also makes rather sinister appearance in Shakespeare's plays, with Lady Macbeth drugging some guards' possets. Kenelm Digby's recipe for syllabub contains Falstaff's beloved sack.

### To Make a Whip Syllabub, Kenelm Digby, 1669

*Take the whites of two Eggs, and a pint  
of Cream, six spoonfuls of Sack, as much  
Sugar as will sweeten it; then take a  
Birchen rod and whip it; as it riseth with  
froth, skim it, and put it into the Syllabub*

*pot; so continue it with whipping and  
skimming, till your Syllabub pot be full.* <sup>5</sup>

Syllabub has evolved to a more solid dessert, but this allows us to eat to from a glass rather than sucking the wine from the spout of a posset pot.

### Lemon Syllabub

300 ml double cream  
50 gms caster sugar  
50 ml sweet white wine  
1 tbsp finely grated lemon zest  
and a little extra to garnish.  
3 tbsp lemon juice

Gently heat the lemon juice, zest and sugar. Stir in the wine. Cool. Whip the cream until soft peaks form. Fold into the wine mixture. Spoon into your favourite glasses, garnish with lemon zest and chill until ready to serve.

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<sup>5</sup> Anne MacDonnell (ed), Digby, Kenelm, *The Closet of Sir Kenelm Digby Knight Opened*, Amazon Digital Services, pp. 84

## Shortcakes and Gingerbread

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*Sir Toby Belch: Out o' tune, sir. You  
lie. Art any more than a steward? Dost  
thou think, because thou art virtuous,  
there shall be no more cakes and ale?*

*Fool: Yes, by Saint Anne, and ginger shall be  
hot i' the mouth too.  
- Twelfth Night, II, III*

The cakes referred to by Sir Toby and the clown are probably Shrewsbury Cakes, a type of shortcake spiced with ginger. John Murrell's recipe calls for nutmeg.

### To Make Shrewsbury Cakes, John Murrell, 1621

*Take a quart of very fine flower, eight ounces  
of fine sugar beaten and cersed, twelve ounces  
of sweet butter, a Nutmeg grated, two or three  
spoonfuls of Damask rose-water, worke all these  
together with your hands as hard as you can  
for the space of half an houre, then roule it in  
little round Cakes, about the thickness of three  
shillings one upon another, then take a silver  
Cup or glass some four inches over, and cut the  
cakes in them, then strowe some flower upon*

*white papers and lay them upon them, and  
bake them in an Oven as hot as for Manchet.* <sup>6</sup>

## To Make Short Cake Thomas Dawson, 1597

*Take wheat flower, of the fairest you can  
get, and put it in an earthen pot, and stop it  
close, and set it in an oven and bake it, and  
when it is baked, it will be full of clods, and  
therefore ye must searce it through a searce  
(sieve): the flower will have as long baking  
as a pastie of venison. When you have done  
this, take clotted creame, or else sweet Butter,  
but creame is better, then take Sugar, Cloves,  
Mace, and Saffron, and the yolke of an Egge  
for one dozen of Cakes one yolke is enough:  
then put all these foresaid things together into  
the cream, & temper them al together, then  
put them to your flower and so make your  
Cakes, your paste will be very short, therefore  
ye must make your Cakes very little: when  
ye bake your cakes, ye must bake them upon  
papers, after the drawing of a batch of bread.* <sup>7</sup>

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6 from *A Delightfull Daily Exercise for Ladies and Gentlewomen* in Robin Howe (ed), Groundspeace, Zara, Mrs. Groundes-Peace's *Old Cookery Notebook*, David and Charles, 1971 pp. 100

7 from *The good Huswifes Handmaide for the Kitchin* in Robin Howe(ed), Groundspeace, Zara, Mrs. Groundes-

My favourite recipe for shortbread is rather less complicated, with just three ingredients.

## Shortbread

125g butter  
55g caster sugar, plus extra to finish  
180g plain flour  
Dash vanilla extract

Preheat oven to 180°C/160°C fan forced. Beat the butter and the sugar together until smooth. Work in the flour until you get a smooth paste. Turn out onto a floured surface and gently roll out until the paste is 1cm/½in thick. Cut into rounds or fingers, dust with a little caster sugar and refrigerate for 20 minutes. Bake in the oven for 15-20 minutes, or until pale golden-brown.

You can add whatever you like to this versatile shortbread. Add one tablespoon of finely chopped fresh lavender and one tablespoon of finely chopped mint for a fragrant biscuit.

*Perdita: This youth should say, 'twere well,  
and only therefore  
Desire to breed by me. — Here's flowers for  
you;  
Hot lavender, mints, savory, marjoram;  
The marigold, that goes to bed with the sun,  
The Winter's Tale, IV, IV*

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*Peace's Old Cookery Notebook*, David and Charles, 1971 pp. 101 -

## Gingerbread

*Costard: An I had but one penny in the world,  
thou shouldst have it to buy gingerbread.  
Love's Labour's Lost, V, I*

Gervase Markham supplies two recipes for gingerbread, one is for "coarse" gingerbread. They are typically heavy-handed with the spices, calling for equal amounts of liquorice, aniseeds, ginger, and cinnamon.

## To make Gingerbread, Gervase Markham, 1615

Take claret wine and colour it with turnsole, and put in sugar and set it to the fire, then take wheat bread finely grated and sifted, and liquorice, aniseeds, ginger, and cinnamon beaten very small and searced; and put your bread and your spice all together, and put them into the wine and boil it and stir it until it be thick; then mould it and print it at your pleasure, and let it stand neither too moist nor too warm.<sup>8</sup>

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8 Michael R. Best, ed., Markham, Gervase, *The English Housewife*, McGill-Queen's University press, 2013, pp

## How to make coarse gingerbread, Gervase Markham, 1615

To make coarse gingerbread, take a quart of honey and set it on the coals and refine it: then take a pennyworth of ginger, as much pepper, as much liquorice; and a quarter pound of aniseeds, and a pennyworth of sanders: all these must be beaten and searced, and so put into the honey, then put in a quarter of a pint of claret wine or old ale: then take three penny mantels finely grated and strew it amongst the rest, and stir it till it come to a stiff paste, and then make it into cakes and dry them gently.<sup>9</sup>

As you can see Markham's coarse gingerbread also uses black pepper, which is a lovely addition to a good spicy gingerbread but seldom used in the commercial varieties. I like a plenty of spice in my gingerbread biscuits, made on the day and served with a simple dusting of icing sugar. You can adjust the sides to suit your taste.

