

Tudor Life

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Just Beyond Living Memory

The Tudors in the age of the Stuarts and the Hanovers



Kate Duchêne as Katherine of Aragon in Shakespeare's "Henry VIII", 2013 (Credit: London Theatre)

Henry VIII, allegedly co-authored by William Shakespeare, culminates with the christening of the future Elizabeth I in a thinly-veiled wink to her destiny as harbinger of the Protestant nation. By the early 17th century, when paranoia against Catholicism was rampant in southern England, Elizabeth-Gloriana was a potent symbol. No wonder that the Jacobean play chose to focus on Thomas Cranmer's position as infant Elizabeth's godfather. It was a perfect image to stress the point: the author of the Protestant Book of Common Prayer stands as spiritual parent to the country's first long-serving Protestant monarch.

By stressing Cranmer and ending on Elizabeth's baptism, *Henry VIII* also managed to avoid the unedifying moment when great Elizabeth's parents turned on one another and her mother was executed for rampant sexual perversity. Eric Ives's theory that Shakespeare had already depicted the unravelling of Henry VIII's second marriage in the allegorical *The Winter's Tale*, with his sympathies firmly on

Anne/Hermione's side, highlights that for many playwrights the horror of the Tudors' later years was something which, publicly at least, they could not touch for many years.

Shakespeare had wisely focussed on the Protestant destiny of England at a time when many of James I's subjects were convinced it was under threat. A century later, when the office of Prime Minister was born under King George I, plays about Henry VIII proliferated once again. This time, they almost always cast Cardinal Wolsey as their villain, mainly as a thinly-veiled parody of George I's unpopular chief minister, Robert Walpole. Throughout the 17th and 18th centuries, when the Tudors were dramatised, they were unambiguously pillaged to reflect contemporary concerns.

Gravestones for Fair Maidens: How Victoria's Empire saw the Tudors

By the 19th century, most Britons had convinced themselves of their country's manifest destiny to lead a great empire. To this mindset, the Tudors had been an integral part of England's development into Britain, her separation from backward foreign powers (in this version of events, the Catholic Church), and her march towards justified imperialism. It is therefore unsurprising to find that in many of the popular and academic histories of the Victorian era, scholars like James Anthony Froude and A. F. Pollard presented Henry VIII as a fine and noble monarch who had prevented civil war and ruled in the best interests of his country.

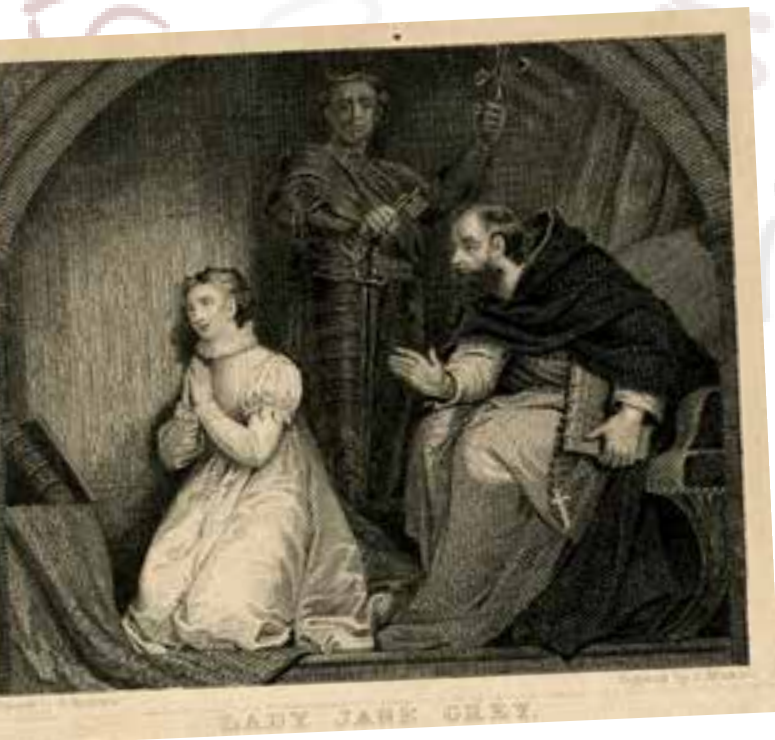


Other writers took a dimmer view. Jane Austen and Charles Dickens regarded Henry VIII

as a monster, echoing the view of the Anglo-Irish Georgian novelist Jonathan Swift, who argued that any good Henry VIII had done had been accidental. Queen Victoria ordered gravestones installed to mark the resting places of Anne Boleyn, Catherine Howard, and Lady Jane Grey, but she did nothing to decorate Henry's sparse tombstone at Windsor.

An explosion of interest in the 16th century swept British popular culture, reaching its fever pitch in depictions of Lady Jane Grey and Mary, Queen of Scots. Novels, plays and paintings dramatised these two women as the apotheoses of Victorian Britain's idea of the perfect woman. Jane, the virginal-martyr, was immortalised in hundreds of novels, sketches, children's dolls and portraits. Novels about her, and Mary of Scotland, lavished melodramatic attention

on their tragic deaths and stressed that these women had been brought low by despicable men, who could not have been gentlemen. When the first silent movies were made at the very end of the era, it is unsurprising to find that one of the topics was the execution of Mary, Queen of Scots, proof of the era's vibrant fascination with the last queen of an independent Scotland.



Jane Grey resists abandoning her Protestant faith, a 19th-century sketch (Credit: Lady Jane Grey museum)

Flappers and femme fatales; Fiction and the Tudors from the Jazz Age to the Second World War

Anyone who has seen *The Private Life of Henry VIII* will remember the flawless elegance of the women cast as Henry's queens. The movie, which became one of the most commercially successful British films after its release in 1933, opened its narrative on the day of Anne Boleyn's execution, focused much of its attention on the story of Catherine Howard, and culminated with a cameo-played-for-laughs of Katherine Parr as a good-natured nag. Anne Boleyn, depicted by the future star Merle Oberon, was achingly beautiful with her flawless Received Pronunciation tones and bow-mouth lipstick. Binnie Barnes' Catherine Howard glistened as an Art Deco beauty, worthy of the cover of 1933's *Vogue*.

Like Francis Hackett's novel about Anne Boleyn or Margaret Irwin's on the early life of Elizabeth I, *The Private Life of Henry VIII* reflected an era that was both immensely stylish but, more importantly, coming to terms with the growing confidence and emancipation of women. The tension between what women hoped to achieve and the restrictions still in place against them were a constant theme in the movies, novels and plays of the 1920s and 1930s. In *Private Life*, Catherine Howard is a young girl who claws her way onto the throne through her own tenaciously-pursued ambition. Catherine is an emancipated vamp who would not be out of place in a F. Scott Fitzgerald novel. But, she soon conforms to what is expected of a woman – falling in love. By this point in the story, Catherine has already sacrificed too much for ambition to pursue her destiny as a romantic being and so, in the end, the poor Queen pays for her love affair with Culpepper with her head.

This was also the era that witnessed the real boom in novels about the Tudors and thus gave us many of our stereotypes regarding them – not least Charles Laughton's performance as the ravenous King Henry VIII tossing chicken legs over his shoulders at banquets.



A Victorian oil painting of Mary, Queen of Scots
in prison
(Credit: public domain)

Our Finest Hour ; The ghost of Elizabeth in the 1940s



A stylish and glamorous Binnie Barnes and Charles Laughton as Catherine Howard and Henry VIII in "The Private Life of Henry VIII" (Credit: Movies Matter)

The Second World War was, as Churchill predicted, subsequently seen as the British Empire's finest hour. However, he got it completely wrong when he predicted the empire might emerge from the war to last for many more centuries. Victory in 1945 proved pyrrhic, immolating the empire in the process.

Before it vanished, the ghost of its mother, Elizabeth I, was summoned up from its tomb to sing a requiem. If the uncertainly glamorous Jazz Age had preferred stories of Binnie Barnes' Catherine Howard and Katharine Hepburn's Mary, Queen of Scots, Churchillian Britain had only one Tudor they were interested in.

Elizabeth I thundered forth in patriotic flicks as the fire-breathing architect of British greatness and defiance against an invader. As the Blitz continued its savage assault on British cities, stories of the Spanish Armada were ransacked for contemporary inspiration.



Patriot petticoats - Vivien Leigh, Laurence Olivier and Flora Robson in the Elizabethan war epic "Fire Over England"



Housewives and Feminists: Tudor fiction in the 1950s and 1960s



James Maxwell as Henry VII in "The Shadow of the Tower"
(Credit: BBC)



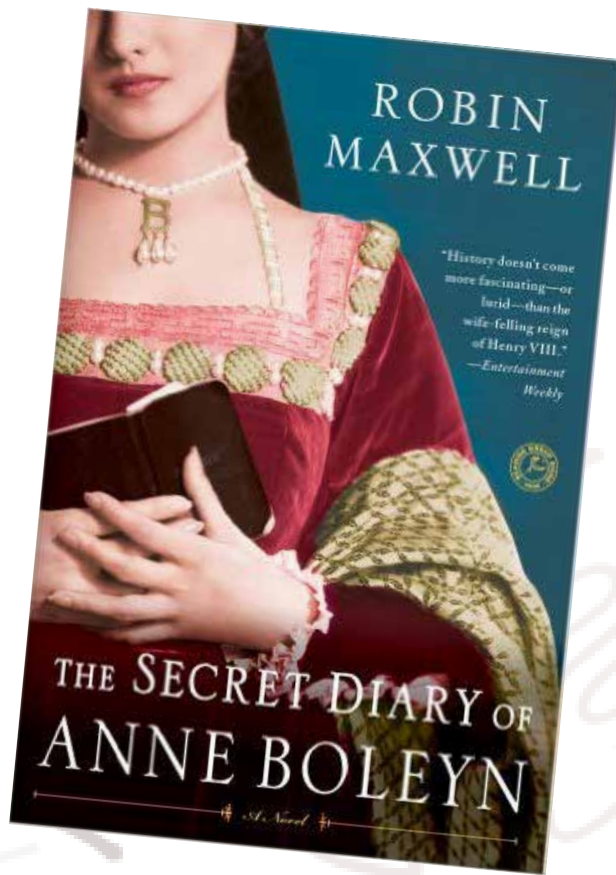
Splendour and enduring fascination - the 2011 New York
production of Donizetti's "Anna Bolena"

Elizabeth I, warrior-queen, had faded by the time Jean Simmons stepped in front of the camera to play her as a lovely princess in the big screen adaptation of Margaret Irwin's *Young Bess*. Opposite Deborah Kerr as the perfect housewife, Queen Katherine Parr, and Stewart Granger as a dashing and impeccably honourable Thomas Seymour, Simmons gave the world an Elizabeth Tudor for the post-imperialist age. She presented a girl that, like Grace Kelly's Princess Alexandra in *The Swan*, would have impressed any strict doyenne of 1950s female etiquette.

A decade later and the blast of feminism was making itself felt, even in the grandest of Hollywood epics. Their style remained conservative with large budgets, casts and purple drama, but how they portrayed their women was remarkably progressive and, arguably, far more honest than anything seen since. Maxwell Anderson's Broadway smash hits, considered too risqué for screen when they premiered in the 1940s, were filmed with Vanessa Redgrave as a troubled yet brilliant Mary, Queen of Scots; Genevieve Bujold was quicksilver magnificence as an enigmatic, vibrant, likable Anne Boleyn; in television, Anne Stallybrass and Jane Asher were able to play a Jane Seymour who, for the first time, was given significant storylines of her own; Glenda Jackson played Elizabeth I with a focus on her brains and her political successes, not dubious theories about her love life.

It was a time when fiction seemed to be doing better service to the Tudors than academia. The BBC series *The Six Wives of Henry VIII* was so well-received that it spawned a sequel, *Elizabeth R*, and the under-rated prequel *The Shadow of the Tower*, about the reign of Henry VII. There were relatively few non-fiction biographies of

the Tudor royals, with a steady trickle turning into something more substantial after the 1972 publication of Marie Louise Bruce's *Anne Boleyn*.



Unending fascination: Tudor-inspired fiction in the new millennium

Sarah-Michelle Geller, best known for playing the eponymous character in *Buffy the Vampire Slayer*, wanted to play another lead if the television rights to Robin Maxwell's novel *The Secret Diary of Anne Boleyn* were ever optioned. Natalie Dormer's career was launched when she played the same role in a four-season soap opera, *The Tudors*, which proved a huge success that also sky-rocketed the career of the future *Superman*, Henry Cavill, who played Charles, Duke of Suffolk in the show. In 2011, New York's Metropolitan Opera revived an epic production of Donizetti's opera *Anna Bolena*, complete with live hunting dogs and moving sets. Sitting in the audience, Tyra Banks, former supermodel and chief judge on the reality show *America's Next Top Model*, was so moved that she tweeted, 'What a woman! And what a time to be her kind of woman!'

Popular fascination with the Tudors shows no signs of waning. Philippa Gregory's many novels on the dysfunctional ruling clan remain commercially successful. Her most famous, *The Other Boleyn Girl*, was adapted twice – once into a BBC drama starring Jodhi May and again into a movie with Scarlett Johansson, Benedict Cumberbatch and Natalie Portman. Hilary Mantel's *Wolf Hall* swept the literary, theatrical and televisual worlds, at the same time as Howard Brenton's play about Anne Boleyn cast her as a religious hero on the stage of the Globe Theatre.

The story of the Tudors has lost none of its power to dazzle, move, enrage, inspire and provoke. Perhaps that is the reason why, half a millennium later, the pages of fiction and fact are still being impressed with their names.

GARETH RUSSELL

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Falling Pomegranate Seeds

**WENDY J.
DUNN**

Fiction Feature

Burgos, 1490.

Doña Beatriz Galindo caught her breath and tidied her *habito*. She shook her head a little when she noticed ink-stained fingers and several spots of black ink on the front of her green gown. She sighed. Too late now to check my face. “The Queen has sent for me,” she told the lone guard at the door of the chambers provided for Queen Isabel’s short stay at Burgos. The young *hidalgo* straightened his stance, then knocked once with the back of his halberd on the door, his eyes fixing on the white, bare wall across from him. The door opened, and a female servant peeked out at Beatriz, gesturing to her to come in.

In spite of the hours since dawn, the Queen sat in bed, her back against oversized cushions. She still wore her white night rail, a red shawl slung around her shoulders, edged with embroidery of gold thread depicting her device of arrows. A sheer, white *toca* covered her bent head, a thick, auburn plait falling over her shoulder.

Princess Isabel, a title she bore alone as the Queen’s eldest daughter, and named after both her mother and grandmother, sat on a chair beside her mother, twirling a spindle. Her golden red hair rolled and wrapped in a cream scarf criss-crossed with black lines, a wry grin of frustration formed dimples in her cheeks before she discarded the spindle in the basket at her feet with the others. She nodded to Beatriz with a slight smile. “Good morning, Latina,” she murmured, using the nickname bestowed on Beatriz by the Queen. Beatriz hid her stained fingers behind her back and curtsied her acknowledgement.

Straightening up, Beatriz gazed at the bed-hangings, unfurled behind Queen Isabel. A naked Hercules wrestled with a golden, giant lion, his club on the ground beside him. Turning to her Queen, she fought back a smile and lowered her eyes, pretending little interest in Hercules, especially one depicted in his fullest virility.

Queen Isabel balanced her writing desk across her lap, scratching her quill against the parchment, writing with speed and ease. A pile of documents lay beside her. An open one, bearing the seal of the King, topped all the rest. Beatriz’s stomach knotted, and not just through worry. She closed her eyes and breathed deeply. *I am free; I am always free while the King is elsewhere. Pray, it is not bad news about the Queen’s Holy War.* The knot in her stomach became a roaring fire. *Holy War? Jesu’ – how I hate calling any war that. Pray God, just keep my beloved safe.*

She almost laughed out loud then; as one of the King’s most important artillery officers, Francisco Ramirez, the man whom Beatriz loved, and had promised to marry, did not live to be safe – but lived to live. It was one of the things that made her fall in love with him. Waiting to hear the reason for her summons, she gazed around the spacious bedchamber, composing in her mind the letter she would write to him tonight:

My love, my days are long without you...

No – she couldn’t write that. If she did, it would be a lie. Her days were full – most mornings she spent tutoring the girls before relishing in the long afternoons free for her own studies. She missed Francisco, but still lived a rich life without him; a richer one when he was at court.

What to write to him then? She could not tell him of her hatred of the Holy War. She could never name as holy a war stamping out any hope of another Golden age, when Jews, Moors and Christian lived and worked together, in peace. Francisco was a learned man, but a man who used his learning to win this war. Her learning taught her otherwise; it taught her to keep silent about what she really felt to protect the freedoms of her life. Could she tell him then of her joy of teaching the infanta Catalina and her companion Maria de Salinas? For six months now, she had been given full responsibility for their learning. She looked at the Queen.

Surely the Queen was happy with the infanta's progress? As if Beatriz had spoken out her thought aloud, the Queen said, "I want to speak to you about my youngest daughter." She waved a hand to a nearby stool. "Please sit."

The Queen put aside her quill and pushed away her paperwork. She lifted bloodshot, sore looking eyes. A yellow crust coated her long, thick lashes.

Seated on the stool, Beatriz gazed at the Queen in concern. If there was no improvement by tomorrow, she would prepare a treatment of warm milk and honey for the Queen Isabel's eyes, even at the risk of once again upsetting those fools calling themselves the Queen's physicians.

"Si, my Queen?" she murmured.

"Tell me, how do you find my Catalina and our little cousin Maria?"

Beatriz began breathing easier; just another summons to do with the infanta's learning. "Both girls are good students, my Queen," Beatriz smiled. "The infanta Catalina is a natural scholar. She relishes learning – even when the subject is difficult, but that does not surprise me. Your daughter is very intelligent, just like her royal mother. Maria, too, is a bright child. Slower than the infanta, but already the child reads simple books written in our native tongue, as well as some Latin. The method of having books written in Latin and Castilian placed side by side is working well." Beatriz straightened and lifted her head. "It was the method used to teach me when I was the same age as the infanta."

The Queen exchanged a look with her listening daughter.

"I have been pleased to see how much my Catalina, my sweet Uno Piqueño, enjoys her mornings with you." Queen Isabel brought her hands together, drumming her fingertips together for a moment. "*Latina*, I believe the infantas Juana and Maria can be given over to other tutors now that you have provided them with an excellent grounding in Latin and philosophy, but I desire you to be Catalina's main tutor, of course, that includes Maria, her companion." Queen Isabel twisted the ring on her swollen finger.

"One day, my Catalina will be England's Queen. It will be not an easy task – not in a country that has known such unrest for many, many years. I want to make certain my daughter is as prepared as I can make her, but I need your help. Can I rely on you to stay with us, and teach Catalina what she needs to know of England's history, its customs, its laws?"

"My Queen, of course..." Beatriz halted her acceptance when the Queen raised her hand.

"Think before you commit yourself. You are betrothed. What will happen when you are wed and, God willing, have the blessing of children? We talk of an obligation of at least ten years, and for you to be not only my daughter's tutor, but act also as her duena."

Beatriz smiled at Queen Isabel. "Francisco and I are both your loyal servants. When the time comes, we will do what needs to be done for our marriage and children, but I will confess to you that my real life is here, and as a teacher at the University of Salamanca. I am honoured that you wish me to continue in that role for the infanta. And to be entrusted with teaching your daughter, now and in the future... my Queen, words can not describe what that means to me."