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111

9 *Ibid* pp. 113

## Gingerbread Biscuits

4 1/2 cups self raising flour  
3 tsp ground ginger  
2 tsp ground cinnamon  
1 tsp ground clove  
1 tsp ground nutmeg  
1/2 tsp freshly ground black pepper (optional)  
185 gm butter, chopped coarsely  
1 cup dark brown sugar  
1/2 cup treacle  
2 eggs

Place flour, butter and spices in a food processor, process until crumbly. Add sugar, treacle and enough egg for dough to form a ball. Turn out onto a floured surface and knead until smooth. Wrap in cling film and refrigerate for 30 minutes.

Preheat oven to 180°C/160°C fan forced.

Roll dough between sheets of baking paper to 5mm thick. Peel off the top layer of baking paper and cut out shapes as desired. Refrigerate for twenty minutes. Bake for 10-12 minutes, keeping a careful eye on them.

# !Happy Christmas!

A very Happy Holidays to all of our Tudor Society members, and I look forward to talking with you all in the new year!

**OLGA HUGHES AND NERDALICIOUS**

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# Make your own Festive Tudor Fireplace

Using the page on the right, you can cut out the fireplace seen in the image below and imagine you're toasty and warm in front of a Tudor fireplace, just like Henry and Anne are!

Don't forget to send us photos of your scene and we'll include them in future editions of the magazine!



fold and  
glue  
for  
sides

fold and  
glue  
for  
sides



fold  
up for  
the  
floor  
in  
front

carefully  
cut the  
black  
dotted  
lines  
and fold  
back for  
the inside  
edges and  
sides etc.



stick the fire  
at  
the front



use this for the back of the fireplace

## FESTIVE TUDOR FIREPLACE



# Charlie

## Mary Tudor: England's First Queen Regnant

# on Books



MARY Tudor is often overshadowed by her younger sister, Elizabeth I, and, when she *is* mentioned, it is often with negative connotations. Mary I was the first queen to rule in her own right without much opposition. Queens had tried to rule previously – for example, the disputed Queen Matilda, daughter of Henry I, in the 12th century – but they had struggled because female rulers were seen as ‘unnatural things’. Certain people, such as Gregory Slys, author of *Mary Tudor: England's First Queen Regnant*, feel that Mary should be reassessed in light of the times and that her reputation as ‘bloody’ is undeserved. In this book, Slys aims to revise this view of her and provide a more balanced view of Mary.

Gregory Slys's book on Mary Tudor is split into three parts and seems to be more of a reinterpretation of her life and reign than a biography. As he explains, ‘the first part focuses on the historiography on the Marian period, and seeks to highlight the reasons behind the misrepresentation of the Marian reign... the second part focuses on the years of her childhood, adolescence and early adulthood, tracing her long journey from a pampered child to England's first queen regnant. The final part of the study traces the restoration of Catholicism to England as well as discussing the suppression of Protestantism, the most contentious

policy with which the Marian administration has been associated’.

The first section of the book is mainly about how the views and portrayals of Mary changed over time, particularly with the changing religion of the monarchy from Catholic to Protestant. He explains why Mary's reputation was kept intact during Elizabeth I's reign, despite the change in religions and the seemingly relative freedom to express those views. Slys's book is very well researched and it shows in this part of the book in particular. However, I did find it hard to read at times and it is not for the faint-hearted, so it may have to be read in the sections in which Slys has divided it with breathers between.

The second section of the book, entitled ‘Pawn and Victim’, is more of a biography than the other sections. Slys describes Mary's relationship with her mother, Katherine of Aragon, and also inevitably explores a large part of Katherine's life. He mentions how life was different in Castile, how women were just as important as men in relation to the throne. Katherine's husband and Mary's father, Henry VIII, on the other hand, ‘lived in hope that Katherine could still produce a male heir to safeguard the Tudor dynasty and consequently did not formally acknowledge Mary as his heir’. Slys then explores Mary's position in her early years and how the lack of a male sibling affected her life, as well as exploring other people that might

# Mary Tudor

England's first Queen Regnant

*Truth is the Daughter of Time*

have influenced her, such as Juan Luis Vives, the renowned Spanish humanist scholar.

Mary's position became particularly difficult after the annulment of Henry VIII's marriage to her mother and his subsequent marriage to Anne Boleyn. Slysyz makes it clear how confusing a time this would have been for Mary, saying, 'Mary was legitimate under canon law, given that she was born of parents who at the time of her birth were unaware of any impediments to their marriage. Henry let it be known, however, that to all intents and purposes she was a bastard and that he would treat her as such on account of her disobedience to his will.' Legislation meant that Mary was treated differently and that Henry and Anne's children were moved to first place in the line of succession.

Slysyz also explores Mary's relationship with her siblings, Elizabeth and Edward, and how their religious views differed. When Edward VI became king, Mary had to be careful regarding how she expressed her religious views, despite the king being her brother. This, along with her apparent illegitimacy, resulted in a conspiracy which 'sought to disinherit Mary as well as Elizabeth – Mary on account of her illegitimacy, which Henry never explicitly reversed... in favour of Edward's Protestant cousin, the great-granddaughter of Henry VIII, Lady Jane Grey'. There is then an in-depth explanation of the events: Lady Jane Grey's nine day reign and imprisonment, as well as what led to Mary eventually taking the crown.

In his final section, Slysyz aims to shed some light on Mary's policies and why perhaps they are still so controversial, as well as the role of religion generally in the period before and during Mary's reign. He talks about Mary's involvement with the translation of Erasmus's *Paraphrases* on the New Testament, a fact which some excuse, saying that Henry VIII's sixth queen, Katherine Parr, pressured Mary into it. However, as Slysyz points out, 'The fact that when she did become queen she did not include the *Paraphrases* on any list of proscribed texts is further evidence not only of her enthusiastic collaboration with Katherine in their translation but also of her willingness to embrace theological revisions, albeit modest ones that did not encroach on any core doctrines.'

Slysyz successfully debates and questions the view that Mary was a staunch Catholic and unable to



Gregory Slysyz

accept reforms. A new side of Mary is shown in this book; the scholar who didn't just blindly follow her faith, although it was a large part of her life.

One of my favourite things about this book is how dedicated Slysyz is to redeeming Mary's reputation, even using her motto 'truth is the daughter of time' as part of the title. It clearly shows the reader what he is aiming to do and may give them something positive about her to remember, instead of the awful nickname 'Bloody Mary'.

This book is very scholarly and so may not suit the general reader. It mentions many times how views on Mary's reputation and religion have changed throughout history and so can sometimes be hard to get into and read for long periods of time. However, it is also fascinating to read how views of historical figures change over time. Slysyz covers all of the major historians that have mentioned Mary throughout the centuries and how their views vastly differ, making the reader wonder if we will ever know what Mary was truly like.

**CHARLIE FENTON**

# DECEMBER FEAST DAYS

## ADVENT

The four weeks of Advent began on Advent Sunday, the fourth Sunday before the Nativity, and was a time of fasting, i.e. abstaining from meat. Christmas Eve was even stricter than the rest of

advent, with no meat, cheese or eggs being eaten, until after midnight mass when it was officially Christmas Day.

## 6 DECEMBER – FEAST OF ST NICHOLAS

The 6<sup>th</sup> December was and is the feast of St Nicholas, or St Nicholas of Myra, the 4<sup>th</sup> century Bishop of Myra (modern-day Demre in Turkey), who is the patron saint of children, as well as sailors, merchants, archers, repentant thieves, brewers, pawnbrokers and students. In medieval and Tudor times, it was traditional for a choirboy to be chosen on 6<sup>th</sup> December or Childermas (Holy Innocents' Day) as "Boy Bishop" to act as bishop and to lead processions around communities, collecting money for the church and parish funds, and to lead some religious services.

As Ronald Hutton points out in his book, *The Stations of the Sun*, this tradition was "a reaffirmation of Christ's own teaching about the special relationship of children to the kingdom of heaven, and of the Church's especial respect for innocence and purity – a celebration of norms" and that it was also widespread: "it is therefore attested at every cathedral in Britain at which a medieval archive has survived."

Henry VII presented money to his "St Nicholas Bishop", a boy chosen from the choirboys of the Chapel Royal, and the giving of money to one particular chorister continued on St Nicholas's Day even after King Henry VIII banned the Boy Bishop tradition. It appears that Henry put an end to the tradition because it could be seen as mocking Church authorities and therefore the king himself, seeing as he was now head of the Church. Although

the tradition made a brief return in Mary I's Catholic reign, it disappeared again in Elizabeth I's reign.

The Boy Bishop tradition continues today in the Cathedrals of Hereford and Salisbury. At Hereford Cathedral, a teenager is elected as "Boy Bishop" from the cathedral choristers and takes his throne at the Choral Evensong service on the Sunday nearest to 6<sup>th</sup> December. Calendar Customs website explains: "His reign lasts for three weeks and in this time he plays an important part in services, wearing full episcopal regalia, in a tradition that here goes back to the thirteenth century." This year, the service takes place on Sunday 6<sup>th</sup> December at 3.30pm – see <http://www.herefordcathedral.org/2015-advent-and-christman-schedule>

At Salisbury Cathedral, a chorister assumes the role of Boy Bishop during Evensong on the Sunday nearest to St Nicholas's Day in a special ceremony which involves the Bishop of Sherborne giving the boy, who is dressed in replica Bishop's regalia, his staff and ring and installing him on the throne. The Boy Bishop then leads the prayers, blesses the congregation and receives the collection, as well as writing and delivering his own sermon.

Another tradition associated with St Nicholas's Day, and also Shrovetide, from Tudor times onwards is "barring out". Schoolboys would lock their schoolmasters out of the school and take possession of the place until the schoolmaster met certain demands.

## 8 DECEMBER – FEAST OF THE IMMACULATE CONCEPTION

This feast day was not celebrating the immaculate conception of Christ, it was celebrating the immaculate conception of his mother, the Virgin Mary, in the womb of her mother, St Anne. Mary's

immaculate conception meant that she was conceived free of the taint of original sin, unlike other women.

## 21 DECEMBER – ST THOMAS'S DAY

The winter solstice was also the feast day of St Thomas the Apostle, also known as Didymus and "Doubting Thomas". As Sophie Jackson points out in *The Medieval Christmas*, Thomas was a carpenter

and "was revered for his generosity", so on his feast day it was traditional for old women, children and the poor to "go Thomasing", i.e. walk the streets collecting alms.

## 24 DECEMBER – CHRISTMAS EVE

On Christmas Eve, a log known as the Yule log was brought into the home. The yule log tradition dates back to Tudor times, although it is thought that the tradition has its roots in the midwinter rituals of the early Vikings who built huge bonfires for their festival of light. The men of the house would go out to the local forest on Christmas Eve, find a huge log, decorate it with ribbons and drag it home to burn throughout the twelve days of Christmas.

It was a central part of the Christmas festivities, as the family would gather around the hearth, and the men bringing in the log would be welcomed with hot spiced ale by the women of the house. People thought it was lucky to keep some charred remains of the Yule log to light the next year's Yule log.

The chocolate Yule Logs that we see in the shops at Christmas time are a reminder of this old tradition.

## 25 DECEMBER – CHRISTMAS DAY AND THE START OF THE TWELVE DAYS OF CHRISTMAS

The fasting of advent was now over and this was a day to celebrate. Christmas Day was the first day of the Twelve Days of Christmas. Work for those who worked on the land would stop and spinners were banned from spinning. Work would not start again until Plough Monday, the first Monday after Twelfth Night. The Twelve Days of Christmas were a time for communities to come together and celebrate. People would visit their neighbours and friends and enjoy the Christmas traditions.

Christmas Day was a day to celebrate the coming of Jesus Christ, our Saviour, and the religious celebrations would begin first thing with a mass before dawn and then two further masses later in the day. Congregations held lighted tapers as the genealogy of Christ was sung, before heading home to enjoy a festive feast.

Christmas was a time to 'eat, drink and be merry', a time to celebrate and enjoy a little luxury.

Those families who could afford a Christmas feast would celebrate it in style with foods like roast goose, turkey or beef, and Brawn and Mustard (roast wild boar with mustard). Turkey had been eaten at Christmas by some people during Henry VIII's reign, as it was introduced into England in the 1520s, but it had not yet superseded goose which was still the traditional meat of Christmas Day for those who could afford it. In 1588, Elizabeth I ordered the whole of England to eat goose for their Christmas Dinner to celebrate England's victory over the Armada because it was the first meal she ate after the Navy had defeated Spain's ships.