Wendy J. Dunn's
 "Falling Pomegranate Seeds"
 will be published on July 31 this year.

The Queen's Revenge

**OLIVIA
LONGUEVILLE**

December 1537, Castello di Rivoli, Turin, Piedmont

Following her arrival in Turin, Anne Boleyn, Queen of France, spent two days in the seclusion of her chambers. François ordered that, under the threat of an arrest, none of his courtiers or ministers were to have an audience with the queen. The queen's chambers were closely guarded by Swiss guards and only François, Cardinal François de Tournon, and Jacques de la Brosse were permitted access.

Rumours about the queen's arrival in Turin spread through the court like wildfire. Courtiers waited impatiently to learn who the mysterious lady was and when she would be officially presented to them. They were desperate to see the woman who had saved their king's life and who may even have driven him from his long-time lover, Anne de Pisseleu, who was rumoured to have left Turin after the queen's arrival.

Queen Anne was enjoying the solitude. She needed time to regain her strength after her long, arduous journey. She was about six months through her pregnancy and tired easily. François was spending much of his time with his ministers and his most trusted courtiers, but he did not neglect his wife. He visited Anne in the afternoons, staying until late into the night. After long, intimate conversations, he would kiss her on the forehead before retiring to his chambers for the night.

Although Anne was desperately trying to forget her former life, following her daring escape from the executioner and her flight from England, she couldn't help but think about King Henry and their doomed romance. The burning desire to take revenge against Henry had reigned in her heart since the moment she had learnt of his intention to have her executed despite her unexpected pregnancy. She still hated Henry for taking everything she loved from her – for killing her brother, for bastardizing her children, for almost killing her, and for forcing her to be separated from her two children, Elizabeth and Arthur.

She had once despised Catherine of Aragon for refusing to step aside to allow Henry to marry a younger and fertile woman. Now, all of her hatred for Catherine had vanished like smoke in the wind, and she was left with nothing but regret for her predecessor so cruelly.

Anne's hatred for Henry possessed her entire being. A pitch-black darkness enveloped her, swallowing her whole whenever she imagined how much she would make him suffer. She'd taken an oath of vengeance against Henry, and she was determined to see her plan through.

Anne waited for every scrap of news from England with a pounding heart and bated breath. She knew that Cromwell had been imprisoned in the Tower of London, and she wished to see the wretched man executed on Tower Green in front of a bloodthirsty crowd. She longed for her moment of triumph over Cromwell.

Once, Anne and Cromwell had been allies and had shared religious beliefs. Cromwell had played an important role in the religious reforms she had worked so hard for and he had helped her marry Henry. But after the break with Rome, Anne and Cromwell had become sworn enemies, mostly due to their disagreement on the subject of the dissolution of the monasteries. Cromwell had worked hard to bring Anne down, conveniently forgetting that it was the Boleyns who had helped him climb to his high position.

Anne hated the vile and crafty man for what he had done to her, her family, and her children. Laughter bubbled in her mind as she imagined how Cromwell, the great schemer, and manipulator, had been disgraced and thrown into a dark, damp cell in the Tower. Cromwell deserved the worst that could befall him. Anne wanted Cromwell dead.

At other times, Anne thought of the new life she would have in France as consort to King François. Despite the passing of time, she still saw her marriage to François as something unreal, incredible, and fathomless. And yet her new royal status was a glorious reality. Moreover, François' gentle and caring attitude was slowly healing the wounds of her bleeding heart, bringing new strength to her broken soul.

Anne tried to put these moments of happiness to one side. Happiness was well and truly in the past now that she had pledged her life to a quest for vengeance. Yes. Only vengeance mattered.

Seem strange? Anne, King François? What is this all about? Olivia's book "The Queen's Revenge" is the second in a series of books re-imagining what might have happened if Anne Boleyn hadn't died on May 19th 1536. In the first book she carefully crafted a way that Anne was rescued, and how she escaped to live in Venice, finally meeting and falling in love with François. (Yes. It's fiction). In this second book, Anne moves with her new husband to the Château of Amboise, where she plots her revenge on Henry VIII.

"The Queen's Revenge" is due to be published in July.



Model: Sarah Bryson

Lady Rochford

**ADRIENNE
DILLARD**

November 12, 1541

The river was calmer than I had ever seen it. Ordinarily, the tide would be wild by this time of year. The currents of the Thames could be fierce and woe betide any man unfortunate enough to fall in, but tonight it was still, the surface glassy. When I allowed myself to peer down into the dark depths, my tired, drawn face wavered in the reflection. I turned away quickly and fought back a wave of nausea, frightened by the anxiety I saw etched there.

As we drifted through the low dense fog, I stared out across the water at the small patches of light in the distance. I could not prove the source of each hazy beacon, but in my mind, each one represented a home. The inhabitants of these homes invaded my thoughts and I envied the present comfort they were enjoying. A mother, a father, and their three children sat down to a small wooden table in the cottage of my mind. A meat pie steamed in the centre as they bowed their heads to pray. Their surroundings began to take shape and I saw that there were no fine tapestries, no plates of gold; but a fire crackled invitingly in the hearth and there was an air of joy that permeated the dwelling.

I turned my attention back to the family. Having finished the prayer, their faces were upturned and shining with delight. The children, two tow-headed boys and a girl with raven hair set about devouring the pastry before them. The man threw his head back in a hearty laugh at his children's exuberance and his rich dark hair and gleaming black eyes danced in the light of the fire. The familiarity of it caused my breath to catch in my throat. It was George - my George. I squeezed my eyes shut to ward off the tears that burned behind them. I would not cry. I refused to let them see my pain.

I shook my head to clear my thoughts and the family faded away like the ghosts they were and would always be. I would never have a family with George. Our children would never laugh at our table or scamper before the fire. The life we could have had disappeared on a fair May day and here I was on my own journey to the same stone fortress that had swallowed our dreams. George was gone and the agony of it ached within me.

I pulled my cloak tighter around my shoulders, but the bitter cold ate its way through and chilled me to the bone; goose pimples erupted beneath my fine velvet sleeves. The stillness of the water and the sluggish pace of the barge made the journey seem interminable and, though I dreaded my arrival at the Tower, I was anxious to be out of the cold and cocooned in my bed. I would gratefully welcome the sleep that transported me from my doleful prison and drowned out the wails that echoed in my ears. Katherine Howard's cries had haunted me even after I was out of her company and only a steady slumber could quiet them.

"Only a few moments more my lady."

The kindness in the guard's voice startled me. Perhaps I would be shown mercy yet. I choked back a polite response. I didn't trust my voice not to falter. Kindness or not, these were royal guards and they were taking me to prison. I was determined to maintain my dignity and immense fear threatened to overtake my composure. I could not respond to their niceties. I refused to weep at their solicitude. After all, their courtesy was owed to me. I was still a viscountess and the queen's sins were not my own. I could not be held accountable for Katherine's behaviour for I had been simply doing as I was bid. I felt my resolve stiffen, but deep down I knew my excuses didn't matter. The king believed that I had betrayed him yet again. I would not escape with my life this time.

The imposing prison that had formerly housed my husband and sister-in-law rose up out of the gloom before me. The alabaster stone was shocking against the dreary backdrop of the night. My stomach clenched at the sight of it. I waited until the barge docked before I stood up and then drew a deep breath and fought off the lightheadedness that threatened my balance. The kindly guard offered his arm to me but I shook my head in response. He dipped a nod in return and hurried to the dock where his captain was standing, deep in conversation with Sir John Gage.

Gage was the most recent Constable of the Tower, having taken over for the man who oversaw the imprisonment of George, Sir William Kingston. I knew Gage quite well from his time at Henry VIII's court, but it had been awhile since I had seen him; the last time was at the funeral of the king's third wife. On that day, I had marvelled at the smoothness of his skin; how it pulled taut against his fine jaw. I had longed to stroke the back of my hand against it to see if it was as soft as I imagined. Now that face was marred by the deep lines of age and worry.

After a brief exchange, all three of the men turned their eyes towards me. Gage merely frowned, but the captain's thin lips twisted into a sneer. Only a few words of his response drifted over the water and they were not friendly. The guard turned to walk back towards me. As he stepped onto the barge, the captain yelled, "Oswin, tell My Lady Rocheford that she can get off the barge however she likes, but for all our sake's don't let her fall in."

Oswin -the name sounded so familiar to me, yet so strange at the same time. It reminded me of a memory from long ago: the sweet tang of rotting apples, the dew on my feet and the warm sun on my face.

Oswin came towards me with an apologetic smile. "Please my lady, allow me to assist you."

My pride would not consent and I would not give the captain any satisfaction so I demurred again. "Thank you, but your assistance is not required." The high timbre of my voice surprised me. It was unfamiliar and it sounded strange.

The dutiful guard stepped back reluctantly and allowed me to sweep past him. I stopped short at the edge of the barge. Politeness dictated that a timber plank be laid down across the barge and the stairs so that passengers could easily step across, but I found no such comforts offered. Instead, I stared down at a ribbon of inky water between the two. It would be so easy to slip and allow myself to be swallowed by the murky depths below. No prison, no more despair, perhaps not even any pain. I had been told once that drowning was an easy death if you could overcome your basic instinct to survive. I didn't know how strong my survival instinct was anymore. Would it be an easy escape?

Sensing my hesitation, Oswin stepped quickly off the barge and onto the stairs. He held out his hand, but I ignored it. I stepped forward but paused momentarily with my foot dangling over the void. Before I could decide, a surprise wave washed against the side of the barge and knocked me off balance. The instinct that I had doubted momentarily only minutes ago surged through my body and I lunged for the guard. Oswin's reflexes were strong and he righted me quickly, but Gage and the captain noticed the disturbance and they rushed towards us.

"That's enough Oswin," the captain barked. "I will handle it from here."

Oswin bowed quickly then stepped back so we could pass. Though I was grateful for his quick action, my embarrassment kept me from meeting his gaze so I stared straight ahead and ignored the men around me. I sensed the captain's fury and felt my own welling up inside. 'Of course, he wouldn't want to explain to the king why his prisoner had drowned,' I screamed sarcastically inside my head. 'We mustn't allow anyone to escape the king's justice.'

“Lady Rocheford, you must know that not even pity from a failed suicide attempt could deliver you now. The king would have saved himself so much trouble if he had only executed you with your deviant husband,” the captain breathed into my ear. “Never fear, you will be joining him in Hell soon enough.” I wanted to retch from the foul sulphur smell of his breath.

Gage stepped between us and placed his arm on the captain’s shoulder. “I can manage from here.”

The captain doffed his cap and shot me a parting glare then retreated back to the barge.

Gage cleared his throat and then offered his arm. “I’m sorry that man felt the need to humiliate you further, but I can assure you that I do not agree with his sentiments.”

His candour gave me the courage to finally face him. I saw the sincerity in his bright cobalt eyes and it gave me a small measure of comfort. I took his proffered arm and allowed him to escort me to his home and my prison.

The royal apartments were far meagre than I remembered them. The last time I had entered these rooms was the night before my sister-in-law’s coronation. On that evening, light from a cosy radiant fire danced across the rich tapestries woven of fine golden thread that hung in Anne’s bedchamber. We played cards on a table carved of warm mahogany on stools upholstered with cream coloured damask that had falcons woven throughout and we toasted Anne’s success with a spicy hippocras served in burnished gold goblets. George was in France on embassy so I had slept with Anne in an immense tester bed hung with crimson velvet arras. The counterpane was made of the softest claret silk I had ever felt and I wondered, at the time, if I would ever feel anything quite so lovely and luxuriant against my skin again in my lifetime.

I kept pastime in comfort knowing that though my husband was absent from the exciting events and I longed for him in his absence, he would come back to me. George would return and beg me to tell him of all that he had missed. I would describe to him, in minute detail, all the ways in which his beloved sister had been honoured; the envious way in which people stared at her. If I had known for one moment that all of that glory and all of that envy would have led to George’s death, I would have returned it all in a heartbeat. I would have lived in a hovel for George if he had requested it of me, but George would have never desired a simple life. He relished the prestige his relationship with the king brought him.

George was as generous with his material wealth as he was with his affection and I grew accustomed to the comfortable life his position gave us, but in the end it was hollow. When he died, I fought for my jointure and everything that was owed to me, but all I really wanted was George. Those lands and properties funded the appearances I had to keep up at court but they didn’t fulfil the emptiness I felt. They also didn’t save me from my own rash judgment and now here I was walking through the empty haunted halls of what had been and what would never be again.

Gage’s boots made little noise on the stone floors. The queen’s scandal had been unexpected and the constable hadn’t anticipated any visitors so very little had been prepared for my arrival.

“I apologise for the musty smell. The rushes have not yet arrived, but I will be sure to have them laid in your room once they do,” he said as if reading my mind.

“It’s quite all right Sir John. I will make do. I am happy as long as I have my maid for company.”

“Oh yes, Lucy is already here My Lady. We set up your former rooms and placed a pallet bed for her in your bedchamber. The furnishings are mean, but you should be comfortable until...” he trailed off.

“Until I die Sir John?”

His face flushed. “Until the king finishes his investigation is what I meant; until we know his pleasure.”

“I’m certain his pleasure will be to bury me with my husband,” I muttered softly under my breath.

Gage swallowed but said nothing. He knew as well as I did that any trial I might have would be a sham, but it was treasonous to say so and I immediately regretting putting him in a difficult situation.

“I appreciate what you have done for me Sir John. I’m certain that I will be absolved of any responsibility for the queen’s behavior. This is only temporary. I expect to be out soon and, perhaps, I will return to Blickling and retire from court. I think, it may be, that I have served the crown long enough.”

Gage’s mouth curved into a gentle smile, but it didn’t quite reach his eyes and I knew it was only for my reassurance. The odds were high that I would not leave the Tower alive, but I clung to hope and a sincere

belief that I had done nothing wrong. I had escaped the disgrace of Henry's second queen and I would escape the downfall of his fifth.

Lucy had been removed from my service while I was confined with the queen to her rooms so I was relieved when she greeted us at the door.

"My Lady!" she cried, sweeping into a low curtsy. "I am so relieved to see you. I panicked when they told me to pack your belongings for the Tower."

I gestured for her to stand. "Thank you so much, Lucy. I am fine and all will be well, I have faith."

Lucy couldn't even muster a smile. Her anxiety was evident and it unnerved me. I would have to maintain my confidence in my innocence to get through the next few days and I couldn't let my maid's fear affect me.

Gage sensed my discomfort. "Lucy, would you please turn down Lady Rocheford's bed and make sure my servants have put warming bricks in it?"

As soon as my maid hurried off to her duties, I turned to Gage and offered him a grateful smile. He reached for my hand and held it between his own hands. I was soothed by the warmth from them.

"Hold on to your faith Lady Jane. It will sustain you in your tribulations."

After the constable left, I wandered through the presence chamber I had occupied before Anne's coronation. Some of the very same furniture remained. I recognised a bench covered in vivid green silk beneath the window where I had read a letter from George the morning before the coronation procession. The cedar chest where I had placed my jewels for safekeeping while I slept in Anne's bedchamber was propped open against the wall. These reminders of my former life left me bereft. I did not care whether my bedchamber was ready for me or not, I had to escape to my only comfort. In sleep, I was released from my torment. In sleep, I could forget.

Adrienne Dillard is the author of the successful "Cor Rotto: A novel of Catherine Carey", a book which has even been translated and published in Spanish. Earlier this year, Adrienne started work on a new novel about Lady Rochford, who is of course a fascinating woman to write about.

We can't wait for Adrienne's novel to be finished and available for us all to read, but do not have publication dates at the moment. We'll all have to wait and see!



PHOENIX RISING

Hunter S. Jones



Fiction Feature

London, England
May 15, 1536

Earlier today, I received a message from a man I reckoned to be a gentleman, both by his clothing and his speech. He delivered it to the room I use to practise my medical healing. The message requests that I cast a star map for an unnamed event. For thirty pounds, an amount of money I had never seen in an entire lifetime, I was to use my skills with the ancient form of Horary Astrology.

“May I ask what event this will be for, sire?” I said.

Another sack of golden coins was placed upon my small wooden table with the Great Seal of King Henry VIII attached. “You are to predict the most auspicious time for the execution of England’s treasonous Queen Anne. Our great and godly King wishes to be most kind to this woman who has wronged him in so many ways. Of such is he made, to be a kind and gentle soul in the midst of such sin and debauchery. This woman has committed many sins against him and our realm, yet he wishes to make her exit from this world into the next as easy as possible.”

“Aye, sire. And is there a particular date to which His Majesty is drawn?” I whispered.

“With great kindness, he wishes the execution to be immediate. His first choice is 18th May. Yet he will adhere to your advice in this matter. This is of great concern to him. He wishes for a hasty end to her iniquities, although you are the prognosticator. As such, His Majesty will concede to your prediction based on how the stars guide His decision. His is the gift of Divine Intervention. Yours is the gift of Divine Interpretation. The King will abide by your findings,” the man said.

Bowing before the messenger, I replied, “Please let our good and gracious King Henry know that I can have an answer to him by twilight today. I pray that he will find this matter settled in a timely fashion and best suited to his wishes and commands. I will make haste and set upon my task immediately.”

“Aye. Well done. I will have the King here by sundown.” Nodding to me, he moved toward the door in order to leave. Pausing, he said, “His Majesty will not hear of her name. She is to be referred to as *the* lady or *she*. Do you understand the seriousness of this matter to our Lord and Sovereign King?”

“Yes, yes, sire. I do understand. Please thank him for his acknowledgement of the abilities given to me by our Creator.”

“Thank you,” he said. Before leaving, he turned toward me one last time. “Once you have given Him an acceptable time for the execution, He will gift you with another bag of gold, so great is his urgency to rid himself of this woman.” Adjusting his eye patch, the gentleman left the room.

Today is the third time the gentleman has been sent to me. Each time, the King has followed my instructions. Earlier in his life, I predicted that he would have daughters by his queens, Katherine and Anne. He said that I was the only astrologer he knew who truly has The Gift or The Power, as my mother called it. The

King's grandmother, Margaret Tudor, had been an associate of my grandmother. So it was with our ancestors, time immemorial. Their family had called upon mine whenever the need for a connection to the otherworldly was desired.

Lighting three candles to evoke the spirits, I say the words of magic taught to me by my mother.

*Gofynnaf Y Dduwies bendithia heddiw
Bydded pob gweledigaethau fod yn bur ac yn wir
Felly brycheuyn ei fod!*

Next, I move to place a basin of water in front of the only mirror I possess. The flicker from the candles reflects a golden aura throughout my small room. The rustle of my dress fabric against the wooden floor seems to give a rhythmic pattern as I move. The spiral dance of our ancestors begins, brought from the place in the mists from whence they came. The rhythm fills my mind as a pain shoots through my temple. *The spirits are arriving.* As the water flows from the ewer, the number 3 passes before my eyes. Water has always served as a divinatory method for my art. Three will be significant, of that I am certain. The sunlight filters in my room as the fragrance of the springtime lavender from the small herb garden outside the window fills the room. I walk to my collection of jars, take a pinch of the powdered herb, henbane, and add it to a cup of ale left from earlier in the day. Reaching into my cupboard, I remove three pieces of paper and my writing instruments. As I seat myself at the small wooden table, I hear a rooster crow three times. The trance begins.

A rapping on the door brings me to consciousness. As always, the papers before me have been filled with the numbers and lines, forming a chart. I have never truly understood The Gift, and am thankful to the Creator each time the visions are shared, using me as a conduit for The Power.