Accompaniments to the roast meat included plum porridge, mince pies and frumenty, a pottage made from boiled, cracked wheat. The Christmas meal was washed down with plenty of ale.

Richer households would have a more luxurious Christmas banquet which could include

roasted swan or peacock which were displayed as table centrepieces with their feathers and skins put back on. A boar's head may also be used as a table decoration. These centrepieces showed just how rich the householder was. With the discovery of the New World and the Elizabethan voyages to America, the rich were also able to make use of new and exotic fruit and vegetables in their Christmas banquet. Tomatoes and potatoes were mixed with foods like citrus fruits which were specially imported from Southern European countries.

There was also the Tudor Christmas pie. This was a coffin shaped pie crust containing a turkey stuffed with a goose, which was stuffed with a chicken, which was stuffed with a partridge, which was stuffed with a pigeon.

The banqueting or sweet meat course course was another way in which the host of the Christmas feast could flaunt their wealth, their status and their creativity. They would have already impressed their visitors with their roast meats and now they would use sweet delicacies to do the same. Sugar was a luxury cooking ingredient in Tudor times and was rather expensive, so an array of sweet delicacies would impress the guests. Delicacies on display would have included:

Leech - A sweet made from milk, sugar and rose-water, which was cut into cubes. It was then displayed as a chequerboard, with some of the leech left plain and other cubes gilded.

Collops of Bacon - A collop was a rasher of bacon but these collops were crafted from ground almonds and sugar, a bit like our present day marzipan.

Sugar-plate - Sugar-plate was made from sugar, egg white and gelatin, and then crafted to look like walnuts, eggs and other food items.

Gilded fruit - Fruit like lemons were gilded and used to decorate the banquet table.

The Marchpane - This arrangement made from almond paste which was iced or gilded and then decorated with sugar figures and crystallised fruit, was the centrepiece of this course.

As well as the roast meats and sweet delicacies, well-to-do Elizabethans would have enjoyed:

Christmas pudding - A "pudding" made from meat, spices and oatmeal and then cooked in the gut of a boar.

Brussels Sprouts - The wonderful Brussels Sprout made its debut in England in the late 1580s.

Gingerbread - Made from bread, ginger, spices, sugar and wine. This made a stiff paste which was then moulded.

Mulled wine - Wine heated and infused with sugar and spices.

Syllabub - A hot milk drink flavoured with rum or wine and spices.

Lambswool - A drink made from mixing hot cider, sherry or ale, apples and spices. The mixture was heated until it "exploded" and formed a white "woolly" head.

Tarts and custards for dessert.

Quince marmalade

Other Christmas traditions included:

The Christmas "minced pye" - This special pie contained thirteen ingredients, to symbolise Jesus and his apostles. It was a rectangular, or crib shaped, pie as opposed to our present day round ones, and it also contained minced meat rather than just dried fruit and suet, with the mutton symbolising the shepherds to whom the Angel Gabriel appeared.

The Lord of Misrule - A commoner would be chosen as "The Lord of Misrule" and would be in charge of organising the entertainment and revelry for the Twelve Days of Christmas.

Mummer's Plays with music and morris dancing.

Decorating with greenery - Holly, ivy and other winter greenery would be brought inside the homes to decorate it.

Christmas Carols - Christmas carols were sung on Christmas Eve and Christmas morning around the parish and carollers would be rewarded with money, food or drink.

Wassailing - The enjoying of a communal cup of spiced ale. Wassailing has also been linked to blessing the orchards and land, and going round the parish in groups with an empty bowl for householders to fill with spiced ale.

## 26 DECEMBER – FEAST OF ST STEPHEN

The day after Christmas, which is today known as Boxing Day, was the feast day of St Stephen, the

first Christian martyr or protomartyr. Stephen was stoned to death after being accused of blasphemy

and his death was witnessed by Paul the Apostle, then known as Saul of Tarsus.

Thomas Tusser, the 16<sup>th</sup> century poet and farmer, wrote of how St Stephen's Day was the traditional day for bleeding horses and cattle:

*"Ere Christmas be passed let horse be let blood,  
for many a purpose it doth them much good.  
The day of St. Stephen old fathers did use:  
if that do mislike thee some other day choose."*

And it was also a day associated with hunting. On one St Stephen's Day, at the Inner Temple, a cat and fox were let loose and hunted with a pack of hounds who finally tore the two creatures to bits.

Trivia: "Boxing Day" has its origins in the 17<sup>th</sup> century when apprentices and servants collected their annual tips (gratuities) in boxes or earthenware pots.

## 28 DECEMBER – CHILDERMAS

Childermas (Children's Mass) or Holy Innocents' Day was part of the Twelve Days of Christmas celebrated in the Tudor period and was celebrated on 28<sup>th</sup> December.

This feast day commemorates the massacre of the baby boys which King Herod ordered in Bethlehem, in an attempt to kill the infant Jesus Christ. The innocent babies were seen by the Catholic Church as the very first martyrs.

The 16th century Christmas carol, The Coventry Carol, which was sung on 28th December, referred to the massacre:

*Herod the King, in his raging,  
Charged he hath this day;  
His men of might, in his own sight,  
All children young, to slay.*

The story of the massacre of these babies is told in the Gospel of Matthew. Herod asked the "Wise Men" to go and search for the Christ child and then

to return to him: "bring me word again, that I may come and worship him also." However, the Wise Men were warned in a dream not to return to Herod:

*"Then Herod, when he saw that he was mocked of the wise men, was exceeding wroth, and sent forth, and slew all the children that were in Bethlehem, and in all the coasts thereof, from two years old and under, according to the time which he had diligently enquired of the wise men.*

*Then was fulfilled that which was spoken by Jeremy the prophet, saying,*

*In Rama was there a voice heard, lamentation, and weeping, and great mourning, Rachel weeping for her children, and would not be comforted, because they are not." (Matthew 2: 16-18, Standard King James Version)*

**CLAIRE RIDGWAY**



# A BRIEF HISTORY OF THE CHRISTMAS CAROL

*by Jane Moulder*

“*H*eigh ho! sing heigh ho! unto the green holly” These words from “As you Like It” by William Shakespeare are maybe reflecting upon the Tudor Christmas Carol and I’m sure that I won’t be the only reader of Tudor Life who will be singing some carols during December. For me, carols have the power to summon up the spirit of Christmas and they are as essential to the festive season as mince pies and mulled wine! In the lead up to Christmas Day I will be busy with my group, Piva, performing Tudor winter music at a number of concerts and events. I always introduce the pieces by telling stories about the music and providing the background to Tudor times. It seems that there are always a number of people in the audience who think of carols as being purely a Victorian invention and are therefore fascinated by their long history. Whilst we certainly have two eminent Victorians, Dr John Neale and William Sandys, to thank for the carol’s revival and popularity, the carol’s medieval and Tudor history is well worth exploring.