"Enter," I say.

The massive King enters the room and I fall to my knees before him. The scent of vanilla fills the room and the grandness of his clothes leaves me breathless. He is dressed as a travelling gentleman this afternoon so as not to draw attention to his visit into this part of London. Even though he is not in regal attire, his height and bearing show me that King Henry is no mere mortal. His golden-red hair blazes in the last goodbye of today's sun through the window as the day draws to an end.

"Your Majesty," I whisper.

"Milady Bliant, please arise. We have much work to do." He reaches for my left hand, raising it to his royal lips, and graces it with a chivalric kiss. I instinctively curtsy to him.

King Henry speaks, "Sir Francis Bryan will make a fire for us, then he will wait outside until our consultation is finished. What have you been told this afternoon, milady? What have the spirits told you?"

"I remain weak from the message and the trance, Your Highness. May I have a moment to see what has been recorded on the papers? In the meantime, would you or your gentleman care for a drink of ale or a bit of wine? It will be nothing as good as behoves the great and mighty King of England, but I will gladly share if you wish," I say, bowing my head.

The gentleman with the eye patch nods his head to me as he crosses the small space and starts a fire. The King looks at him for a moment, then says, "Be gone now, Bryan, and leave us to our work. And try not to draw any attention to ourselves, especially from jealous husbands. We must make this visit as invisibly as possible." A brief smile passes his face like the sun on a cloudy day.

The gentleman smiles, bows before the King, and nods in my direction. He disappears into the darkening night without even making a sound as the door closes behind him.

"You are a good and faithful servant. There is no need to share what you offer. All I require is the interpretation sent to you this afternoon," he replies. "I wish to put this event behind me at the earliest possible moment. I can no longer bear the thought of *her*. Yet, I must do the Christian thing and make her transition into the next world the easiest possible. She has sinned against her King and against God. I must be strong. "

A tear tumbles down his left cheek. I look into his eyes and see pain. He must be shocked from the recent events. *How can he have his wife executed? The mother of his daughter, Elizabeth?* But, mine is to do as I am told. I am not to judge a man with ancient and noble blood. A king, deemed as divine by his birth and chosen by the hand of God to lead our nation. Ever since the gentleman messenger left my abode earlier today, I have consulted with The Powers and the information gleaned from my astrolabe. That event happened a few hours ago, yet it seems as an eternity due to the drain on my energy.

The charts before me look hauntingly familiar. Two charts are for the 18th May, as was requested. Yet, the chart for the 19th May catches my eye.

The King notices the change in my countenance. “What is it you see, milady?” he says. As he looks at the papers, he dabs a tear from his cheek with his left hand.

“It’s this one, sire. The 19th May chart. No disrespect, Your Highness, but this date is the most compelling of the three.”

“Why so, Milady Bliant?” he asks.

“The first notice is the numerology of the date. The day is a three, the number of the Trinity. If it please you, this may be the day you seek.”

“What of the 18th May? I so wish to put this business behind me and rid myself of the curse of her treachery.” His large hand closes over his mouth as he says this. His eyes look at me pleadingly. I must tell him the truth as given to me.

“Aye, Your Majesty. So I understand, yet that date is a two, a duplicitous number and the number of the Devil,” I reply.

“Is not her two-faced treachery duplicitous? Why will the date in May I choose not stand?”

“It is a matter left for you to decide, King Henry. I merely relay the matter as The Power reveals itself to me,” I whisper in response.

He wipes his forehead and looks at the charts again as if to decipher a hidden message. He pauses, taps the two charts for the 18th May, and says, “What other matters prohibit our plans for this day?”

“If it please Your Majesty, that date will conclude your matter in a satisfactory manner at this time. However, if it please you, there is an aspect on the morning of the 19th, which will be most memorable and most compassionate. These two aspects appeal to you, the most benevolent and kindest of rulers known to England, do they not? The two charts for the 18th show that nine in the morning bodes well, as does midday, sire.”

“Yet you say the 19th May is the most auspicious? Why so?” he asks.

“That day has a placement of the outer planets and stars, Your Highness. The time of the chart shows us a depth to this time. A depth of emotions and beliefs. It is an aspect to the god of the underworld, sire. There are symbols here to remind us that the opposite of depth is not height. The opposite of depth is shallowness. This is the symbol of the extreme. Where there was once great ecstasy, there is now only despair. The opposite of depth is simply *nothingness*.

“No ecstasy or despair, no success or failure, no risk and no reward.”

Looking him in the eyes, I next point to the aspect on the chart for the 19th May and continue. “The line symbolizes death. You, sire, must have all...or nothingness.”

“The placement in this chart of Venus and Mars necessitate an intense burst of energy, a show of force. Action must be taken to fulfil desire. You are to use your energy to the extent of your royal capabilities. Otherwise, the energies will implode onto yourself.

“Of course, you do understand, with such power being exercised, there is a possibility of you being destroyed in some manner.”

“Aye, Milady Bliant, when one is King, one understands that with great power comes great risk.” He sighs as he speaks.

“On the day you choose, different members of your family and Court will react according to certain planetary placements. Each will play a role in completing the story of the last hour.

“Your Majesty, there is a great possibility that you will never be satisfied in your relationships. You are a deeply sensitive man. Your expectations will rarely be fulfilled, for you seek the ideal human relationship. You are a romantic. As such, you attribute to people qualities that they do not often possess. Hence, you become disappointed when your ideals are not met. Please look to artistic and musical pursuits to balance your sensitivities. But take great care that you do not become a victim of friends who will attempt to take advantage of your indulgent nature.

“Knowing that you can make a lasting contribution to society in some way, you must persevere in discovering what your legacy will be, in spite of the reversals of fortune in love, which fate will bring your way. Your interpretation of what is required to better the quality of life for our country may possibly manifest due to your spiritual concerns.”

“Thank you, milady. What else do the stars reveal to us?” he says.

“On the day of the 19th, there is also a benevolent aspect to the Ascendant of the chart. You are to use a powder I will prepare of dried herbs. The powders are to be placed in her wine from the time she wakes until after supper. It will balance the mind of the lady in the Tower and ease her transition into the next world.”

Rising from the table, I walk to the jars in my cupboard. I remove the herbs Deadly Nightshade, Chamomile, and Mandrake. As I grind the herbs into a powdered mixture, the King remains silent. The only sound he makes is the movement of the papers on the wooden table. The fire in the fireplace hisses and pops as the sap from a piece of cedar is dissipated. The scent of cedar wafts through the room. I wonder if the cedar portends anything, or if it is merely happenstance.

“Milady,” he says, then pauses. “Milady, so you say it is to be at 9 in the morning, or at midday, should the event occur on the 18th?”

“Aye, sire,” I respond.

“And, do you see any Fire in the chart?” he asks.

“Yes, there is Fire, yet it is tempered by Water. This is to be an action of force, carried out quickly.”

“In legend, King Arthur had Guinevere burned at the stake for her actions. What are the stars telling me to do, if there is to be no Fire involved?” the King asks.

Staring momentarily at the chart, I see what is to be done. “Your Majesty, you are a kind and benevolent ruler. This is to happen quickly and the chart has a Trine with the planet of war. Therefore, the sword is recommended.”

The King stares at the three papers for what seems to be an eternity. Finally, he reaches into his overcoat and pulls out a pouch. As he places it on the table, I see that it is the payment which had been promised earlier, once the reading was completed.

As he looks at me, I see another tear drop down his cheek. “Milady, thank you for your great gift. This is a burden no man, least of all a king, should have to endure. Your advice and divinations are truly inspired.”

As he rises, he asks, “If this deed is postponed until the 19th May, what time do the stars advise us to be the most advantageous?”

As I look into his eyes, I see that he is considering the most opportune date, as advised in the reading. “Sire, as this involves the death of another, I cannot speak it. May I write down the time for you? It is against the Akashic Code to predict the time of death for another, even in the reading of Horary Astrology. I have merely interpreted what the stars have aligned for you to consider.”

“Yes, of course you may,” he replies.

Tearing off a portion of the paper closest to me on the table, I pick up the writing instrument and write the time as divined by the star map for the 19th May.

Handing the paper to the King, I curtsy. “Your Majesty does me a great service by confiding in me,” I whisper.

The King nods, looks at the time written on the paper, and tosses the paper into the fireplace. “So mote it be,” he says. “Pray be well, Milady Bliant. I greatly wish to see the final hour of Queen Anne Boleyn and the rise of Lady Jane Seymour.”

With that, he removes a golden band from his pinkie finger, hands it to me, and leaves the room. He walks into the darkness of the new evening, never looking back.

Hunter S. Jones is the author of *Phoenix Rising* which looks at the last hour of Anne Boleyn’s life from the perspectives of many people who were involved. It is a thought-provoking novel and is quite different to any book you’ve read before...



OBITUARY

SIMON ANDERSON



It is with great sadness that the Tudor Society announces the loss of Simon Anderson, author of “The Claimant: A Novel of the Wars of the Roses”.

It was several years ago that we got to know Simon, through his energetic enthusiasm for history, and we are great fans of his novel. Simon undertook extensive research on the subject of the Wars of the Roses in both England and Wales, visiting castles, battlefields, churches and tombs along the way. Although not a member of any official re-enactment group, Simon practised archery using an English longbow, amassed a modest collection of reproduction weapons and armour, and occasionally wore a complete outfit of 15th century clothes. He saw this as the best way get a true feel for the people of those times and give his writing extra authenticity.

Sadly, in early May, Simon lost his battle with cancer. He is survived by his wife Sarah.

THE CLAIMANT

SIMON ANDERSON

“WE ARE betrayed! The King still lives and the men of Calais have changed sides.”

At first it was but a single voice, carried on a chill breeze through the steady drizzle and failing light of an October evening. But then the cry was taken up by others. The stark, unwelcome message gathering strength, surging along the lines of soldiers like a flood tide up a river, impossible to stop and leaving devastation in its wake. As the implications sank in a second shout pursued it through the ranks, precipitating a full-scale panic:

“ALL IS LOST! EVERY MAN FOR HIMSELF!”

Sir Geoffrey Wardlow, accompanied by his seventeen-year-old son Richard and a retinue of twenty liveried men, had been stationed on the rearmost ‘battle’, or division of the Duke of York’s army. The force numbered some five or six thousand and was deployed in three blocks, one behind the other, straddling the main road from Leominster to Ludlow close to where it was forced to bend around the long ridge known as Whitcliffe. Too steep for an approaching army to scale in any kind of ordered fashion, the ridge offered protection to the right flank of the Duke’s position. In addition, the rain-swollen River Teme, crossed by the Ludford Bridge, ran in a broad curve around their left and rear, and two bowshots beyond that stood the walled town of Ludlow, its mighty castle one of the Duke’s principal strongholds. Sir Geoffrey had left Richard in command in order to seek out an old friend further along the battle lines. They had been discussing the disposition of their troops, said to be outnumbered two-to-one by King Henry’s approaching Lancastrian army, and also the recently circulated rumour that the King, against whom they were arrayed that day, was dead. Now that the latter had been disproved, however, the former was of no consequence, especially with the defection of some six hundred Calais garrison soldiers, under their commander Andrew Trollope, to the King’s side.

On hearing the cries of alarm the two friends exchanged resigned looks, knowing that the time had come to call it a day and make for their homes as fast as their horses could carry them. Fleeing soldiers began to stream past the two knights, many throwing down their weapons and casting off pieces of armour – anything to speed their flight from the battlefield and the King’s wrath. Sir Geoffrey clasped his friend’s hands in farewell and wished him ‘*Godspeed*’, then set off to rejoin his men and make his own escape.

It was only when he began to walk the two hundred yards or so back to where his retainers had been stationed that Sir Geoffrey realised just how thoroughly panic had gripped the Duke of York’s army. What had been open meadows between the battle lines was now a seething crowd converging on Ludford Bridge, desperate to get away. Men were pressing all around him and he was jostled by common soldiers who under normal circumstances would have treated him with the utmost deference. Three times he was knocked to the ground in the crush and by the third time he had struggled to his feet in seventy pounds of plate armour he was



thoroughly disoriented. The rapidly-descending darkness had robbed him of reference points and he began to walk around in circles crying out his rallying call, “*À Wardlow! À Wardlow!*” But there was no reply. The jostling crowd finally began to thin, but then Sir Geoffrey stumbled down a steep bank, almost losing his balance. A cold, wet sensation enveloped his feet and crept up his steel-encased legs as far as his knees. He realised he must have been heading the wrong way in the now all-encompassing darkness, not to the bridge but straight towards the River Teme. Not daring to take another step, in case he should overbalance and drown in his armour, he cupped his hands round his mouth and in near-desperation shouted again. “*À Wardlow!*” Still no answer.

The disintegrating rebel army had all but fled the field by now, leaving only the sound of the river swirling darkly around him and, in the distance, the noise of trumpets being blown – faint at first but slowly getting closer. The King’s troops, supporters of the House of Lancaster, were coming.

Sir Geoffrey knew that with the rebel army gone, King Henry’s men would soon be spilling over the bridge, somewhere off to his left he guessed, and advancing on the town. Drown, or be captured and throw himself on the King’s mercy? He felt his feet begin to sink a little further into the river bed. The cold waters of the Teme would not understand the concept of mercy, but King Henry might.

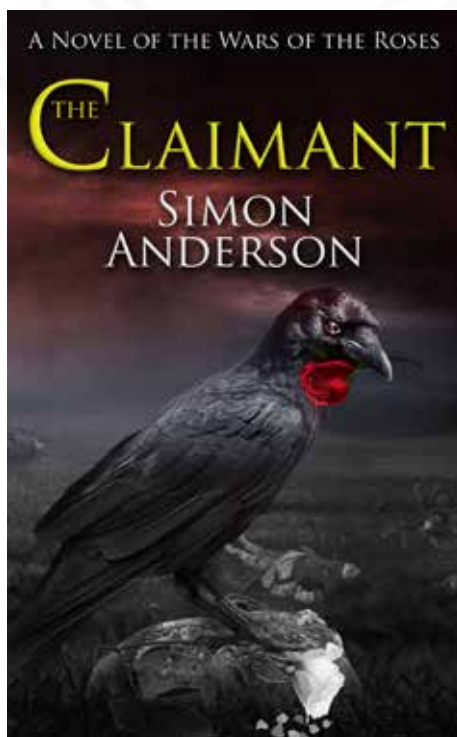
“*À WARDLOW!*” he roared, his throat tearing with the effort.

“*À Wardlow! À Wardlow!*” came the reply. Relief flooded through Sir Geoffrey’s body. His men had not deserted him after all.

“*Over here, by the river!*” he shouted. Disembodied points of light, looking like dancing glow-worms, gradually resolved themselves into flickering torches illuminating indistinct human forms. Strong hands grabbed Sir Geoffrey’s arms on either side, pulling him from the cold, sucking embrace of the river bed and up onto firmer ground.

His relief at being plucked from the murky waters of the Teme quickly evaporated, however, as the hands that had dragged him to safety continued to hold him in a vice-like grip. These were not his men. Moments later he realised they were not the King’s men either. A tall man wearing a full harness of fine-quality armour approached to inspect his catch, flanked by two torch bearers. He unfastened the leather strap on his helmet – a barbute with a distinctive T-shaped opening – and eased it off, handing it to one of his men.

Sir Geoffrey recognised his captor even before the latter had pulled off his padded arming cap and ruffled out his shoulder-length crow-black hair. It was the eyes that had given him away. Looking into them now, as they glittered in the torchlight, Sir Geoffrey knew he was a dead man.



The Devil's Chalice

D.K. WILSON

THE MAN WITH no name was taken in a covered wagon. It was dusk before the wagon arrived at its destination - the destination with no name. The flaps were unlaced. The man stretched as the wagoner helped him down. It had been a long journey.

Looking round, he was confronted by a massive stone wall, decayed and blotched with creeping ivy. Mounds of weed-robed rubble lay everywhere. From one, a horned devil glared stonily. A damp mist filtered through the elms bordering the track. The man shivered.

'This way.' His guide steered him along the wall to a heavy oak door – substantial yet seeming too small for the massive masonry in which it was set. Within seconds of the wagoner's heavy knock the door opened inwards. A whispered conversation and then the man was ushered inside.

The first thing he noticed was the smell – acrid, smoky, yet mingled with an aromatic fragrance he could not identify. The chamber was small and seemed even smaller because of the cluttered objects strewn and piled everywhere. The only light came from two candles set on iron pricket sticks standing on a trestle table in the centre of the room. The flames were reflected in bottles, jars and a large glass alembic which had pride of place among the scattered tools, books, papers and potted plants cramming the oaken surface.

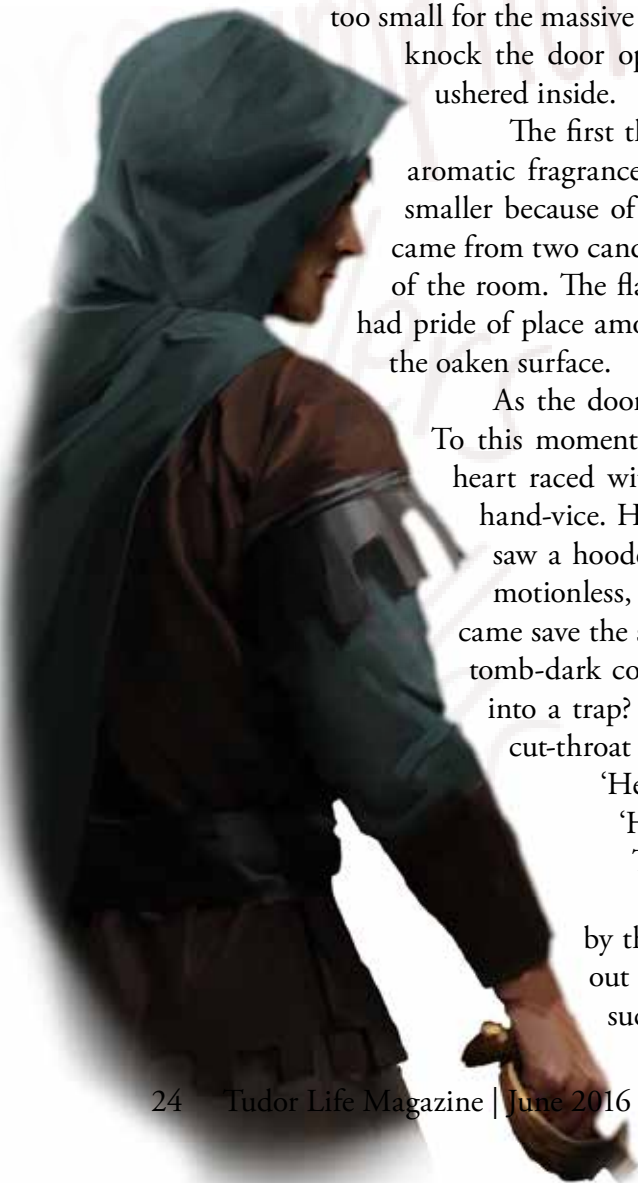
As the door closed behind him the man peered into the surrounding gloom. To this moment, he had felt no anxiety about his self-imposed mission. Now his heart raced with sudden panic. This alien space clamped him like a carpenter's hand-vice. He started as something brushed against his leg. Glancing down, he saw a hooded crow hopping across the floor, trailing a silver chain. He stood motionless, left hand on his sword pommel, ears straining for any sound. None came save the sputtering of the cheap candles. What creatures might lurk in those tomb-dark corners or the blackened rafters above? Had he, perhaps, been lured into a trap? Was this scholar, supposedly skilled in arcane studies, in reality a cut-throat with a novel way of luring victims into this choking hellhole?