In carrying out some background research for this article I visited a number of websites and was saddened to read so many inaccuracies and complete fallacies about carols. Folk traditions, European customs and fiction have all become intermingled to give a somewhat distorted view of the true Christmas carol. The full story of the carol in all its stages of development would make for a very long article, therefore my aim here is to give an overview of its development from its medieval beginnings through to the form that the Tudors would have known and sung.

There are a number of theories about the origin of the carol and its early history is sometimes confused with the development of other forms of sacred hymns and songs. But there’s no doubt that the word “carol” derived from the Old French “carole” and the word passed into the English language in about 1200. The “carole” was a secular circle-dance and often the ‘music’ for the dance would have been provided by voices. The ‘carole’ dance seems to have been relatively simple and would have involved men and women, standing alternatively in a circle, holding hands or linking



‘la karole damours’, from the *Roman de la Rose*, Royal MS, British Library

fingers. The circle would move to the left, starting on their left foot, which was then joined by the right foot. In choreography this is known as a “simple” – and that’s exactly what the dance was! This also explains why so little was written about the dance but we do know from contemporary descriptions that the circle would often surround an object, such as a tree. All involved in the dance would be singing, taking it in turns, perhaps, to sing the solos. Some early sources indicate that the dancing could last for hours. The descriptions of the dances, with the call and refrain structure, remind me of the Breton dances of Brittany that continue to this day. The Fest-Noz celebrations in this part of France can often include hundreds of people, all linking arms, hands or fingers, the music being provided by voices or instruments, often with a call and response structure. So, are these French dances a direct link back to the original carols?

The carole seems to have been a popular dance and a few religious moralists didn’t take kindly to it. Jacques de Vitry, a French theologian from the 13th century, said that the dance “*is a circle whose centre*

*is the Devil, and in it all turn to the left, because all are heading towards everlasting death. When foot is pressed to foot or the hand of the woman is touched by the hand of a man, there the fire of the Devil is kindled.*” Meanwhile, the author of the *Mireour du Monde*, a 13th century treatise on sin, found that “*all those men and women who carole, sin in every member of their bodies by turning elegantly and by moving and shaking their arms, by singing, and by speaking dishonourably.*”

It is perhaps these descriptions that have linked the early carol with pagan worship but there is no firm evidence for this ever having been the case. These early carols were sung and performed on celebratory occasions and were often performed in the open spaces to be found outside of churches.

The structure of the sung carol was always a burden (chorus) followed by a stanza (verse). The format of verse and chorus is what distinguished a carol from being a hymn or a religious song, although today the term ‘carol’ does not have such a limited form. In early carols, the burden would have been sung by everyone but the stanza may well have



**A carol by Henry VIII: Green groweth the Holly  
(British Library)**

been sung by a soloist. Although we automatically link carols to Christmas, early carols were sung and danced at a range of festivals, events and occasions, such as celebrating the arrival of Spring or the reaping of the harvest.

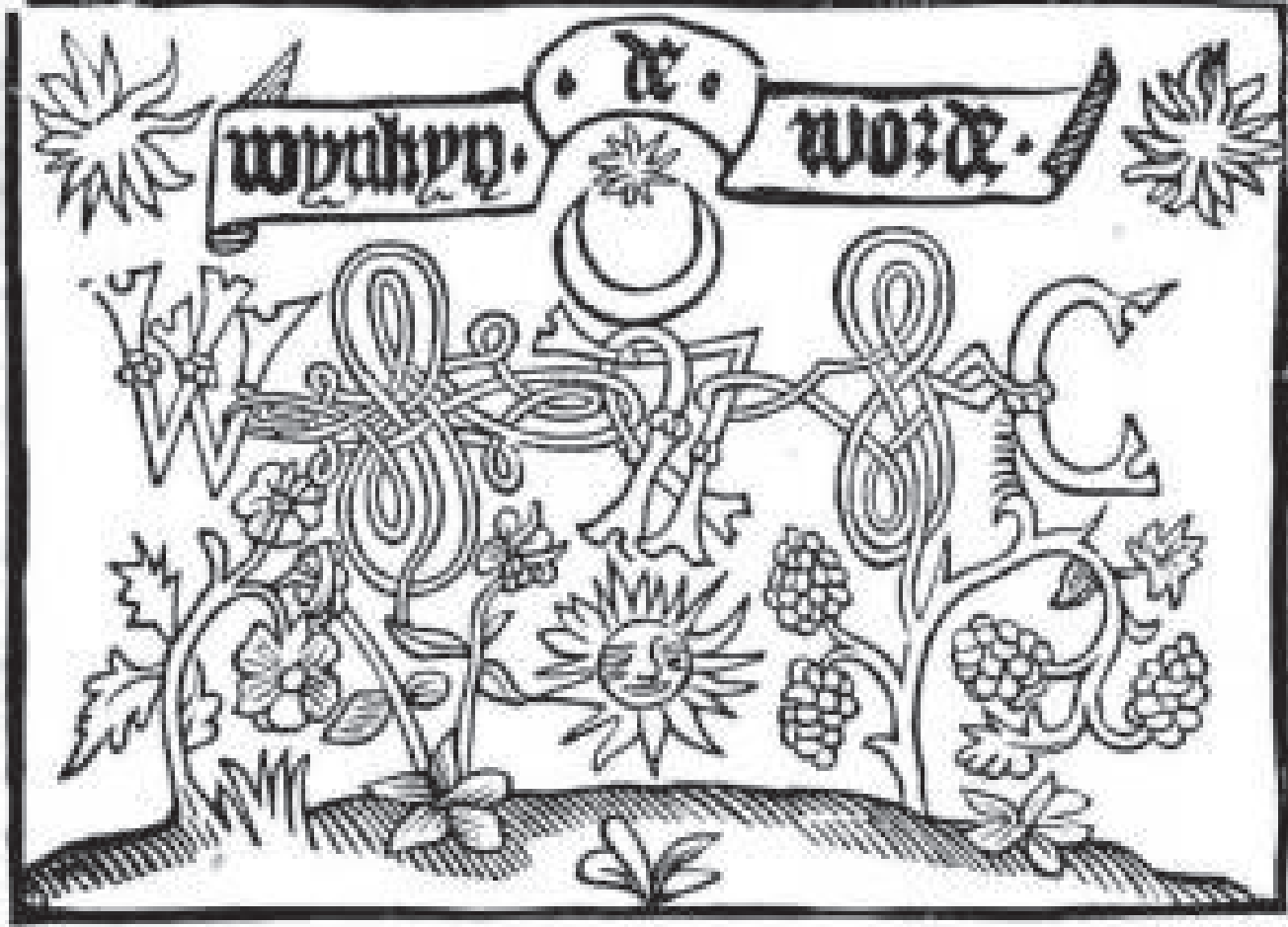
Carols are a perfect example of where the early Church sought to assimilate secular practices to make them their own. Many ancient, non-Christian, customs were absorbed by the church in the hope of gaining support and conversions to the faith. A prime example of this is how the Roman festival of 'Saturnalia' and the winter solstice were merged together to form the festival of Christmas. But some of the old rites still prevailed within popular culture. For example, Wassailing, derived from the Anglo Saxon drinking toast of "was hael", continued to be carried out at Christmas and the New Year. Likewise, references to the holly and the ivy, sometimes found in carols, were a link back to the pagan evergreen fertility symbols of male and female.

With the increased emphasis on the importance of song in religious worship which occurred in the early 14<sup>th</sup> century, it is no surprise

that the church attempted to absorb a popular song culture and make it its own. The song aspect of carols was embraced by the church and the dance part eventually dwindled away. By the time that "*Christmass Carolles*" was printed by Wynken de Worde, in 1521, the association with the early medieval dance had long been broken. Likewise, the old spring carols which had celebrated spring fertility and new life, morphed into songs celebrating the passion of Christ and Easter.

Whilst the church had adopted carols as their own, the tune's original dance form and lively spirit often remained. One of the earliest advent carols, *Angelus ad Virginem*, written at the beginning of the 14<sup>th</sup> century, is very clearly based on a sprightly saltarello dance tune. The process of the church adopting secular carols occurred across Europe as well as in England and the link between a folk and a sacred tradition has been retained in all cultures. Early carols were not necessarily part of a church service but were often sung and performed in processions or at popular gatherings. As a result, the words to the carols were usually in the vernacular rather than Latin, the language of the church. However, there are numerous examples of carols which are "macaronic" – meaning that they have two languages within them, the local language and another, which was usually Latin.

Although the carol continued as a popular religious song, it also developed into art music. There are three principle song collections dating from the early Tudor period, *The Fayrfax*, *Ritson* and *The Henry VIII Manuscripts*. Compiled at the very beginning of the 16<sup>th</sup> century, these court songbooks all contain a number of carols. *The Fayrfax Manuscript*, circa 1500, contains carols which did not stem from popular or folk culture but were composed by professional musicians such as William Cornyshe, John Browne and Dr Robert Fayrfax. The arrangements of these carols are highly complex and elaborate and they would certainly have been sung by trained choristers. Fayrfax was the organist at St Albans and a member of the Chapel Royal and was no doubt writing with specific voices in mind. These pieces are certainly not the type of song to have been sung by the general populace and they are far removed from the popular dance form. The carols in these collections are not just associated with Christmas but with other seasonal celebrations of the church calendar as well, such as



Wynken de Worde was a printer and publisher in London and had worked alongside William Caxton and took over his presses on his death. De Worde popularised printed books and pamphlets by aiming them at the general populace. Previously, books were only afforded by the privileged elite.

Easter. However, the link between Christmas and carols was definitely established at this time as in 1504 William Cornysh, the court composer, was paid the very generous sum of £20.00 for '*setting of a Carrall upon Xmas day*'.

Dating from about 1518, Henry VIII's manuscript also contains a number of carols as well as a range of court and secular songs. As I discussed in my article for the March edition of Tudor Life, Henry did not compose as much music as is popularly believed. However, it is acknowledged that he did compose the Christmas carol, Green Groweth the Holly. This lovely secular carol features the holly and ivy, with holly symbolising the man and ivy representing the woman.

Green groweth the holly, so doth the ivy,  
Though winter blasts blow never so high,  
Green groweth the holly.

As the holly groweth green  
And never changeth hue,  
So I am, and ever hath been,  
Unto my lady true.  
Green groweth the holly . . . etc

As the holly groweth green,  
With ivy all alone,  
When flowerys cannot be seen  
And green-wood leaves be gone,  
Green groweth the holly . . . etc

Now unto my lady  
Promise to her I make:  
From all other only  
To her I me betake.  
Green groweth the holly . . . etc

Adieu, mine own lady,  
Adieu, my special,  
Who hath my heart truly,  
Be sure, and ever shall.  
Green groweth the holly . . . etc

*"Thus endeth the Christmasse carolles, newly imprinted at London, in the Fletestrete, at the sygne of the sonne, by Wynken de Worde. The year of our lorde M.D.xxi."* – This quote is obviously from the last and, sadly, the only surviving page from Wynken de Worde's "Christmass Carolles" book. It is fortunate however, that this one page contains

probably the best known carol from the 16<sup>th</sup> century and one that is still performed today -The Boar's Head Carol. It is a rousing piece of music, celebrating feasting, drinking and revelling and is as far removed from the sacred music contained in the Fayrfax Manuscript as is possible.

The first record of the ceremony of bringing the Boar's Head into the great hall of Queen's College Oxford dates from 1376 and the custom it is still carried out today in the same place. The ritual consists of entering the main hall with a boar's head on a dish, garlanded with silks, herbs and mustard. A soloist leads the procession singing each of the

three verses at different stations in the hall. The other guests at the banquet sing the choruses. Below is an account of the feast by Henry, Prince of Wales, when he visited Oxford in 1607.

*“the first messe was a Boar's Head, which carried by the tallest and lustiest of all the guard. Next to him, two pages in tafatye sarcenet, each of them with a messe of mustard; next to whome came hee yet carried the Boares-head crost with a greene silke Scarfe. As they*



A print by Henry Vizetelly from “Christmas with the Poets” – a Victorian’s view of the Boar’s Head tradition.