'Hello,' he called and the word sounded like a croak.

'Have you brought the money?' The voice came from behind him.

The man spun round.

The magus was standing by the door, his features partially obscured by the man's own shadow thrown by the candles. The man could make out a thin face; below it an unkempt dark beard; above it a square cap such as clergy wore. All else was only a faint outline. The long, black



robe merged with the shadows as though its wearer had appeared from the darkness and might melt back into it at any moment.

‘Have you brought the money?’ The repetition was calm, emotionless.

‘Er ... yes ...’ The visitor fumbled in his purse and held out gold coins.

‘Take the money to the table.’

The man turned – and let out a strangled cry. There on the other side of the table stood the magus. Not a breath before he had been by the door. There had been no movement in the room – or so his senses told him, and yet ...’

‘Come, man, the money. We have not all night!’

Trembling the man advanced and let fall his fee upon the table.

‘Good. There is your potion.’ The magus pointed with a short wand to a phial of violet liquid.

The man stared at it. ‘You’re sure it will work?’

‘It worked for the Bishop of Trier and the Elector of Brunswick. Why should it lose its potency for a mere English gentleman.’

‘Oh, I ... I did not mean to suggest ...’

‘But you must employ it properly. The potion must be administered when the moon is in cancer. That will be three and four days hence. Be sure that the elixir is served in a silver chalice and swallowed at one draught. Once administered you must say the Lord’s Prayer and the Creed three times daily for seven days.’

‘I see ... your ... yes ... Thank you.’ The man reached for the phial.

Swiftly, the magus covered it with his left hand. ‘One more thing is needful to conclude our business.’ He pressed the sharp point of his wand against the flesh between the man’s thumb and forefinger. A swift jab drew blood.

The man yelped and held the wound to his lips. ‘What in the name ...?’

‘A simple precaution.’ The magus held out a clean kerchief.

‘Wipe your hand with this.’

The man made no move to comply. ‘There is trickery here. Poison on the cloth or some such devilry.’

The magus smiled. ‘Devilry? No ‘tis to avoid devilry that I need this safeguard. Wipe your hand. You will come to no harm.’

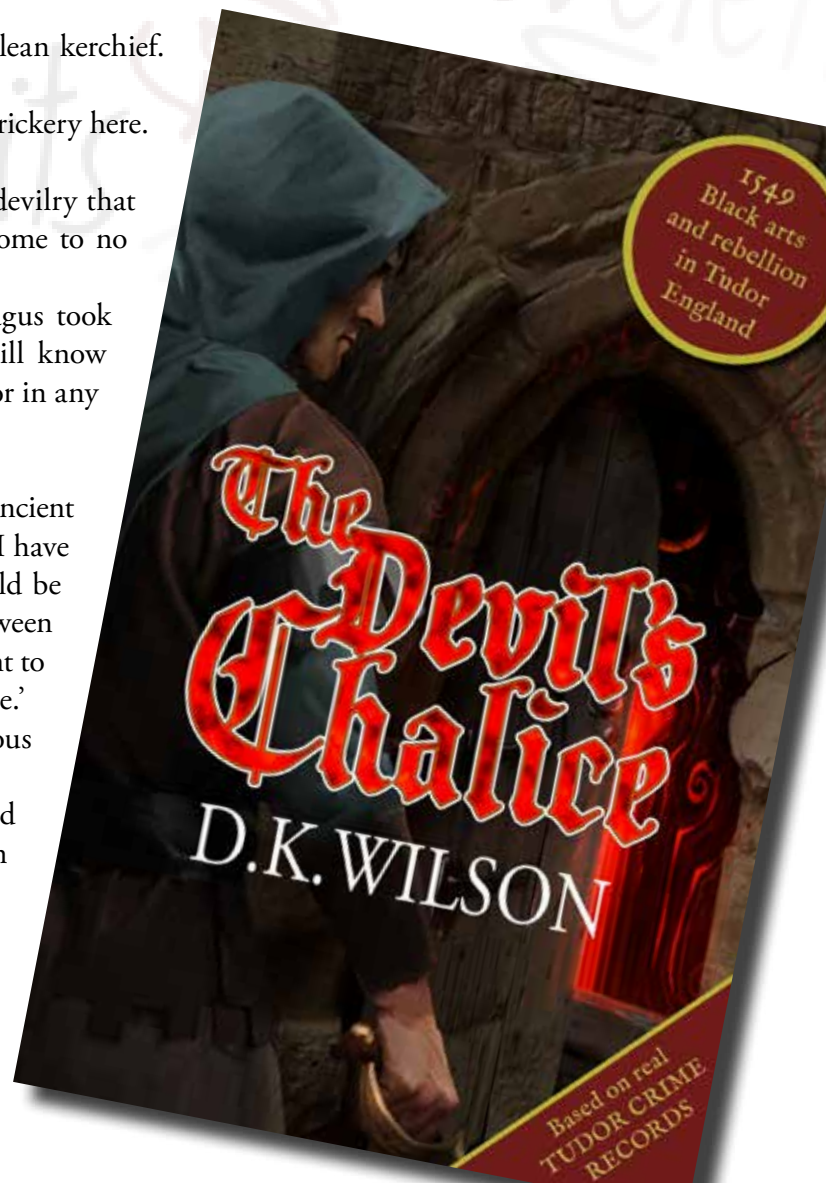
Cautiously the man dabbed the cut. The magus took the stained kerchief. ‘Now I have your blood. I will know from it the moment you tell anyone of this meeting or in any way betray me.’

‘Why should I do any such thing?’

‘There are many who are enemies of the ancient ways. Someone might try to reach me through you. I have to protect myself in every way possible. If you should be persuaded to reveal to anyone what has passed between us today ... Well, let me just say that I would not want to send spirits to set a permanent lock upon your tongue.’

He held out the phial. ‘Now, you will be anxious to return to London. I wish you safe journey.’

The man pouched his potion and turned towards the door, which was once more open. On the threshold, he thought of one question he had forgotten to ask. When he looked round there was no sign of the magus.





TRUTH ENDURES

The Palace of Whitehall
February 1533

LO, HE WAS something to observe - as observe I did, with pride and pleasure: my royal consort in resplendent authority, impeccably groomed and luxuriously draped in burnished sable, his broad chest weighted with a golden, gem-studded collar. He was radiant! Flush with health, his resonant voice echoing as he paced the length of the new gallery in Whitehall with his councillors. The events of recent weeks had steeped him in vigour and confidence.

No one wore an air of aplomb as well as did my husband, Henry VIII of England.

Unconsciously I placed my hands on my gently swelling belly. The gesture had become a habit for me of late. With a contented smile I reflected over the months since late autumn, when Henry and I had travelled to Calais to meet with the French king, François I. It had been a triumphant visit for me - Anne Boleyn - the girl who had spent her youth at the royal court of France, being groomed in the ways of royal demeanor, Christian humanism, and womanhood. Now I returned in splendour as a Marquess in my own right, accompanied by my betrothed, His Grace the King. We enjoyed a most pleasing and very successful stay, and an even more romantic trip homeward, taking our time crossing the English countryside, revelling in each other's company before - very reluctantly on my part - returning to London just before Christmastide. Even that sojourn had been an unexpected pleasure. The winter season spent at Greenwich was jubilant despite our increased disillusionment with the Pope and his obstinate refusal to align with Henry in granting him his rightful divorce from Katherine of Aragon. Regardless of that cumbrance, I basked in the adoration of a man with whom I now lived as if we were husband and wife. Yes, I had decided before we departed for Calais to abandon my dogged stance to remain chaste before we wed. The resulting fulfilment of living as a couple was rewarding and we were happy and content with one another. Indeed, it was a Christmas to be remembered.



During that halcyon period, I did admittedly experience one cause for anxiety - it seemed I had the beginnings of a nagging illness which I could not identify. I had eaten less and less yet remained nauseous throughout the day while feeling overbearingly tired in the afternoons. Only when my maid, Lucy, tried valiantly to lace me into the bodice of a new gown, resulting in the spillage of an unusually ample bosom from its neckline, did I finally perceive the exultant truth - I was pregnant with Henry's child! Please be to God, with his *son*? Never again will there be such a gift for the New Year as was that realization. The tender scene between us when I told him the news will be forever etched in my mind's eye. Occasionally I had allowed myself the luxury of imagining a time when I might announce a pregnancy to the King - I would create a gorgeous, elaborate tableau in which to unveil the news. The moment came, however, when Henry's exhaustion and melancholy over years of thwarted effort to gain his freedom to marry me were etched deep in the lines on his face. In truth, at times, I had wondered why he persisted in his intent to have me - to marry me. Was it not possible with the very next obstacle thrown in his path - one more denial from the Pope - he might just give up, even though we loved one another? But then! *Sweet Jesu!* The pregnancy I had suspected became certain, and while we dined together alone one evening, I tenderly turned his tired face to mine, and in a voice thick with emotion, told him, simple and plain. At first, he was devoid of expression, and I held my breath, fearing he had already determined to abandon me and our hopeless suit. But then his face crumpled, and he had clung to me, weeping into my shoulder. I held my strong and powerful King and felt his shoulders heave with quiet sobs, overcome with relief and joy at the news he so desperately wanted: had waited an eternity to hear.

The next day and those that followed were imbued with the exhilaration of an expected prince.

In late January, then, urged on by the great blessing the Almighty had bestowed upon us, His Grace the King had taken decisive action by designating Dr Thomas Cranmer, our staunch supporter and friend, as his choice for the vacant position of Archbishop of Canterbury. This step placed in Cranmer's capable hands the task of acquiring licenses necessary for our very secret marriage. So in the dark pre-dawn of 25 January 1533, Henry and I were wed in the northern tower of Whitehall Palace. While snow softly cloaked London's rooftops, we had stood in the fire-lit chamber with only the fewest witnesses, looked into each other's eyes and, prompted by the Reverend Rowland Lee, stated our vows to remain together 'til death us depart'.

And thus did I find myself impervious to all previous misgivings. No less powerful a man than the King of England had promised, even before God, to become my sworn protector.

Pregnant, married at last, with a husband who doted on me? Life could not be more blissful. More secure.



Here were now three highly competent men operating from the leading positions of power in Henry's Council, all of them motivated to present His Highness as the ultimate determiner of all matters, political and theological, pertaining to his realm. His word would thus be supreme, and the dependency on the Church of Rome and those decisions previously considered the prerogative of Pope Clement VII conclusively broken.



I observed with satisfaction the culmination of what had been a long and arduous campaign to gain Clement's agreement to annul Henry's marriage to Katherine of Aragon. Despite many setbacks, a combination of brilliant logic, practiced crusading and, ultimately, sheer force of will, had brought us to the present status: Henry firmly in control, and me a married woman, expecting a fully legitimate prince, heir to the throne of England.

Before me strode the ingenious lawyer Thomas Cromwell, who, by demonstrating cunning and dedication to the King's service, now held several illustrious titles including Master of the Jewels and Chancellor of the Exchequer. Beside him walked Thomas Cranmer, Henry's personal nominee as the new Archbishop of Canterbury, and - of no lesser stature - His Grace's recently installed Lord Chancellor, Thomas Audley. They, along with Henry, would appear before the House, make their case and subsequently, following negotiation, payments, and politicking would confidently await an acknowledgement from Rome on Cranmer's appointment to the highest clerical office in the land.

Undeniably, the tactics this trio had devised to gain victory were worthy of the master manipulator and Florentine statesman Niccolò di Bernardo dei Machiavelli himself. We had heard much of Machiavelli and the crafty principles he espoused. Cromwell was an enthusiast of Machiavelli, and for that matter, all things Italian; especially the barbed offensives so aptly utilized by the powerful families who ruled the principal city-states. And of course, Henry had long been an admirer of the great Lorenzo de Medici and a student of the humanism flourishing in Florence. I was aware that the Florentine principles of leadership were exacting a great influence on Henry's newfound determination to grasp and direct his destiny.

Once formally sanctioned by the Church in Rome, it was intended that Cranmer would immediately use his newly appointed authority to exercise the conviction that the King of England was now Supreme Authority of the Church in England and that his previously held jurisdiction was no longer the privilege of the Pope. The premier directive? To officially pronounce Henry's long marriage to Katherine of Aragon null and void, and let the Pope be damned!

With that act of defiance, we would be sure to hear the bell toll for the Church of Rome in England.

Until Dr Cranmer's new position was confirmed, which would then allow him to create the necessary official documents for certification of our marriage, I was obliged to keep my two 'secrets', albeit there were a few in my closest circle who did know the truth ... that I was the wife of the King - his new Queen - and I carried his child. Oh, how difficult it was to remain circumspect when I wanted to shout the news from the Palace towers!

I resigned myself to maintaining the privacy of my condition, but at least felt able to share the joy with my family. My mother and my sister Mary proved great sources of comfort and advice as I became accustomed to life as a pregnant woman. It proved helpful, being able to discuss the peculiarities and subtleties of what I experienced as the early days of sickness began to wane, and other cravings took precedence. Particularly I delighted in being included in that special clan of women who smiled knowingly when pregnancy was discussed.

My queasiness did subside, and in its place, I found I had little tolerance for meats but had a great urge to eat fruit, especially apples. I delighted in how my belly had become firm and had begun to swell as the babe within me grew and flourished.

Admittedly there were times when my resolve to remain discreet faltered. Rapturous over my new and treasured position as the King's pregnant wife, and simply itching for some jovial mischief, one wintry and bleak February afternoon I mingled with the usual groups of



courtiers clustered, talking and passing time in the Presence Chamber. While conversing with Thomas Wyatt and the newly married Anne Gainsford Zouche I'd first looked artfully about to assess the crowd within earshot, then, during a lull in our discussion, had selected an apple from a porcelain bowlful which sat upon the sideboard before calling loudly and playfully, "These apples look delicious, don't you think, Thomas? It is quite strange because, of late, I find I have an insatiable hankering to eat apples such as I have never experienced before."

I waited for my words to register, and then widened my eyes in mock disbelief. "The King tells me it must be a sign that I am pregnant. But I have told him I think he *certainly* must be wrong ...!"

Then I laughed loudly, thinking this little scene terribly humorous, prompting heads to turn and everyone within range of hearing to stare. Gratified with the reaction thus generated, I stood, gathered my skirt with a flourish and swept coquettishly from the room, leaving all in my wake wondering what had just taken place.

Not that Henry, either, could contain our joyful secret entirely. He was giddy with unbridled elation at being a new husband and father-to-be. And although no official royal announcement had yet been made concerning our matrimony or my condition, he became less and less concerned with guarding the news. And how rightfully he deserved to proclaim the reasons for his exuberance for, I thought, no man had ever shown such patience, such loyalty, such *dedication* to any woman as did my Henry to me.

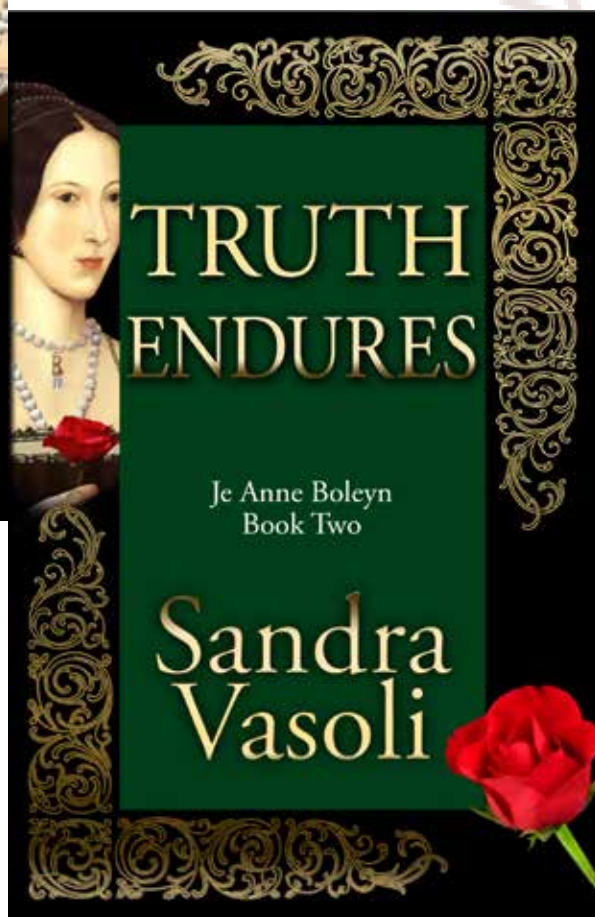
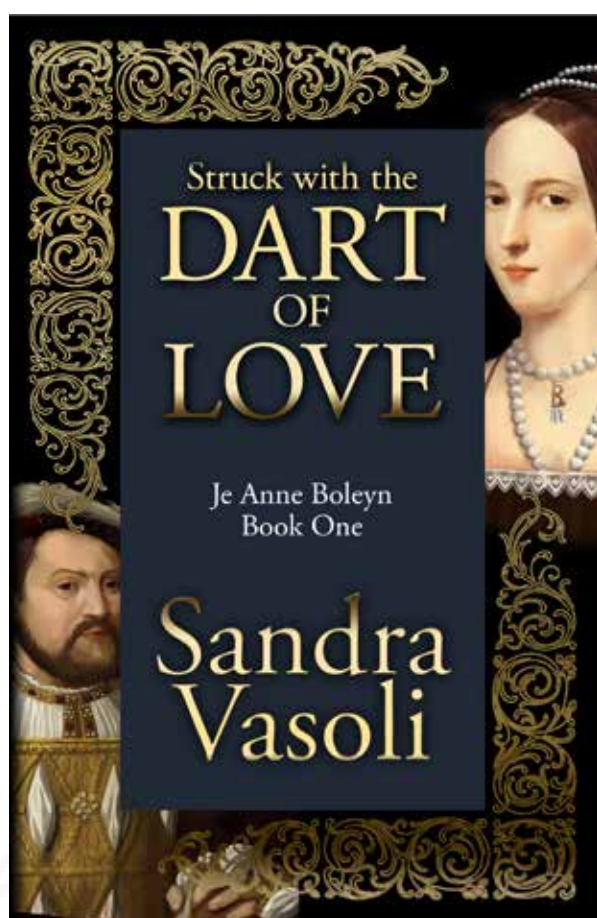
To provide him with just the smallest demonstration of my gratitude and devotion, I planned an elegant banquet in his honour, which was to be held in my beautiful new apartments in Whitehall on 24 February; the Feast of St Mathias. I invited all of the great personages of the court, and personally attended to every detail, as was my wont, to ensure the room looked its grandest. With fine arras lining the walls, masses of glowing gold plate on display, and spectacular dishes presented in elaborate style, my position and wealth were now evident to all. The ladies whom I had assembled as members of my household were all present, gaily bedecked, looking stunning, and in high humour. On that evening, Henry had chosen to partake of *aqua vitae*, or as its distillers called it - *uisge beatha* - the wickedly potent spirit produced by Scottish monks. He quickly became flush with the drink, jesting and flirting madly with me and my ravishing companions. I found his boisterous, ribald jokes and silly levity to be completely endearing, thinking how much he deserved an evening of release after the tensions he had endured. At one point he gave me a staged wink so noticeable that anyone in view would have wondered what was to come, then moved close - *much* too close - to the very proper Dowager Duchess of Norfolk before blurting loudly, with a noticeable slurring of the tongue, "Your Ladyship! Doth you not think that Madame the Marquess, seated right here next to me, has an exceptionally fine dowry and a rich marriage portion as we can all see from her luxurious apartment?"