*entred the Hall, he sange this Christmas Caroll, the three last verses of everyie staffs beinge repeated after him by the whole campanye."*

The Boar's Head Carol is an example of a macaronic song as the chorus and last line of each stanza is in Latin.

The boar's head in hand bear I  
Bedecked with bays and rosemary  
I pray you, my masters, be merry  
Quot estis in convivio [so many as are in the feast]

CHORUS: Caput apri defero, Reddens laudes domino [the boar's head I bring, giving praises to God]

The boar's head, as I understand,  
Is the rarest dish in all this land,  
Which thus bedecked with a gay garland  
Let us servire cantico. [let us serve with a song]

CHORUS

Our steward hath provided this  
In honour of the King of bliss  
Which, on this day to be served is  
In Reginensi atrio: [in the Queen's hall]



**A boyce from heuen to erth Shall com  
Venite ad iudicium.**



"At Christmas of Christ many Carols we sing, And give many gifts in the joy of that King". This quote comes from Thomas Tusser's *Five Hundred Points of Good Husbandry*, which was printed in 1557. We know that the popularity of carols must have grown as the 16th century progressed as there are a number of Christmas carol collections being printed in this period. However, more often than not they were usually printed without music, just

the lyrics. Occasionally the words "to be sung to the tune of " is stated but not in every case, making it very frustrating for today's musician attempting to play the carols from the past. One of the oldest sets of printed Christmas carols includes a collection of songs and poems compiled by Richard Kele in about 1550 titled "*Kele's Christmas Carolles*". Kele would simply have collected and published the carols and not composed them himself as the title page indicates: , 'imprynted at London, in the Powltry, by Richard Kele, dwelynge at the longe shop vnder saynt Myldrede's Chyrche'.

There are a number of other sources for Tudor carols, one of which stems from the medieval tradition of Mystery Plays, staged tableaux which depicted various events from the Bible. The Pageant of the Shearmen and Tailors was one of the Coventry Mystery Plays, originally performed by the guild of that name. Whilst first being staged in the 1390's, the transcript of this particular pageant, depicting the murder of the Holy Innocents, dates from 1534. The play has given us one of the most haunting of carols, Lully Lullay, now more commonly known as the Coventry Carol.

However, one of the greatest sources we have today for early Christmas carols comes not from England but from Finland. It is a document called "*Piae Cantiones*". This collection of songs was published in 1582 but, despite its date, the music and songs it contains clearly have a much earlier medieval origin. The songs are sourced from across Europe and much of the music reflects earlier medieval dance forms. The tune of *Tempus Adest Floridum* (or "The Spring Carol") is familiar to us today as Good King Wenceslas – the lyrics we sing today are a Victorian invention and not original! An early version of *In Dulci Jubilo* is there as well as *Unto us is Born a Son*. Another carol from "*Piae Cantiones*" which will be familiar, especially to those who can remember the folk group Steeleye Span, is the rousing *Gaudete*.

In 1572, a Latin-English dictionary equates the Latin word 'Sicinnium' with both '*Cristmas caroll*' and '*Dauncing with singing*', so it is clear that in Tudor times the Christmas carol still evoked the link with its medieval dance origins. However, whilst we know that carols were sung throughout Tudor times, there is surprisingly little concrete information about how they were performed and

when. Were they sung in the home or in church? Were they sung 'a Capella' or accompanied by instruments? Perhaps this lack of hard evidence is why today the various Christmas traditions have all become intermingled to create the somewhat distorted picture we have of the past. Carols seemed to have been the domain of the common man and whilst they were obviously performed at Court as well, the paucity of written accounts has allowed the development of carol singing to become confused with other winter celebratory practices such as mumming, wassailing and the later Victorian tradition of 'Christmas Waits'.

Carols continued to grow in popularity during the early 17<sup>th</sup> century and by now, they were firmly associated with Christmas. There were a number of carol books and tunes printed, such as "*Good and True, Fresh and New Christmas Carols*" in 1642. Likewise across Europe, Christmas carols were gaining in popularity, especially in Lutheran Germany where congregational choral singing was positively embraced by the church. In England, the Civil War and the rule of the Puritan Commonwealth during the 1640's and 1650's, suppressed the tradition of singing Christmas carols but with the Restoration in 1660, there was a concerted effort to bring back the celebration of Christmas and all that that entailed. There were a number of carols publications in the years immediately following the Restoration such as "*New Carols for this Merry time of Christmas*" in 1661. In the spirit of the times, rather than being religious in nature, the majority of these late 17<sup>th</sup> century carols reflected the fun side of life such as drinking, wassailing, eating and dancing. During the 18<sup>th</sup> century congregational hymn and psalm singing became the dominant form of music in church. Gallery choirs sang 'country' settings of

hymns and anthems and the style of carols moved away from their medieval and Tudor origins. *While Shepherds Watched* is a perfect example of the style of carol from this period; the original dance element of the carol was now severely diminished.

Despite this shift in style, in some remote and rural areas the tradition of carol singing continued, consequently placing the songs firmly in the "folk" tradition. However, it wasn't until the 19<sup>th</sup> century, with the efforts of a handful of Victorian antiquaries and musicians, that the carol was revived in the form we know and sing today. They looked to the medieval and Tudor periods for their sources and what they couldn't find – they created! So *Tempus Adest Floridum*, based on the lively spring dance, became *Good King Wenceslas* with its 'sturdy' tempo and slushy, romantic words. Another example of the Victorians playing fast and loose with tradition is the way they took the lively and bawdy 16<sup>th</sup> century dance, the *Branle d'Official* (The dance of the kitchen staff) and gave it a new set of completely faux 'medieval lyrics' which resulted in the firm favourite, *Ding, Dong Merrily on High!* Song collectors such as William Sandys, Cecil Sharp and Vaughan Williams searched out some of the country carols which had been passed down through the generations and formalised them. Thus we have the *Seven Joys of Mary*, which can be dated back to the 16<sup>th</sup> century, albeit with a somewhat "Victorian" lilt to it, and *Tomorrow Shall be My Dancing Day*, with the lyrics suggesting a much earlier origin than the 19<sup>th</sup> century arrangement we are used to.

I hope that whatever carols you will be singing this coming festive season that you will all have a very happy Christmas.

**JANE MOULDER**

**Jane Moulder** is very active in the Tudor music scene. She regularly performs with her group "PIVA", and they have a fantastic CD of music which will get you into the Christmas and Tudor mood in no-time!