He gesticulated wildly with his arms to indicate the scope of my possessions, nearly knocking the goblets from the table. "Does that not make her an excellent marriage prospect, hey?" Then, as I had done just a few days prior, he exploded in raucous laughter at his drink-fueled sense of comedy. The Duchess, stony-faced, leaned as far back in her seat as was possible in an attempt to escape Henry's liquored breath while those observing tittered behind their hands. Watching my beloved sway while he roared with amusement, I couldn't help but enjoy my own hearty chuckle.

The celebration did not conclude till early the morning next. From the room littered with the debris of gaiety, I saw the King off. Henry Norreys, his Groom of the Stool, had his arm



firmly about the shoulders of His Majesty as he guided him, staggering amiably, toward his chambers. I suspected I would not see Henry at all on the morrow since there was little doubt he would remain abed till he could recover from the effects of the *uisge*. Smiling happily as I took myself to bed, I reflected on the entertaining moments of the evening, and mostly on what an irresistible drunk my husband had been.



The Truth of The Line

Melanie V Taylor



The morning of 24th March 1603

The sudden tolling of the bells could mean only one thing.
Queen Elizabeth was dead.

Nicholas Hillyarde raised his head and listened.

A tiny portrait of a woman rested on his desk gazing into the distance with unseeing eyes. He only needed to dribble white paint to form the lace edging of her ruff. A red enamelled locket lay over her heart and its twin lay on his workbench waiting to enclose and protect her.

Semi-frozen droplets of sleet slattered against the mullioned windows and the wind squirmed its way through the cracks making the room cold despite the fire crackling in the grate. Spring was only a few weeks away, but today the weather was letting London know that winter had not yet lost its grip.

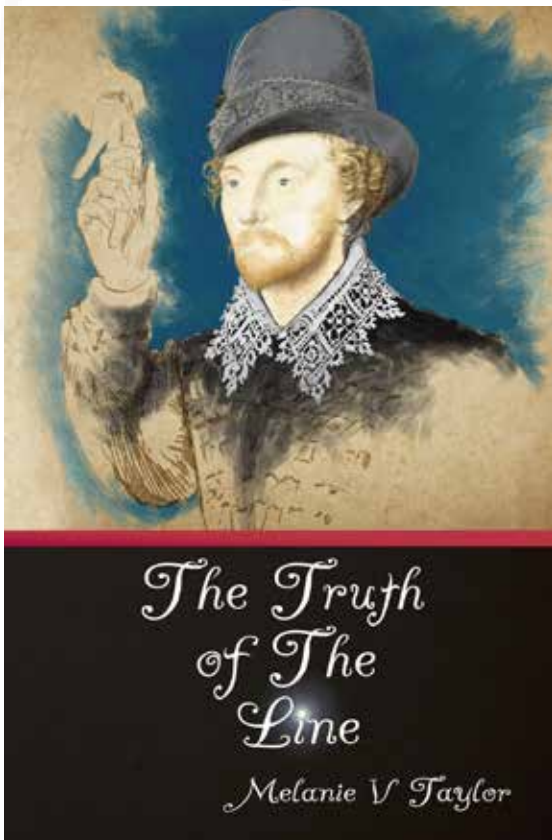
As the bell continued tolling its gloomy message, Nicholas leaned back and stretched. He no longer had the heart to continue painting. He grunted in sad amusement. There had been so many portraits of so many people, many carrying declarations of undying love. Everyone recognised symbols of love such as the person placing their hand over their heart. He had once painted his dear wife, Alice, holding an ear of corn and a pink rosebud and looking very smug. She had just announced she was pregnant with their first child.

Other portraits had been far more arcane. Young Essex had asked him to include the words *Dat poenas laudata fides*, which, according to the young Earl, meant, "My praised faith procures my pain". Nicholas had no idea what faith had procured what pain for the young Earl. Then there had been the young man who had asked him to be painted holding a lady's hand coming from a heavenly cloud and had given him the puzzling motto, *Attici Amoris Ergo*.

As the years had passed, he knew he could no longer portray the aging Queen as she was, so he portrayed her as the perpetually young Astraea, the Just Virgin Goddess of a Golden Age, set amidst shimmering faux jewels.

Elizabeth's death was not unexpected, but now it had happened Nicholas felt old. They were all gone, his beloved teacher Levina, Robert Dudley, Lord Burghley, Sir Francis Walsingham, Sir Francis Drake,

young Robert Devereux and even the young man holding the hand from the cloud. Nicholas contemplated the lady lying on his bench and mused on the various lockets he had made over the years. Locketts that hung on chains around a lover's neck or nestled between a lady's breasts; whoever wore these, the gentle beat of the heart would sound to the painted ears of a lover. Another blast of wind hurled another squall of sleet against the window and the room darkened even more. He shivered, remembering the death of another queen years before. His gout pained him so much that even his soft lambskin slippers were uncomfortable. He needed something hot to drink, perhaps something spicy. Crossing to the fire he thrust the mulling poker deep into the coals, picked up a silver tankard and poured himself some wine. Reaching for a silver box, he sat for a long time looking at the lid and running his fingers over the engraved entwined initials, N and A, all set about with daisies, their petals made from halved creamy white oval seed pearls with small round yellow topaz middles and forget-me-nots of pale blue sapphires with tiny diamond chip centres. This had been one of his wedding gifts to his beloved Alice, who made the best mulled wine he knew. The box held cloves, a couple of nutmegs, slivers of dried ginger and several cinnamon sticks. Nicholas took a small silver grater and grated nutmeg directly into the wine cup, then pounded a clove, a piece of the ginger and some cinnamon in a small pestle and mortar adding the powdered spices to the wine and stirring it with his finger. Plunging the red-hot poker into the tankard, the cold liquid spluttered against the red hot metal. Nicholas sipped his drink, relishing the luscious taste of warm wine and spices; it was not as good as when Alice made it. Settling back into the chair and resting his aching foot on a padded footstool, Nicholas adjusted a fur rug around his knees and stared into the fire. He thought about the things he should be doing, but he did not have the heart to finish them. Later he would visit the Goldsmith's Hall, but for now he just wanted to be alone with his thoughts. "Ah Marcus" he thought, "If Thomas and I hadn't rescued you from those ruffians all those years ago, I wonder how different my life would have been? I bet it wouldn't have been as nearly as exciting!" Nicholas closed his eyes and let his memory glide back down the years.



Melanie V. Taylor is the resident Tudor Life art historian. She is also the author of this wonderful book. Melanie is working on writing the non-fiction book to go along with her novel, outlining her convincing arguments about who the "mystery man" in the portrait might actually be. This book is due out later in the year.

Additionally, Melanie is working on preparing an art history course for the MedievalCourses website, and there will be launch discounts for Tudor Society members for that course, once it goes live.

Thank you Melanie for your support of the Tudor Society!

May 1475

Tyburn, outside the City
of London

THE COLOUR OF POISON

This was the most hellish journey a man could ever make. The only mercy, it would be his last. Dragged on a hurdle, pelted with filth, jeered at by the crowds of Londoners, every stone and pit in the road jarring his teeth in his head. He closed his eyes so as not to see the beautiful summer sky above him, its joyous colour mocking him.

He was not alone in suffering these terrors. Four others were being hauled along in similar, agonising fashion. His fellows in death. He did not know their names – although one face seemed familiar, he couldn't place it – did not want to, any more than he wished them to know who he was. An anonymous death was the best he could hope for.

He wondered if his brother

would be there, by the scaffold, to witness his end. Or the duke – would he want to view this final insult to life? He doubted it. They'd all disown him now.

The priest continued to intone his prayers without emotion as the ties binding the man to the hurdle at the nag's tail were released. Rough hands pulled him to his feet and shoved him towards the ladder, grabbing at him when he stumbled, as though they feared he might attempt an escape. Not much chance of that when a contingent of pikemen surrounded the scaffold, bristling with steel barbs.

Blood trickled from a gash on his forehead where a stone had caught him, matting his long fair hair, of which he'd been so proud. He could feel the gore, hot and sticky, running down his temple, but it didn't matter now. He looked over the heads of the crowd with some unformed hope that salvation might be at hand. It wasn't. Only a lone crow sat, waiting, on the dead bough of an ancient elm that overlooked the place of execution by the Tybourne stream.

The condemned were encouraged up on to the scaffold with pike staves. The man ahead of him, hands now bound behind him, was pushed across the wooden planks of the platform to the foot of a second ladder set against the gallows tree. Here, the fellow was held as a noose was passed over his head. A brazier glowed dully in the sunshine, various metal instruments pushed in to heat among the coals.

A trumpet blast caused the excited crowd to fall silent and one of the two Sheriffs of London stepped forward, a breeze rustling the paper in his hand.

'After due trial by the authority of the lord mayor in this our city of London, the felon, Thomas Witham, has been adjudged guilty of coining. Punishment: death by hanging, disembowelling and quartering. Have you anything to say before sentence is carried out?'

‘You’re all bastards, all of yer!’

Unmoved, the sheriff replied: ‘Is that all? Makes a change from “I’m innocent”, at least. May God have mercy on your worthless soul.’ He nodded to the hooded executioner who forced the miscreant to climb the second ladder.

The drum began to beat slowly in time with the fellow’s hesitant steps. With hands secured behind him it was difficult, but the ladder was propped at a shallow angle. As soon as he reached near the top, one of the executioner’s assistants, at a signal from his master, tipped him off the ladder and the drum ceased. The fall was not intended to kill. The fellow’s legs thrashed the air, sending a shoe flying into the crowd where it was fought over as a good luck token. His eyes bulged hideously, his tongue stuck out of his mouth, his face turned red, then purple. At a sign from the executioner, the assistant cut him down, so he fell in a gasping heap. A second assistant straightened him out and cut away the man’s clothes, revealing an enormous erect cock that brought a murmur of approval from a knowledgeable crowd. More impressive than usual, apparently. Then the executioner took up a butcher’s cleaver, stained and rusted with the blood of previous customers.

The fair-haired man could not watch and looked instead at his feet, wondering pointlessly if he had tied his fashionably-piked shoes tightly enough so they should not fly loose. He heard the victim scream but wouldn’t look, yet nothing could prevent the stench of searing entrails reaching his nose. Behind him, the third fellow fell to his knees as his legs buckled beneath him, vomiting on the stink. A few folk in the crowd swooned – men among them – as the body was decapitated and quartered, the bloody parts thrown into a straw-filled basket.

Eyeing the crowd, the man still could not see his brother, unsure whether he wanted to or not. No sign of the duke either, though it was hardly to be expected. Nor the miracle of a royal pardon from King Edward. Hands bound, he was taken to the ladder that had been repositioned against the gibbet. The noose was slipped over his head, so he could feel the rough rope chaffing the vulnerable skin of his neck. Not long now, it’ll all be over, he promised himself as the trumpet sounded.

Then the world seemed to blur momentarily and he did not hear the sheriff announce his name: ‘Guilty of murder. Punishment: death by hanging, disembowelling and quartering. Have you anything to say before sentence is carried out?’

‘Why waste my last breath?’ he said, speaking too softly for anyone beyond the scaffold to hear.

‘Then may God have mercy on your soul.’

The executioner pushed him towards the second ladder.

‘Give the buggers a good show, lad. I’ll make the end quick for you,’ the hooded fellow whispered in his ear, but the man was beyond understanding quite what he meant. The drum began its fearful, rhythmic beat, keeping pace with the blood pounding in his ears as he climbed upwards.

He barely had his foot on the third rung when he heard cries behind him.

‘I didn’t do nothing, yer honour, honest I didn’t. It was me brother Adam what stoled the horse!’ The third would-be customer for the executioner’s services was on his knees at the sheriff’s feet, pleading with him, his snotty, tear-streaked face contorted in desperation.

‘Shut your snivelling, you!’ the sheriff snarled, kicking him aside.

‘But I didn’t do nothing ’cept feed the horse fer Adam.’ The voice, half breaking, came out shrill and the man, looking down, saw a boy, probably not yet twelve summers old, terrified, pitiful. He realised, after all the horrors he had suffered, he could still feel something like sadness at the lad’s plight, surprisingly.

‘Take this miserable wretch up next,’ the sheriff ordered. ‘I want his whinging and whining done with. Gag him if he won’t shut up.’

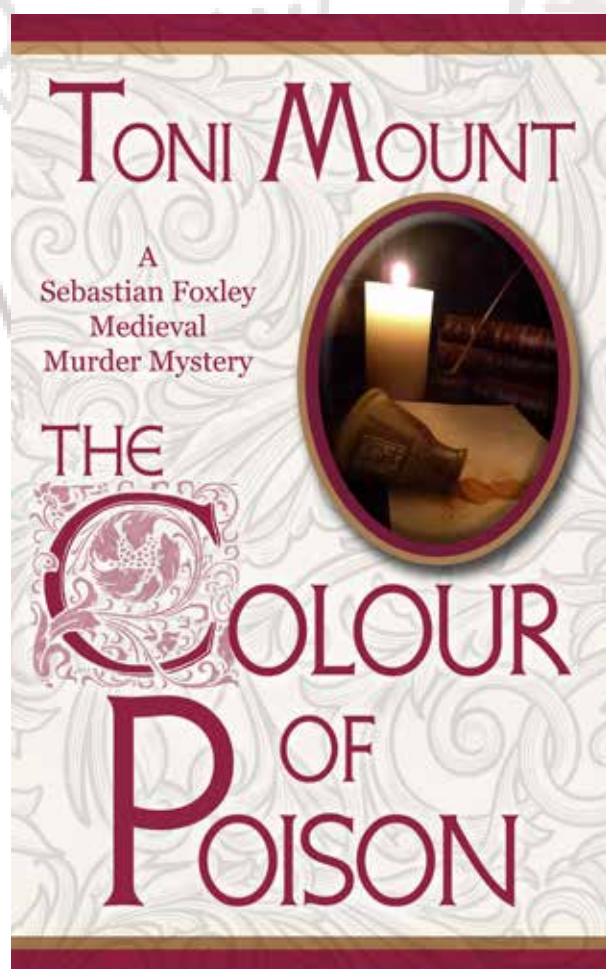
The man was assisted back down from the ladder as the trumpet blared and the sheriff began to read aloud from his paper: ‘After due trial, etcetera, etcetera, William Hay-ut, er... Here, you can read, can’t you?’ he said, turning to the man. ‘What does this say?’ He held the paper so the man could see it.

‘It says: Hauteville. It’s French, so the ‘h’ is silent,’ the man explained, forgetting his dire circumstances for a moment.

‘Bloody French. I might have known,’ the sheriff grumbled, then aloud to the crowd, he continued: ‘William Urvil is guilty of horse-stealing. Punishment: death by hanging, disembowelling and quartering. Have you anything to say before sentence is carried out? No? Good. Get on with it, Master Executioner!’

The petrified lad was sent up the ladder in the man’s place, the smell of piss strong upon him, his legs buckling so the executioner went up with him, keeping a firm hold as the drum beats began afresh. The boy was whimpering, his sobs affecting the crowd who were muttering about one so young having his life ended so soon. The executioner checked the noose personally before climbing down. At his signal, the drumming ceased and his assistant twisted the ladder away.

The child fell. His body jolted to a halt. There was no “hangman’s jig” this time, just a few twitches, the head twisted at an agonising angle. The executioner knew his business and had made the lad’s end quick, setting the knot so it broke his neck. The crowd sighed, though whether in relief or disappointment at the loss of an entertaining spectacle was impossible to tell. Though a few jeered the hangman for bungling his work, the man suspected that was not the case. The swift despatch had been intentional. The rest of the sentence was carried out in no hurry. The heated iron in the guts dispensed with, since the victim was beyond suffering now. The lifeless body was decapitated and neatly quartered without undue haste, prolonging the torment of the man still awaiting his fate.



Toni Mount is a regular contributor of articles to the Tudor Society and Tudor Life magazine. She earned her research Masters degree from the University of Kent in 2009 through study of a medieval medical manuscript held at the Wellcome Library in London. Recently she also completed a Diploma in Literature and Creative Writing with the Open University.

Toni has published many non-fiction books, but always wanted to write a medieval thriller, and her first novel “The Colour of Poison” is the result.

Toni regularly speaks at venues throughout the UK and is the author of several online courses available at www.medievalcourses.com.

EXCLUSIVE **NEW** *SHORT STORY***“BY ALL THE
OPERATIONS OF THE ORBS”***BY KYRA KRAMER*

JOAN CLASPED her hands together tightly in front of her to mask their subtle trembling as her uncle unrolled the parchment. She had been fostered in Pierre Detgheer's home for two years, learning to calculate the movements of the celestial bodies through the heavens and to understand how they affected the microcosm of a human life. It was the first horoscope she had completed by herself, and it was a test of all she had taught thus far. Uncle Pierre had cast the woman's horoscope first, and was comparing Joan's version to his own exemplary work. Joan had been given no other information than the date, time, and rank of the highborn damsel's natal chart she was casting. She wanted, desperately, to have done well. Mistakes would show slovenliness and ingratitude toward her uncle for his efforts to educate her, and Joan couldn't bear the idea that she would disappoint him that way.

Pierre was a Flemish astrologer who had come to England with his father, a prosperous importer of English wool and exporter of Dutch tapestries, when he was a young man. It was to be a short summer trip, but he had unexpectedly remained to live in London after falling in love with Edith Pulfar, the eldest daughter of a wealthy apothecary. Edith and Pierre had been wed for more than twenty years, and the marriage was a good one on all fronts. Not only were they still a loving couple, Edith's family connections within the apothecary guild meant that there was hardly a doctor in London who was not advised to seek a consultation with her husband regarding matters of astrological importance.

It wasn't usual for a girl to be instructed in such an arcane topic as astrology, but neither was it unknown. Joan's early and obvious facility with mathematics had inspired her uncle to take her under his wing for training when she was only twelve. Pierre believed that being a skilled astrologer would make Joan a very desirable future bride for a scholar or physician, since all academics needed a functional understanding of science of astrology and no doctor could make a proper diagnosis without his patient's horoscope. Her uncle had convinced Joan's father that her astrological talents would count toward much of her dowry, removing any hesitation he felt at having his daughter learn such unfeminine knowledge. After all, Joan's father and uncle reasoned, a wife helping her husband with his work in the privacy of their own home was too common to be frowned upon and as long as she did not flaunt her abilities to people outside the family it would do her no disservice.

Doctors and scholars were not the only men who sought Detgheer's expertise, of course. Wealthy tradesmen and even peers of the realm came to him to be told what fate had in store for them. His horoscopes were particularly desired when marriages were being arranged or contemplated, or when there had been unexpected reversals of fortune. Such was the case with the horoscope Joan had recently completed at her uncle's behest. A courtier's daughter was having difficulties in making a match; two potential marriages with wealthy heirs had fallen through with little warning in the space of a year. Her father suspected that either an evil eye had been put upon her or an ill aspect plagued her chart. The exact nature of the problem must be found before countermeasures, be they charms or prayers, could be effected.

Pierre studied the horoscope his niece had given him, double checking Joan's placement of the heavenly orbs, as well as the calculations of their trines, squares, oppositions, and conjunction. Finally, her uncle looked up and smiled. "Well done, Joan." His kindly blue eyes crinkled at the corners. "You have done the calculations with the utmost correctness."

Joan dipped into a small curtsy, trying not to sag with relief. "Thank you, uncle. Any small talent I possess is because of the generosity and greatness of he who taught me."

“You flatter me child,” Pierre chided, but his smile grew. He truly loved his niece, and had a deep avuncular pride in her quickness of mind. “Now, come explain your interpretations to me, so that I can see how well your mind works in these matters.”

Joan moved to stand beside her uncle, looking over the completed horoscope. “Shall I start with the great matters, uncle? Or would you have me delve into the less apparent aspects?”

“Tell me as if I were the client, or someone who had paid you for this work. Explain to me like I know nothing more than any man of education would, but do not overburden me with the mysteries of our craft.”

There would be no need for Joan to explain the rudiments of astrology, then. Even the lower classes were aware of the common characteristics of the astrological signs, and which of the four elements they affected. Any churchgoer would have seen the four apostles -- Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John -- depicted with an ox to represent Taurus, the lion of Leo, Luke's eagle, and John as the water bearer Aquarius. A man or woman with any pretense of education would know the difference between a rising and a descendant cusp, as well as the connections between the Twelve Disciples and the twelve houses of the zodiac.

She nodded and took as deep a breath to steady herself, feeling her ribs push outward against her stays of her gown. The corset was newly-made to accommodate her growing adolescent body, and she was not yet as inured to them as she had been to her old stays.

“If it pleases you, milord,” Joan began, careful to keep any quaver from her voice, “to look here I can show you the lady's stars. A person's natal chart is complex, with small matters able to affect the great, as do cogs effect a mechanical clock.” She gestured over the parchment, hoping her movement was graceful enough to be pleasing.

“Milady's birth places her in the house of Scorpio,” Joan explained. “Scorpios are ruled by Mars, and suffer from this even as they are given the boon of high courage. It is difficult for one to be a Scorpio, because the planet Mars exacts great payments in exchange for the gifts of bravery and daring. Moreover, the lady is a Scorpio in such a degree that she is more strong-minded and large-hearted than most other maids born to this sign. Every reward that fate bestows upon her will be leavened by an equal sorrow.”

Joan moved closer to the chart, and pointed to a symbol in the tenth section of the astrological wheel. “Mercury shelters in this house as well, and in conjunction to the sun. Quicksilver brings the lady a more agile mind than could be expected in even a Scorpio of her gradation. Like the disciple Thomas, she is a seeker of knowledge and skeptical of things which she has not seen for herself. It will be difficult for her to retain her maidenly respect for the male sex, since so few men will be able to best her in wit or learning. Wit is not wisdom though, and the lady risks mistaking the two as the same being when they are but twins of one another.”

She peeped at Pierre through her lashes, but could not tell from his expression if she were doing well or not.

“There is good news for the lady, for her ascendant is in Sagittarius.” Joan's finger traced the line bisecting the chart from left to right without touching the paper. “This ascendant marks her as thrice blessed with wit and likely to travel far in her lifetime. The lady is not only clever; she will have an allurements that will win her many admirers. A first house ruled by Sagittarius does not often confer beauty, but it has such an element of magnetism to it that its owner need not have a perfect face to match it. This ascendant will also disguise the deep power of her sun sign, and allow her to coax where as a woman she cannot command. Beware if she should be given too free a reign, however. Like a spirited horse, she will refuse the bridle if not schooled to it carefully. It is a pity the lady was born cloven, rather than crested, for she would have been dominant among her sex if she had been a man.”

Next she pointed to the crescent drawn on the far right of the natal zodiac. “The lady's moon is in the house opposite of Sagittarius, in her descendant. A moon ruled by Gemini increases her already immoderate thirst for knowledge and justice but it weakens her understanding of the feelings of others. The moon is also in full opposition to Mars, whose heated properties hold great sway over her temperament. The lady will have to guard against a sharp and over-hasty tongue. Her ire, once roused, is fearsome and no help to her. More, she would repent it; she will say things in her hot blood she would not say when her blood was cool.”

Joan moved her finger to hover above another of the sections of the divided circle on the parchment. “I regret to tell you that the lady is afflicted in the placement of both the Infortunates, Mars and Saturn. Mars is in opposition to the sun, and Apollo's star resides in the house Mars rules. Those who meet this lady will have

strong feelings about her, both of love and hate, but none shall be unaffected by her presence. The only passion that this lady will never evoke from those who know her is indifference.”

“Note well how close Saturn lies next to Mars within the house of Cancer, and both of them are in retrograde. If Mars and Saturn were alone here in this house, I would advise that the lady be wary of any born to the sign of the Crab. But see this great star that aligns himself with them? It is Jupiter, and this celestial king is in strong conjunction with his jealous brother Saturn. The lady could find great power in this aspect, and have a Cancer of great importance elevate her.”

Joan hesitated, unsure if she were being fanciful, but then spoke her thoughts aloud. “If you had not told me that the lady was from a family of high rank, I would not dare to say such, but His Majesty is born unto this of Cancer, and this may mark his favor to the lady’s future husband or her family. Yet the approval of a king is a chancy thing, as Icarus found when he flew too close to the sun. The lady must take care; the balance hangs by a thread.”

“Do you really see such signs?” Detgheer asked her sternly.

Screwing her courage into place, Joan gave her assent. “If the lady were born into a lower sphere than the Crab who can be her greatest ally and worst foe might only be a mayor, or a moneyed relative, or a potential husband’s father. Yet the lady’s family *is* of exalted rank, and you have told me that both her father and her brother are in service to the king. The Cancer who tugs on the threads of her fate may be His Highness.”

Her uncle looked at her for a long moment, but Joan neither babbled excuses nor recanted her predictions. Finally, he nodded. “I think you are right, niece. I have seldom seen such a delicate balance in a horoscope. There are rope dancers above a fire who have less risk in the path they take. This chart is that of a lady who may be great, and who may have cause to regret it.”

“It will not be easy for her, that I can see as plainly as a church by daylight.” Joan frowned and bit her lip before confessing, “For all her potential glory, I do pity her. Her love-star is in Capricorn, but is aspected so that Cancer’s watery claws cling to the skirts of Venus from afar; the lady’s feelings will be a source of wondrous confusion and melancholy to her. Only her understanding of what she owes to her family and to God will be clear.”

“The person who pays us is too far above our humble station for you to let him know you pity his daughter, child.” Pierre warned her. “He would not thank us for our care.”

“Of course, uncle!” Joan hastened to agree. “I would hope my mother had never birthed such a fool as one who would tell such a man that a yeoman’s get would light candles for his daughter!”

“I see no signs my good sister found a goose in her straw,” Pierre comforted his niece, “but a poor foster father would I be if I did not teach you all that I know.”

“And I thank you with all my heart, uncle.” Joan promised with complete sincerity.

“Well then, carry on child.”

Joan complied willingly. “With these three planets in Cancer together, the lady will be more than commonly close to her mother but an unwilling source of terrible pain to the lady who bore her.”

“Would that not describe any babe at its birth?” Her uncle interrupted her with a raised brow.

“You are right, uncle.” Joan agreed. “I should say that the lady’s stars show that she may her mother pain in heart and mind, although the lady will wish it is not so.”

Pierre patted his niece’s shoulder. “You are doing well; speak further.”

Joan smiled at this encouragement, and continued. “There is both good news and ill regarding the lady’s marriage, mixed in equal proportions. Venus is in the house of Capricorn, so she will be most likely to marry a man who exceeds her in rank and wealth, and that same he planet of love is also trine to Jupiter, foretelling great things. Alas, Venus is likewise in opposition to Mars, and the fire of her love will burn too brightly to be a comfort; she will quarrel often with her wedded lord, and just as often reconcile with sweet words. Venus is moreover square to Saturn, showing there are many obstacles that will impede the lady’s path to the church.”

The novice astrologer hesitated. “Is it meet that I should warn of future dangers, uncle? Or would that be taken amiss?”

Pierre shook his head. “The fault is in the stars, sweetling; not you. You are but the messenger. Let him rail against the heavens, but he can have no anger towards you for your truth.”

It was Joan’s turn to raise a brow. “Oh? Then his is not a mortal man then?”

Her uncle chuckled. “It is the perversity of man that he is more convinced of your predictions if you pepper meat of them with dire warnings and dread fears. Tell him truly, child. All will be well.”

Joan bowed her head in submission. If her uncle *said* so, it must *be* so.

"Then I must warn that it is unlikely for the lady to make her best match until Saturn once again transits her natal house, when she will be nigh unto thirty. It would be a wonder if she had not been wed long ere that. It is perhaps best to wed the lady first to a man advanced in years, so that she can make a superior marriage when she is past her first youth."

"Good, good." Pierre said approvingly. "To offer a potential rectification for the vagaries of fate is best. Nothing is so set in stone that there is no remedy, at least in part."

Joan looked down, trying not to beam in pride. It would not do to indulge in such vanity. "I would likewise beg that the gentleman heed the third transit of Jupiter, which brings a decided ill omen in its aspects with Saturn, the midheaven, and the north node of the moon. As these form the lady's destiny, they are frightful in this measure. The time of the worst peril will come while the sun sits in the sign of the Bull, for that is when fortunes brightest star shall transit in opposition Saturn as it moves through the year. If the lady can but be safe until the sun enters into Gemini, she shall be past the critical point and will live another two score years."

"It is not these configurations alone that can harm the lady." Joan cautioned. "If she does not take care, Mars will rule her more than would be wise, and do its damage long before Dame Fortune and Saturn can do their worst. The lady can achieve much if she does not let her man-like brains and temper overrule her, but I fear that she will wear a scold's bridle if she cannot keep Aries's star in rein. The more she gives into her vexations, the more those humors will influence her and the stronger Mars will grow in her breast."

"You did surpassing well," Pierre praised her. "I am pleased with you, niece."

Joan blushed at the praise, and tried to look modest even as her pride swelled.

"I think such a valiant effort should be rewarded," her uncle continued, gathering fresh parchment from the cupboard behind him. "When the gentleman comes with his daughter three days hence, I shall introduce you and let you bring them refreshment."

She gaped at him for a moment, rendered temporarily speechless by the honor. "Thank you," she finally gushed. "Thank you so much, uncle." To be named to a courtier and his lady daughter! She had not thought that such an honor would come to her.

"You are a good girl," her uncle praised her. "And who knows? You might marry so well that you needs be able to make your obedience to such figures in the future. 'Twill do you good to learn this, I think." Pierre looked thoughtful for a moment. "*Vous avez besoin de pratiquer la langue française.* Your French is not yet as able as I should like it, but it will be enough to make them welcome."

"Will they be speaking French, then?" Joan asked. Most courtiers spoke English when communicating with Londoners, but Pierre's native fluency meant that the elite often chose French to converse with him.

"I would make a fair wager on it, yes." Pierre unrolled the new paper and weighted all four corners to hold it flat. "Now, go help your aunt while I work. I shall need to make the horoscope afresh and illustrate it properly. They don't feel they have their pound's worth if it doesn't look like a team of monks worked a whole season on it."

Joan curtsied and turned to the door, only to stop with her hand on the knob. "I almost forgot, uncle. Who is it that comes? Whose natal chart did I work on?"

Pierre looked startled. "Did I not tell you yet? No, I must not have. My dotage comes upon me, and my memory flutters away like sparrows from a cat. It is no less than Sir Thomas Boleyn, a Knight of the Bath and a son-by-marriage to the Duke of Norfolk. He has returned not long ago from an embassy to the Holy Roman Empire, and he is trying to find an advantageous marriage for his youngest daughter, to no avail. Methinks he aims too high for her husband. He has tried to secure her marriage to the heir of the Earl of Ormond and again to the heir of the Earl of Northumberland. A gentleman of the court was good enough for his eldest daughter, but Boleyn is not satisfied with such for the other."

"What is the lady's name, uncle?" Joan was curious. She knew somewhat of the Boleyn family, because her grandfather had known Sir William Boleyn well and it was a nine days wonder when the Lord Mayor of London had married Lady Margaret Butler, but she knew none of the names of last-born generation.

"Anne," her uncle replied distractedly, preoccupied by his work. "Anne Boleyn."

KYRA KRAMER



To Make or Mar

A Gentleman or Damned to Hell

By Beth von Staats

“And thus much I will say to you, that I intend, God willing, this afternoon, when my lord hath dined, to ride to London, and so to the court, where I will either make or mar or I come again.”

Thomas Cromwell, as quoted by George Cavendish in his biography, *The Life and Death of Cardinal Thomas Wolsey*

November 1, 1529

Rain, does it ever not? Wind whipping, rain pelts upon the window glass here in Esher's Great Chamber on this day set aside for all saints. Though morning, it is dark, the clouds closing in, suffocating me as sure as the pillows undone the poor princes in the Tower. God speaks, bellowing his displeasure at me as sure as that bastard village drunk. For every sin done, for every sin wished done, for every sin yet done, He now punishes me, snickering. Last summer, my good dear wife, the woman who taught me how to be a gentleman, woke up one morning with a chill, and by noon she was dead from the sweat. Three months past, she came for our daughters. Why Elizabeth? Anne was learning her Latin, Grace her rhymes. I was away at Oxford at Wolsey's bidding yet again, yet another monastery closed for good measure, riches deferred to educate the sons of this realm. Could I not at least be with them? Did they have to die in the arms of servants, Elizabeth? Answer me woman.

I rest my head against the window pane, the cool damp mist seeping through my sorrowful soul. A year ago, I was the happiest man in Christendom. Now all I've strove for, worked for, fought for, slaved for, connived for, bargained for, bartered for, loved for -- a family, a reputation, a comfortable home, wealth and an assured future for my son, companionship in my grey years -- it's gone, first my wife, then my daughters, and now my means of living, laid in waste at the whim of King Henry's cod piece, the man intent on having the Boleyn girl, not his pretty discarded mistress, but the dark, swarthy one.

I look down at the primer I'm gently holding, gifted from His Grace to my Grace upon her birth, and open to a random parchment. Hmm... if I pray Our Lady Mattens right here and right now, will she come to me? Tears welling in a weak moment, I begin... mumbling along the versicles, the venite, all the psalms and lessons, like a good Catholic should in times like these.

"Hail Queen mother of mercy, our life, our sweetness, our hope. Unto thee do we cry and sigh, weeping and wailing. Come of therefore our Patroness, cast upon us thy pitiful eyes, and after this our banishment shown to us the blessed fruit of thy womb. Oh Gate of glory be for as a reconciliation onto the father and the son. From the wretched their faults expel: wipe the spots of sins unclean. "

No grace. Damn it all, there is no grace. Where is my Grace? Her mother must be holding on tightly, as she will not come. Grace never does.

"Why Master Cromwell?"

My God, I startle upright, dropping the primer on the floor. How long has he been standing there? Cavendish, he is a slippery sort, I do swear -- always coming up upon me unawares. If ever a man be a spy, with desires to know all Wolsey does, all Wolsey says, all Wolsey thinks, Cavendish is him. My dear clerk Ralph says he keeps a journal, writes down God knows what about God knows who. I trust him not. In these times, I trust not a soul -- even my mother, if she still walked among us.

“What means all this, your sorrow?”

I turn towards Cavendish. God knows I must be a sight. I glare him down for good measure. How dare he interrupt my sanctity?

“Is my lord in danger, for whom you lament this? Or is it for any loss you have sustained by any misadventure?”

Downcast still, I think my answer best be good. God knows my words may end in that blasted journal of his, bound among the parchments through time eternal. His Eminence -- the great Thomas Cardinal Wolsey, yes his plight is bleak. Stripped of his garter and chains of status, all his worldly goods, thrice counted and inventoried by me to be sure, the great Cardinal whom I did think one day would be Pope, turned in the great seal, now in the hands of heretic chasing More. I decide to answer frankly, nothing else to lose but my character, which already suffers much. My family pains I'll leave unsaid. All already know, and it be no more than most men, save the celibate. “No, no, it is my unhappy adventure. I am likely to lose all that I have travailed for all these days of my life, for doing of my master, true and diligent services.”

Cavendish is the most loyal and trusted servant of my blessed Cardinal, not I, truth be told. He looks at me kindly, and my walls fall if but a smidget, no more.

“Why Sir? I trust you to be wise, to commit anything by my lord's commandment, otherwise than you ought to do of right, whereof you have cause to doubt of loss of your goods.”

I answer honestly. My situation bleak, I speak the obvious. “Well, well, I cannot tell; but all things I see before mine eyes is as it is taken; and this I understand right well, that I am in disdain with most men for my master's sake; and surely without just cause. Howbeit, an ill name once gotten will not lightly be put away. “

Aye, an ill name once gotten will not be lightly put away. Christ laments my soul to the fire, thrice burnt.

To make or mar, a gentleman or damned to hell; yes, to make or mar I am -- and I told that Cavendish right square. This afternoon, after the Cardinal's last dinner with those few here still close, left with naught but his gratitude, I am riding out to Court. I lost plumb all so far as I can see, so no harm done. Stephen Vaughan, my good friend doing my bidding in Antwerp, will think me daft, but you can't win lest you place the bet. Yes, heading to Austin Friars to barrister for land greedy folk would be my safest lot, but I told dear Ralph Sadleir, find me a seat in Parliament. Do what you can, man. Call in all favors, forgive loans if need be.

With a seat, I can sweeten my fate at will, trade a vote here and there for favor, lay the King's agenda to law if he behests -- but I will cleave to no man, no faction. No longer will my fate be hinged in the back of another, for if the great Cardinal fell to the depths, so can Norfolk, Suffolk, Gardiner, More and the high rising Wiltshire, riding on the

bosom, flat though it be, of his daughter, the Lady Anne Boleyn. The King, he is a fickle one -- but His Eminence, my beloved Cardinal, he taught me well indeed, both what to do and say and when and how, and God save him, what not. I'll rest my wagers with me, and me alone. God help me.

As I piss the day away preparing for the journey to a future untold, Cardinal Wolsey fell to his knees through two long masses, gave his confession that must laid bare half the morning plus I am sure, and then led yet his own mass for his yeoman and gentlemen servants. Heavens man, don't these clerics have anything better to do but raise the host on and on and yet on once again? Won't just one mass do? Is God deaf? Daft? The village idiot? All these priests, so devout and humble so they profess, their vestments are done filled high with hearty indulgences. They will soon leave him for the likes of Gardiner. So why the pretense? Make it so. Just damn go.

Fumbling through my papers, a servant calls to me. "Master Cromwell, do come to dinner. His Eminence, well he needs you. He dines in his privy chamber."

I gently nod at the man. That poor snog has not a farthing, no payment coming for his service done well. "Must I go?" I ask teasingly.

"Aye, best you do, good man. There be no escape for you," he says with a broad smile.

I rise from my desk in surrender to attending the inevitable meal of penance. Before heading off, I offer mine thoughts, as that be all we have between us. "God be with you, James. May His Eminence, our beloved Cardinal, find you safe haven."

He nods. "And to you and yours, Master Cromwell."

"If God be good to us James, we shall meet again at Sunday morn' Mass and not in line at Archdeacon Gardiner's for a dole, eh?"

"Aye, if I be you Master Cromwell, I would stay clear of the Archdeacon's doles. Me thinks the King's Secretary likes you not."

I laugh. "So you think the Archdeacon would poison me then, good man?"

"Aye... I do, aye yes," he says with the smirk of the devil.