Their recording is available from the CDbaby website:  
<http://www.cdbaby.com/cd/piva>





Also, you can listen to Jane Moulder's wonderful expert talk on the Tudor Society website.



# DECEMBER'S ON THIS

<b>1 December</b> 1539 Execution of <b>Thomas Marshall</b> , Abbot of Colchester, at Colchester. Marshall was hanged, drawn and quartered for treason for his opposition to the dissolution of the monasteries, his refusal to accept <b>Henry VIII</b> as the Supreme Head of the Church in England and his belief that those carrying out the King's wishes regarding religion and the monasteries were heretics	<b>2 December</b> 1586 Parliament met on the 2nd December following their request for <b>Elizabeth I</b> to sanction the execution of <b>Mary, Queen of Scots</b> .		<b>3 December</b> 1536 A proclamation was made to the rebels of the <i>Pilgrimage of Grace</i> offering them a pardon
<b>7 December</b> 1549 Hanging of <b>Robert Kett</b> , leader of Kett's Rebellion in Norfolk. Kett was hanged from the walls of Norwich Castle after being found guilty of treason.	<b>8 December</b> 1538 Death of Sir <b>William Coffin</b> , courtier and Master of the Horse to Queens <b>Anne Boleyn</b> and <b>Jane Seymour</b> . It is thought that he died of the plague.	<b>9 December</b> 1541 <b>Agnes Tilney</b> , the Dowager Duchess of Norfolk and step-grandmother of <b>Catherine Howard</b> , was questioned about the location of her money.	<b>10 December</b> 1541 <b>Thomas Culpeper</b> , Gentleman of the Privy Chamber, and <b>Francis Dereham</b> , secretary to Queen <b>Catherine Howard</b> , were executed at Tyburn.
<b>15 December</b> 1558 Funeral of <b>Reginald Pole</b> , Cardinal Pole and <b>Mary I's</b> Archbishop of Canterbury, at Canterbury Cathedral.	 Agnes Tilney		<b>11 December</b> 1607 Death of <b>Roger Manners</b> , member of Parliament and Constable of Nottingham Castle. He was buried at Uffington Church in Rutland.
		<b>16 December</b> 1485 <b>Catherine of Aragon</b> was born at the recently reformed fortified palace at Alcalá de Henares, a town just east of Madrid	<b>17 December</b> 1538 <b>Pope Paul III</b> announced the excommunication of <b>Henry VIII</b> .
		<b>21 December</b> 1495 Death of <b>Jasper Tudor</b> , 1st Duke of Bedford and 1st Earl of Pembroke, at Thornbury. He was laid to rest at Keynsham Abbey, near Bristol.	<b>22 December</b> 1541 Members of the Howard and Tilney family, plus their staff, were indicted for misprision of treason for covering up for Queen <b>Catherine Howard</b> .
	<b>26 December</b> 1546 <b>Henry VIII</b> made some changes to his will, a document which had been prepared two years earlier to prepare for Edward reigning during his minority.	<b>27 December</b> 1539 <b>Anne of Cleves</b> landed at Deal in Kent. Anne was to be <b>Henry VIII's</b> fourth wife. Henry had never seen her.	<b>28 December</b> <b>Holy Innocents' Day</b> or <b>Childermas</b> . This feast day commemorated the massacre of baby boys which King Herod ordered in Bethlehem.

# DAY IN TUDOR HISTORY

<div>4 December 1555</div> <div>A Papal sentence was passed on <b>Thomas Cranmer</b> in Rome, depriving him of his archbishopric “and of all ecclesiastical dignities”. Permission was also given for the secular authorities to decide on his fate. Although Cranmer recanted his Protestant faith five times, which should have resulted in absolution, his execution date was set for the 21st March 1556.</div>			<div>5 December 1560</div> <div>Death of King <b>Francis II of France</b>, husband of <b>Mary, Queen of Scots</b>. Francis was aged just fifteen when he died from some type of ear infection.</div>	<div>6 December 1573</div> <div>Death of <b>Sir Hugh Paulet</b>, one of <b>Henry VIII</b>’s executors and who served <b>Edward VI</b> as Captain of Jersey and Governor of Mont Orgueil Castle.</div>
<div>12 December 1546</div> <div><b>Henry Howard</b>, Earl of Surrey was led through the streets of London from Ely Place, where he had been held since the 2nd December, to the Tower of London.</div>	<div>13 December 1577</div> <div>Sir <b>Francis Drake</b> finally left Plymouth with his fleet of five ships on a journey which would see him circumnavigating the Globe.</div>			<div>14 December 1558</div> <div>Burial of <b>Queen Mary I</b> at Westminster Abbey in the <b>Henry VII</b> chapel with only stones marking her grave.</div>
<div>18 December 1555</div> <div>Burning of <b>John Philpott</b>, former Archdeacon of Winchester and Protestant martyr, at Smithfield.</div>	<div>19 December 1583</div> <div><b>John Somerville</b>, was found dead in his cell at Newgate Prison. He had been convicted of high treason for intending to shoot and kill <b>Elizabeth I</b>.</div>			<div>20 December 1541</div> <div>A “very sickly” <b>Agnes Tilney</b>, Dowager Duchess of Norfolk, begged <b>Henry VIII</b> for forgiveness. She confessed to having another £800 hidden at Norfolk House.</div>
<div>23 December 1558</div> <div>Queen <b>Elizabeth I</b> moved from Somerset House to Whitehall Palace, which became her principal residence.</div>	<div>24 December 1545</div> <div>King <b>Henry VIII</b> made his final speech to Parliament. Historian Robert Hutchinson describes it as “both measured and compelling”, and writes of how Henry wanted “to impart a stern message” to all of his subjects.</div>		<div>25 December</div> <div><b>Christmas Day</b> in Tudor times was an end to the fasting of Advent, the four weeks leading up to Christmas, a time when Tudor people were not allowed to eat eggs, cheese or meat.</div>	
<div>29 December 1606</div> <div>Death of <b>John Davis</b> off the coast of Borneo His ship, <i>The Tiger</i>, was attacked by Japanese pirates who killed Davis.</div>	<div>30 December 1546</div> <div><b>Henry VIII</b> signed his last will and testament,authorising the changes which he had ordered to be made by <b>William Paget</b> on 26th December.</div>	<div>31 December 1535</div> <div>Death of Sir <b>William Skeffington</b>, known as “the Gunner”, Lord Deputy of Ireland, at Kilmainham in Dublin.</div>		

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