I will miss dear James. I will miss them all. Resigned to my fate, I brush the dust off my doublet, bow respectfully and set out on my way to the Cardinal's last feast.

O Lord help me. I be in foul humors. Damn, I always hated this dank privy chamber. It smells worse than a piss pot with meats stirred in. God knows why.

The Last Supper -- by the intercession of Saint Thomas Beckett's relic toe nails, let this be the last damn supper I sit with this brooding lot. Holy Christ, I am fidgeting like Gregory at Christmas Mass, picking at the roast boar, likely the last boar this sorry brood will dine in plenty a fortnight. Where did His Eminence get this meal of plenty? Did Norfolk or Suffolk owe him one last favor before damning this great man to a life of embarrassment, depravity and house arrest? Mayhaps dear Ralph will tell me later, a bartered deal I paid for knowing not. And there be poor James again, serving this brood

of clergy and gentlemen, his plight now tugging at what's left of my conscience. Yes, this is no time for staying mute. I'll speak my mind.

"Your Eminence, in all conscience, I do beseech that you do repay your humble servants, both yeoman and gentlemen, for their truth and loyal service done to you, never forsaking you, even in these times of trial and tribulation."

There, I have his attention. Though an annoyed glare, I'll take it still. I venture on. What the hell? What can he do? Release me once more from my living? Mayhaps, but I am the last friend he has.

I take a deep breath. If I don't speak truth, who will? Certainly not these chaplains present. "I do so beseech that your Eminence call these men all before you, let them know you rightly appreciate their patience, truth and faith to you. Give these yeoman and gentlemen, who stayed the course these dismal days, your heartiest commendation, and reassure them still that they will continue to serve your good until God calls you."

The silence is deafening, all around the dining table waiting on his word, what response the Cardinal will give me. One of the priests looks to me and snickers. Oh, I will not forget that. Oh no, I will not. He best pry I mar, the pig.

When His Eminence finally speaks, we all bolt upright, like from the first bolt of thunder in an unexpected storm.

"Thomas, you know my finances, my budget, best said lack thereof! Alas, I have nothing to give them. Words with no tender be hollow indeed."

The defeated Cardinal Wolsey grows silent once more, seeking words that don't come easy. His face grows sullen, poor man. I do think he is close to tears. With this, the clergymen surrounding me look chastising, like I am Satan himself, placing His Eminence in this predicament for my own jolly. For those who have much, they see no need of it. Pity these fools who professed to a life of poverty. Their coffers overflow, so they know no pain of the common man. They need to stymie themselves right now.

"Thomas, I am ashamed but to say I must no longer accept their faithful service to me. As much as they do honor me through their humble diligence now as in my glory, and I have cause to rejoice their truth and honor born on to me all these many years, I have nothing to give them. Nothing, Thomas... nothing at all. I want again to at very least give substance among them so they may leave, hence to return when His Majesty calms thus and restores me. I have not even that, man. You know this well enough, so why taunt me?"

A tad ashamed, I nod knowingly. I inventoried all his worldly goods, every piece of silver, every goblet, every rich vestment, every tapestry, every coin. I transferred them all, every last knife, every last lacework, to the Crown myself. The Cardinal was left with nothing. Again, the clergymen glare me down, like a heretic holding Lutheran tracts instead of the rosary. They fright me not. I rise, gesture towards them sitting around the table, and speak to His Eminence -- and through him to them.

I pound my fist on the table with grand effect, jolting those seated to attention.

“Your Eminence, look to these men around this table! Aren’t they right among us your chaplains? Are these not holy men sworn to poverty that you treated with great liberty? By your preference are not some of these pious men dispensed 1000 marks each year, some even more, some a little less? None of these men chaplain here to you; yet they have all, and your servants nothing! And now in your time of need, they impart not a farthing to you in gratitude for all their riches and liberties. I do swear some day, each and all these chaplains will be viewed with indignation for their ingratitude to their master and lord, for their limitless indulgences and fortune, so help me God!”

The Cardinal holds up his hand in command that I quiet. Respectfully, I do. I’ve said enough. Mayhaps, I said too much. Humbly he speaks, more to me a father than my father. “Calm Thomas, calm down, good man. Though I have no crowns, no pounds, not a farthing, do bring my servants to the great hall. I can at least give them my hearty commendation as you suggest.”

George Cavendish, faithful to the end, he will stay with our lord and master to his death, I do swear. As helpful as any a man can be on this most dreadful of All Saints Days, he scurries to collect all the servants of His Eminence, yeomen and gentleman alike. Under his watch, down one row of Esher’s Great Hall lines up the yeoman, cooks and cattlemen, chimney sweeps and ostlers, farmers and soldier guards. Along the row on the opposing side, lines the Cardinal’s honorable gentleman servants. The sight brings a smile to my face, many of these men showing me every gracious welcome through the years.

I walk up to Cavendish, tapping his shoulder. “You are most faithful and diligent of all, good man. Do watch guard for His Eminence, and I shall do same.” We nod to each other knowingly. Yes, we shall -- always, to his death, the commitment given graciously and willingly to the greatest man in Christendom, our mentor, my friend.

As the room lay silent as a congregation of the dead, the great Thomas Cardinal Wolsey enters, followed by his chaplains, shamed into accompanying I am sure. Wearing modest vestments of lace surplice over a bishop’s purple cassock, he looks suddenly old and frail -- not the powerful rotund man in crimson velvet who rode a donkey into Court, not the man who lead this nation while a young king played his games of Camelot, and certainly not the man who took a chance on me, the son of Putney’s town drunk.

At the sight of the great Cardinal, Cavendish and I sigh deeply as one, both looking to the floor for a short spell, a tactic to compose ourselves quickly. May our strength now be his, as his was ours so long hence. I tug on Cavendish’s sleeve and motion. His Eminence, distressed to uncomfortable silence, turns away from us all, breaking into quiet sobs. I walk across the room and stand beside him. The Cardinal will not do this deed I so beseechingly implored alone. As I grab hold to his arm to steady him, I feel

him breath deeply, straight from the gut. Finally, he wipes his tears, and speaks, his voice with a slight quiver.

“As you all know, His Majesty in his greatest of wisdom finds it his pleasure to take all I own into his possession, Master Cromwell here doing my stead to insure His Majesty’s commands were done in all diligence. So, all I own I wear now, certainly not so grand as you all are so accustomed. If my worldly goods be here, know now I would divide them among you.”

In all graciousness and with kind regard, all the yeomen and gentlemen nod, acknowledging his words as gospel. Though beaten to near death and standing no richer than a pauper, the Cardinal commands devotion still from all of us who know him.

“Fret not, good men. I doubt but His Majesty, in all his loving benevolence, knowing that the offenses so brought by mine enemies have no truth, will shortly restore me. And when this good day comes, I will be able then to divide among you deserved wages, the surpluses of my wealth divided equally one and all. Until then, do take leave to your families, with my blessing and return in three months hence, by then my riches restored.”

All in the Great Hall now fall silent. These men, they have no means to go anywhere, do anything. They lack the resources to live yet a day without the Cardinal’s favor. This just won’t do, not at all. I release His Eminence’s arm, and speak frankly, again gesturing at the chaplains present.

“Your Eminence, I am certain your yeomen would feel blessed to see their families, as they so now do just once per year if best, but they have no money. But look a yonder. Here they are, your chaplains, great men with great benefices. Oh yes, in their high dignities, let them show themselves, as they are bound to do by their solemn vow of poverty. Their charity abounding, I am certain they can assist in this cause.”

I look to the clergymen, a wide grin on my face. Dig deep, you dirty dogs, dig deep. I look back at the great Cardinal, and he nods to me, a slight grin on his face. Yes, I learned well, dear man. I took careful notes, like Cavendish, but in my mind, not parchment. I layer it on once more to shame the bastards. They will do these men right or look like the fools they are.

“Now Your Eminence, though I have received not a penny towards my yearly living, I will happily donate to these men who have none.”

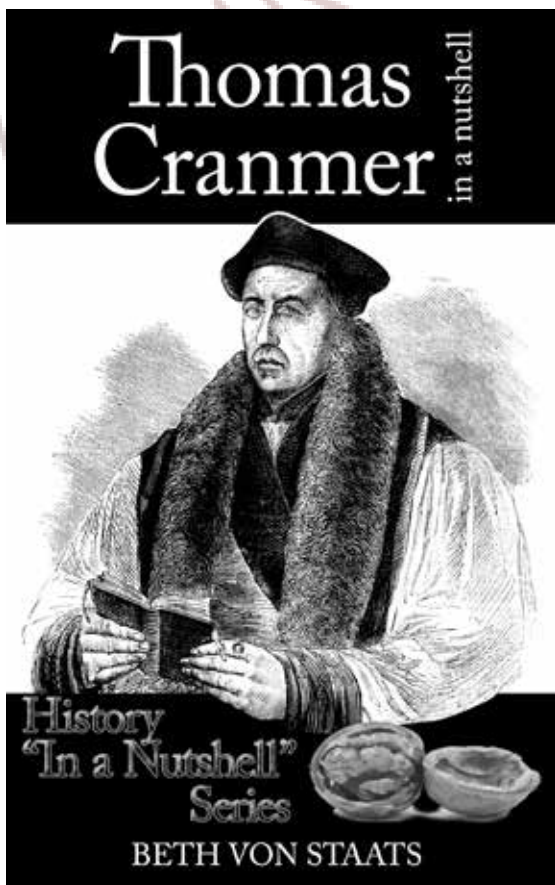
I dig deep into my purse, pull out five pounds gold and toss it upon the table before us. “There, Your Eminence. Now let us do see what these most benevolent chaplains will do. With all their indulgences and riches bestowed by your loving patronage, I am certain they can and will donate to you a pound for each of my pennies.”

The Cardinal turns from the sight of his chaplains, and rests his hand upon my shoulder. He bends into my ear and whispers, “Remember all I told you, Thomas.

Remember it all or you shall perish. These tricks Thomas, this heavy handed tone, will work not at Court. The Dukes, those with royal blood, they will cut you down.”

I nod knowingly, and then point over to the table and smile, careful not to lay open my broken tooth. The chaplains, they are laying down crowns one and all. “Aye, you speak truth, Eminence... but not this night.”

BETH VON STAATS



Beth von Staats, author of “Thomas Cranmer in a Nutshell” is a regular contributor of articles to the Tudor Society. She also runs the popular website QueenAnneBoleyn.com, which is one that we highly recommend.

With her website, Beth wanted people to be able to share their historical writing. In her own words:

“At Queen Anne Boleyn Historical Writers (QAB), there is a home for anyone who loves to read or write about British history. QAB is a website designed as a safe haven for biographical and historical fiction writers, bloggers, online re-enactors and poets.”

Why not head over and look at her website. You’ll be welcomed with a big historical hug!



AN INSIDER'S GUIDE TO HER
MAJESTY'S PALACE AND FORTRESS

THE TOWER OF LONDON

White Tower photo
by Tim Ridgway

PART FOUR

WRITTEN BY
TARA BALL



A Tower Mystery

The greatest mystery of the Tower of London has to be that of the disappearance of two young princes. They were the surviving sons of King Edward IV and his Queen, Elizabeth Wydeville.


Edward Plantagenet, Duke of York won the English crown at the Battle of Towton in 1461. He married Elizabeth Wydeville, a widow, out of love in 1465, and not all at court approved of this love match, including his younger brother Richard, Duke of Gloucester. Elizabeth bore Edward a large family. After a succession of princesses, she gave birth to a son in 1470 and then another in 1473.

The King died suddenly in April 1483, thus his eldest son Prince Edward was now King Edward V and was fetched from Wales to come to the Tower to await his coronation. His paternal uncle, Gloucester, intercepted his nephew and took control of the twelve year old King. The Queen Dowager fled into sanctuary at Westminster Abbey with the rest of her children, but was forced to surrender her younger son, Richard, Duke of York to Gloucester. The boys were kept at the Tower of London, and were reported to have been seen shooting targets in the gardens and playing around inside. Gloucester's motives are unclear; he declared the princes and their siblings illegitimate, unfit to inherit the throne. As brother to the dead King, Gloucester was the true heir and crowned in July 1483 as King Richard III. The princes were last seen in the autumn, after being seen less and less. By the time of Richard's defeat and death at the Battle of Bosworth Field in 1485, it was generally believed they were dead. The victor of Bosworth was the half-nephew of King Henry VI, King Henry VII and one of his first moves as King was marrying the boys' eldest sister, Elizabeth of York and founding the Tudor dynasty. Their son became King Henry VIII.

The story did not end there however. Nearly two hundred years on, in 1674, workmen ordered by King Charles II were demolishing the remains of the old Royal

lodgings that lay to the south of the White Tower. At the foot of an old staircase they came across a chest. The two small skeletons of children were found inside. Charles II believed them to be the two lost princes and ordered their reburial in Westminster Abbey, where they remain today.

With the recent discovery of Richard III's remains, it has caused popular calling for the bones of the children to be analysed, using the modern technology to finally prove if they were the princes and they were murdered. The bones were once actually analysed in 1933 and concluded that they were male and were of children close in ages of the princes. Were they murdered? If so, at whose hands did their deaths lie? Any conclusive proof is still yet to be found.



At whose hands did
their deaths lie?

Torture and Tower Hill

Although some were granted a private execution on upon Tower Green within the Tower, most of the condemned prisoners died just outside the walls of the Tower, for all the public to witness. Most were beheaded.

Beheading was not necessarily a straight forward job. The axe (and its wielder) was often clumsy and a dull blade, and crushed the neck in two, rather than cut. The aim was not always on target and jostled the victim out of place on the block. There

is a little evidence to even suggest that the head of the victim had sufficient enough blood and oxygen still within to live for an amount of time. The French revolution has cases where severed heads grimaced in pain when poked and reacted to human voice. Indeed, Anne Boleyn's head caused gasps when her lips still appeared to be moving in prayer, so swift and clean was the blow she

suffered. Mary, Queen of Scots, executed at Fotheringhay Castle in 1587, suffered at least two blows of the axe, shortly after the first blow her servants reported her whispering the words "Sweet Jesus!". Her own lips continued to move for fifteen minutes after the complete severing.

Margaret Pole suffered dearly at her execution in 1541 (mentioned previously) and Thomas Seymour's execution was simply recorded down as dying "irksomely and horribly". However one execution was such a shambles, that even the crowd lost faith in the executioner.

The victim was James Scott the Duke of Monmouth, illegitimate son of King Charles II and one of his many mistresses, Lucy Walters. Charles II died in 1685 and had no legitimate heir, save his brother, James, Duke of York. He became King James II and was unpopular from the start, as he had converted to Catholicism in 1672. Monmouth rose up in rebellion to

Famous Tudors who were executed publicly at Tower Hill

Sir Thomas More – June 1535 – Henry VIII's Lord Chancellor

George Boleyn – May 1536 – Anne Boleyn's brother

Thomas Cromwell – July 1540 Henry VIII's Chief Minister

Thomas Culpeper – December 1541 – 'Lover' of Queen Katherine Howard

Thomas Seymour – March 1549 – Uncle to King Edward VI

Edward Seymour, Duke of Somerset – January 1552 – Lord Protector under the minority of King Edward VI

John Dudley, Duke of Northumberland – August 1553 – Lord Protector under the minority of King Edward VI

Guildford Dudley – February 1554 – husband of the 'nine day' Queen, Lady Jane Grey

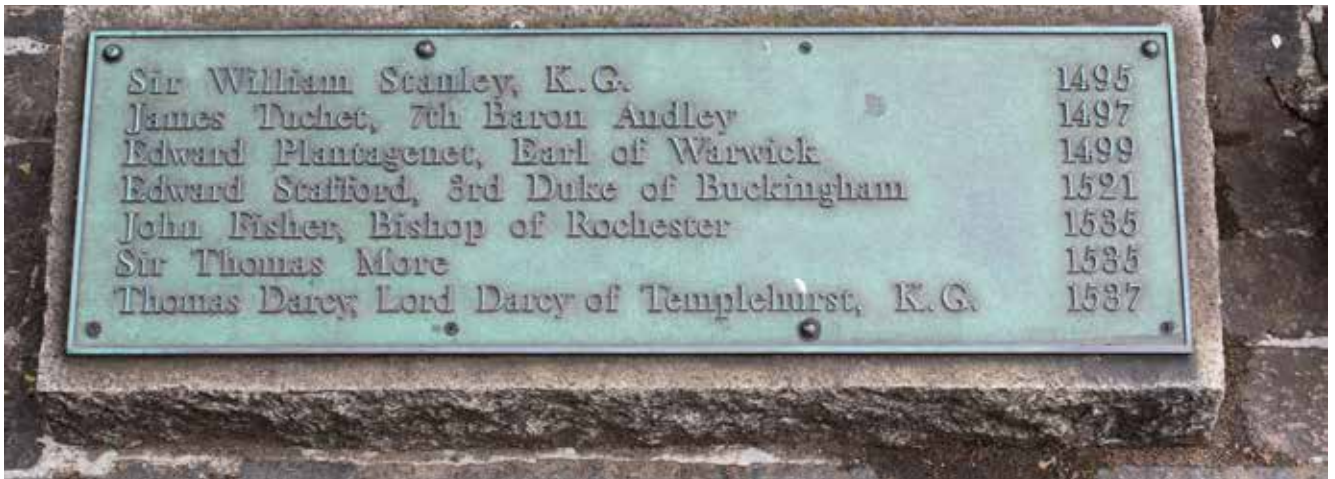
Henry Grey, Duke of Suffolk – February 1554 – Father of Lady Jane Grey



his uncle, claiming his parents had after all secretly married, but his rebellion was quickly crushed by James II and Monmouth was taken to the Tower. He was led out to Tower Hill where he met his terrible end. He paid the executioner, as was custom, and then lay on the block. Many versions of this story claim the executioner was drunk or that Monmouth had insulted him, or he was disappointed with the money he received from Monmouth. Either way the outcome remains the same; Monmouth received at

fire until it had become smouldering embers and the screams had faded away into the smoke. Mercifully, sometimes bags of gunpowder were tied to the victim if the executioners were tipped enough, ensuring a quicker end for the prisoner.

Anne Askew was a prisoner in the Tower in June 1546, accused of heresy. She was married at fifteen to Thomas Kyme, who was a Catholic. Anne was a Protestant which caused a rift in the marriage and after the birth of two children Kyme turned his



least five blows of the axe before his head was severed, some claim as high as fifteen.

The bystanders eager for a good show, boo-ed and jeered the executioner for his blunder and for taking so long, and no doubt also horribly mutilating the victim.

Beheading was often reserved for the highest ranking prisoners. If you were of lower birth, your execution would be truly horrific. You were taken to the scaffold and there hung by the neck until you were barely conscious, then cut down and your abdomen opened brutality before your eyes as your senses would be returning. Your very innards would be flung into the fire, followed by the genitals. Your heart would be ripped out, shown to the crowd and burnt also. Finally your body would be beheaded and cut into quarters and put on display for all to see and learn by. Basically, you would be butchered alive.

Heretics and women prisoners were often spared this brutal method and were burnt at the stake instead. This was by no means less horrifying. The victim would be tied to a stake and bundles of wood or hay were piled around them, sometimes waist high. They were set alight and the crowd watched the

One of the memorial plaques at Tower Hill

wife out of doors for her religious opinions. Once separated from her husband she became a preacher in

London, and was arrested. She was brought to The Tower of London and in order to extract names of fellow Protestants to her interrogators she was tortured. Anne is the only woman known to have been tortured at the Tower. She was put on a terrifying instrument known as "The Rack"; a contraption that had rollers at either end. The prisoner was tied by wrist and ankle to each and they were turned in the opposite direction, stretching the limbs until they were broken. Anne refused to name anyone through her ordeal. Every joint of hers was dislocated and twisted. Her bravery caused the Constable of the Tower, Sir Anthony Kingston to refuse to take part any further.

Her execution was brutal. Carried on a chair because of her injuries, Anne was firmly chained to the stake and for her refusal to co-operate, she was burned slowly. The process took about an hour and witnesses claimed she did not scream until the flames danced around her chest. All the while Bishop Shaxton preached and Anne voiced her approval if he said anything she agreed with and if he didn't,

she said “There he misseth, and speaketh without the Book”.

The rack was only one torture instrument on offer to Tower prisoners. Another item was called the “Scavenger’s Daughter” and has been part of the Tower’s displays since the 18th century, and still on show today. This instrument was designed to crush the victim by compressing the legs into the chest. The neck was locked into a ring at the top of the contraption and the wrists were locked to the sides ankles locked below. The frame was hinged and triangular in shape (though a 16th century pamphlet shows a circular version). The knees were forced into gaps, so the victim had his legs bent upwards. Today’s modern visitor gaps at the device and asks “how did they fit into this?” The answer quite simply is, you couldn’t. This instrument was used rarely and a victim could endure about an hour locked in this position.

The collection also boasts of other ‘delights’ such as the thumb screw and manacles. Torturers could also have a selection of instruments to break digits and pull out finger and toe nails from their beds. Mark Smeaton, the musician accused of adultery with Queen Anne Boleyn was said to have been tortured into confession by using rope with knots

positioned around the eyes and by twisting, those knots would tighten into the eye socket, potentially blinding the victim.

It is uncertain how many prisoners were tortured at the Tower of London. Contrary to popular myth and culture, it was mostly only used in extreme cases and to discover truths, rather than be used as evidence. What cannot be denied are the scores of persons who suffered undoubtedly within its walls as the centuries unfolded. Mental torment and isolation were often the worst prisoners suffered, followed by a brutal death by execution. It is easy for 21st century minds to find this horrifying and that such things were commonplace and once part of life. Most prisoners died bravely and with dignity and were fully aware of what the punishment was if they committed the crime and were willing to suffer to safeguard their soul. Others were simply caught up in politics, intrigue or lost their hearts where their peers disapproved. All in all, the prisoners of the Tower remain immortal and their stories live on vividly in the storytellers. The humble audience can only hope that they all at last, found peace.

TARA BALL

Sources/Further Reading:

Prisoners of the Tower – Pitkin Guide

The Beefeater’s Guide to the Tower of London – G. Abbott

The Mysteries of the Tower of London – G. Abbott

(Other works about the Tower of London and its history by this ex-Yeoman Warder are also a gem to read)

The White Tower – Edward Impey

The Tower of London: An Illustrated History – Edward Impey

Tara was just eight years old when she first ‘discovered’ The Tudors, after studying it in Primary School. Since then it has defined her life for over twenty years. Through encouragement, passion and a very talented memory ‘for dates’, she is an entirely self-taught Tudor expert. She has also completed a short course on Henry VIII: Portraits and Propaganda with Birkbeck, University of London. She has worked in tourism in a well-known historical landmark for over ten years. She lives near London in the UK with her husband, baby daughter and five guinea pigs.

My London

Clare Cherry shows us her view of London through the eyes of someone who loves history...

LONDON means many things to many people. It is a melting pot of humanity, with so many different cultures living in close proximity, mainly in tolerance and acceptance. There is history, futuristic buildings, the centre of world finance, parks, museums, theatres, top quality food, pubs....I could go on and on.

Though living in the English Midlands I have been visiting London regularly since I was a small child. Nowadays I visit the capital two or three times a year. I've been to the Tower so many times I know the ravens by name! To me London is the greatest city in the world. Of course it has its negatives, as does any great city. After the second world war, and the destruction of parts of London, particularly the East End by Hitler's bombers, some so called city developers decided to create buildings that only the insane could think attractive. Thankfully they are gradually being replaced, but still leave an ugly stain on London's architecture.

London's history is unprecedented. From Roman remains, to the Norman invasion; the Tower of London, which was started in 1066, to the Tudors, to the Great

Fire of 1666, to the Georgian beauty, to the Dickensian Victorian workhouses, the city which stood united against the might of the Luftwaffe with dignity and courage, to the protection rings and gang warfare of the nineteen-sixties, to the city which I love and cherish.

There is no city on earth quite like the London. But in fact it is two cities in one. The City of Westminster, a glorious square mile of beauty and history, in which the majority of London's great buildings stand, and then the City of London, which spreads for miles. But the City of London is actually made up of dozens of villages which have amalgamated over time, with the river Thames acting as a barrier between them. Each village has its own history and character, and a post code (zip code) can result in a property

having a very different value to that of its neighbour (the same house in Chelsea can be worth £500,000 more than an identical house less than a street away).

So what is my London? Well, it is where I go to see museums where exhibits take your breath away with their diversity. It is where I go to enjoy history spanning hundreds of years, and the beauty of the pre war architecture. It is also where I go to enjoy the buzz of the capital with its bars and restaurants.

It is difficult to turn a corner in London without being smacked in the face with history. We had London Bridge, though that is now in America. Apparently the American businessman who bought it thought he was buying Tower Bridge.....that must have





come as a bit as a shock....oh yes, we have con artists too!

But we also have the Tower of London, Tower Bridge, Greenwich, Somerset House and Palaces galore. The problem with London, which is a nice problem to have, is that there is so much history that we can't get it all in. This means that you can be walking along, minding your own business, and all of a sudden you see a plaque on a wall saying 'Emily Pankhurst Lived Here'. It's on a side street. No bells or whistles. Just that. In fact, you can just walk round London and on nearly every street there is a plaque of some sort saying someone great lived or worked there; everyone from Alexander Fleming to Florence Nightingale.

Apart from history, I love London culture. So much of London, which used to be no go areas are being so-called 'gentrified'. Now I have no idea what that means save for the fact they are now safe and nice to be in.

Take Brick Lane. That used to be in the heart of the Kray Twins domain. Everyone in England knows of the Kray Twins, those outside the UK may not. Well, they were gang leaders who ran protection rackets in the sixties. Their 'Manor' stretched across the East End causing fear and ultimately death to a few. But they are long gone, and now Brick Lane is a haven for all us people who love a good curry! Yes, it is a street of curry houses, with the odd chocolate heaven added in for good measure; places where home made chocolate loveliness are there solely to make us fat and happy.

Let's take a look at just some of our museums. You can take in the Imperial War Museum on the Lambeth Road. I initially did not want to go here, and only went because my better half wanted to go. Not my thing. It was actually the building which was originally the old 'Bedlam' (before it moved from what's now Liverpool

Tower Bridge
Photo © Tim Ridgway 2013

Station). It is the history of war in Britain but mainly the two world wars. You can go down into a bunker and see what it was like to be in a Blitz. You can also go through the trenches of WWI and feel (kind of) what it was like to be in that horror. And there was an exhibition of the liberation of Auschwitz. The English do things well and things badly, but what we do well we do very well. I wept during the whole visit.

Then there is the British Museum. This has an eclectic array of wonders from around the world, including Greece and Egypt. The British Museum holds the Elgin Marbles, those marbles taken from the Acropolis. The Greek want them back. The marbles were in disarray and would have been destroyed. Lord Elgin protected them by bringing them back to England. If it were not for him they would not be in existence anymore. The Greeks can

The London Eye
Photo © Tim Ridgway 2013

argue till they're blue in the face, but they belong here. I'm English, and I'm not apologising for it. Some people have got grumpy about this. Personally I don't care as long as these treasures are protected. They are protected in English museums.

The Natural History Museum has a wonderful collection of exhibits from around the world, which are housed in the most exquisite building. You could spend a lot of time just looking at the unique and beautiful carvings of animals, birds, insects etc which adorn the walls and pillars.

Next door is the Science Museum, and just across the road from that is the Victoria and Albert Museum. All are housed in South Kensington within an easy walk of Harrods, with its glorious food hall and millionaires row.

Of course there are The National Gallery and National Portrait Gallery presided over by Nelson's Column in Trafalgar Square. From there you can

take a short walk up The Mall to Buckingham Palace. Or another short walk to the Houses of Parliament and Westminster Abbey, where you can take a look at Downing Street on the way, and pay your respects at the Cenotaph.

In addition to the dozens of museums, London is a very green city with its numerous parks and squares, including Kensington Park, Hyde Park, Richmond Park, Regent's Park, Primrose Hill, St James Park and Hampstead Heath to name but a few. These are oasis' of calm in an otherwise bustling city. Berkley Square nightingales may well have sung in the past, and perhaps they still do, but nowadays they may well be choking on the 4x4 fumes. Still, the squares of London, surrounded by stunning Georgian and Regency Properties are beautiful, even though most of us can only dream of being rich enough to own a property in any of them.

Then we have the many markets which dot the city. There is Camden Market, which sprawls over a huge area and sells pretty much anything you want. It also has fantastic architecture, and numerous metal horse sculptures many of which are huge and all of which are intricate and lovely.

There's Brick Lane Market which, as I say above, has the added benefit of linking on to a haven for curry lovers, with its Indian Restaurants vying for custom. 'FREE POPPADOMS, FREE DRNKS'; each trying to outdo the other in a good natured bantering.

Spitalfields Market used to sell fruit and veg, now it is far more upmarket, with its crafts and quirky gifts. There are many more, including Columbia Market which sells exclusively flowers and plants, but my two favourites have to be Borough Market and of course Covent Garden.



Borough sells exclusively food, and it's enormous. There is every type of food you can think of. Many of the stalls provide free tasters, meaning you can get quite full on freebies without bothering with lunch! But the market is surrounded by restaurants, and filled with places selling top quality street food. Street food has become a popular thing in London over the last few years. Everything from kebabs to fajitas; steak pies to chow mein. It makes the heart, and the stomach, very happy.

All Elisa Doolittle wanted was, 'A room somewhere, far away from the cold night air'. She was in Covent Garden selling flowers. Now all I want is to be in Covent Garden, with its restaurants, lovely and unique shops and its street entertainers (now that's lovely).

Then there are attractions which are just for fun. The

London Dungeon is one of those attractions, and although there is an element of history, it's more Disney meets torture. Then there's the London Bridge Experience, again great fun, but would probably be more realistic in Texas. There's the Millennium Wheel, which takes thirty minutes to do a circuit, and gives you unprecedented views across the city. We also have the Millennium Dome (better known nowadays as the O2 Arena). Now the Dome has a rather chequered history. It was built for the millennium and does what it says on the box. It's a dome built on the site of the old London dockyards. It was a sort of educational thing in various zones. I went to it and it made me want to drown myself in the Thames. However, the Dome was saved from jaws of defeat (or at least demolition) and is now a fantastic

concert venue, complete with numerous shops and restaurants.

There's also Madam Tussauds, having waxworks of the rich and famous (some of which seem to be more realistic than the originals)! We've sadly lost the Planetarium, which I loved, but there's a very good one in Winchester.

Then there is the Theatre District with numerous theatres showing a diverse and eclectic variety of plays and musicals, all surrounded by hundreds of hotels, bars and restaurants, including the wonderful Chinese District with its jaunty lanterns.

Further afield there is Hampton Court Palace with its majestic architecture and gardens. Of course there are hundreds of years of history, but there is also the world famous maze and the oldest living grapevine in the





world. It's massive. Tim Ridgway bought a cutting from it and managed to set an alarm off with it when it went over a barrier while he was looking at a painting. Oh how we all laughed when he was arrested! Only joking, he was just asked to keep control of his cutting!

We also have the Harry Potter World. You get on a bus, with Potter stuff all over the windows, and they take you to Watford while showing the films. It's brilliant. Take a walk down Diagon Alley and see the sets of the classrooms, Dumbledore's study and Hagrid's cottage. Walk over the rickety bridge and see into the Knight Bus. It has all the original props, and you can drink butter

beer and buy some every flavoured beans.

As per England, it all costs a fortune. But it's wonderful if you're happy to pay £65 pp for the day including travel.

Further still there is the splendour of Dover Castle, and of course Hever Castle, as well as Penshurst Place and Windsor Castle. But then we are leaving London, so let's get back.

London during the day and London at night are two very different species. However, both are exciting and exhilarating, and both cost a fortune. It cannot be said that London isn't expensive. If you wanted to do everything in London that there is to do, you

Hampton Court Palace
Photo © Tim Ridgway 2012

would probably need to remortgage your house.

Of course, the museums are great free entertainment, and public transport is reasonably priced and regular. Window shopping costs nothing and many of the Churches only ask for a donation, as do the museums. And of course you can simply walk through the lovely parks and the famous streets marvelling at the history.

Alternatively take the open top 'Red Bus', which has three routes taking you round the whole of London. It's a hop on hop off and the ticket (not too expensive at about £25) lasts all

**The ceiling of an
Indian restaurant**
Photo © Tim Ridgway 2013



day and takes you on all three routes. Being nosy, I love being able to take a look over walls on the Double Decker to see things you would miss in a car.

London is also about friends. When we visit London, more often than not it is to visit friends who live on the outskirts, and we travel in by train/underground. They aren't so keen on history, but they do love a good meal and drink. We can take a cruise from Kew to Westminster and see a show, or spend the day in Kew Gardens or Syon Park. Or there's always a lovely pub on the side of

the river in Richmond to have a meal and watch the world go by.

But for all the reasons I love London, my main love is the history, especially Tudor history. Wherever you walk you know that your footsteps have been walked in for hundreds of years. When you touch a wall at the Tower you wonder who from the past has touched that very spot; Henry VIII, Anne Boleyn, Catherine Howard, William the Conqueror? To visit cells and towers where alleged traitors awaited trial and execution, including George Boleyn, Thomas Wyatt

An old-style double decker bus
Photo © Tim Ridgway 2013

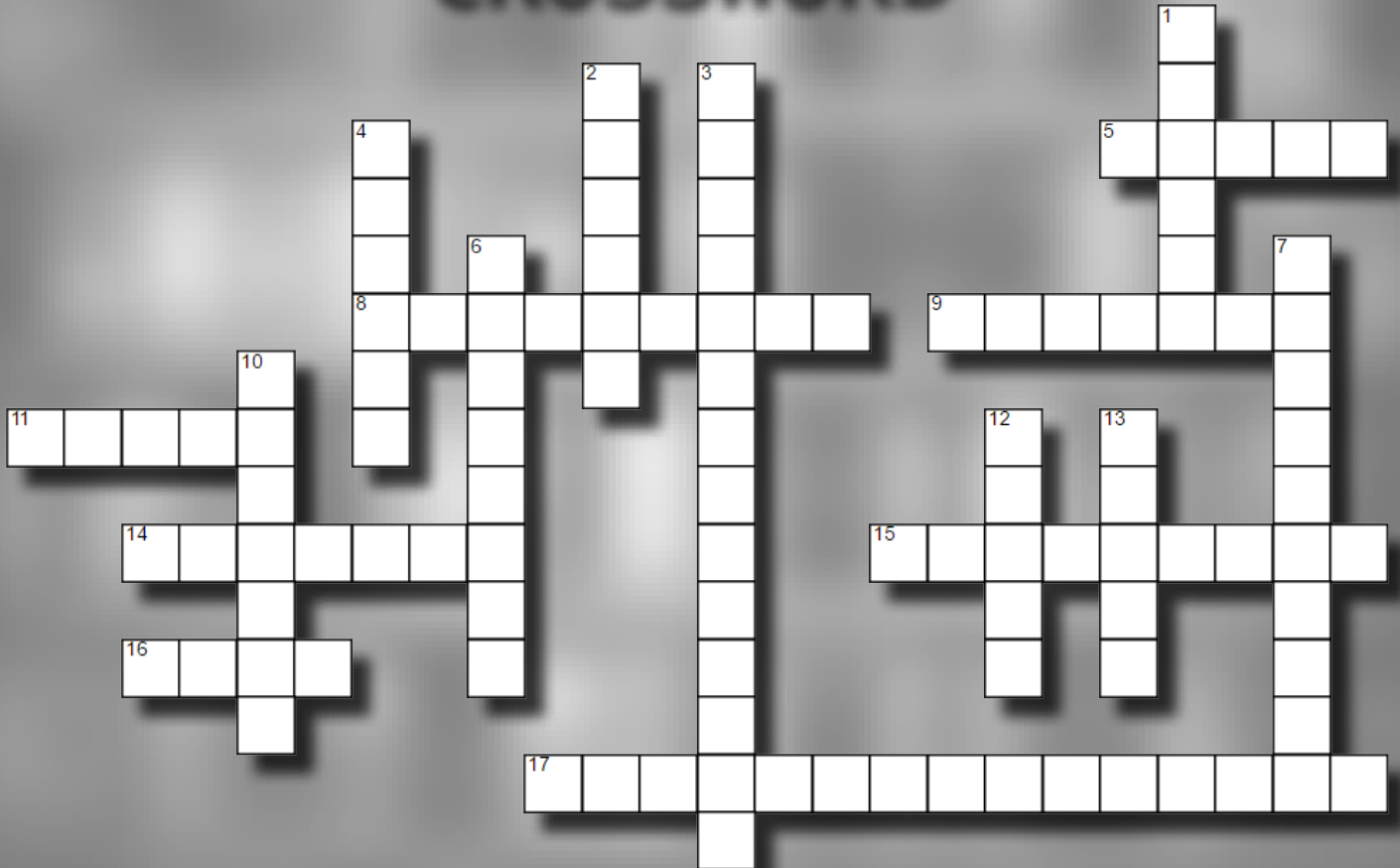
the Younger and Sir Francis Drake.

When you wander around Westminster Abbey you are wandering around graves and tombs of people you have read about for years. Their humanity and mortality brought home to you by the words of their eulogies; Anne of Cleves, Elizabeth I, Mary I to name but a few. It is extraordinary to walk down the same corridor at Hampton Court Palace that poor Catherine Howard ran down in order to get to Henry and plead for her life. Nowhere on earth does history come to life more than it does in London. It is magical and I am very lucky for that great city to be so near to me that I am able to regularly enjoy the wonders of it.

CLARE CHERRY



TUDOR FICTION CROSSWORD



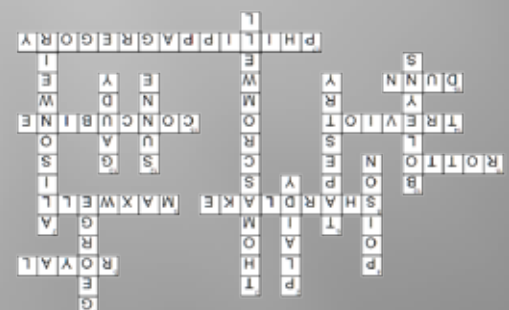
ACROSS

- 5 Novel by Jean Plaidy, Murder Most
- 8 C J Sansom's protagonist is Matthew
- 9 The Secret Diary of Anne Boleyn is a novel by Robin
- 11 Cor is a novel by Adrienne Dillard
- 14 Thomas is the protagonist of DK Wilson's Traitor's Mark, The First Horseman and The Devil's Chalice
- 15 Norah Lofts' Anne Boleyn novel - The
- 16 Dear Heart, How Like You This? is a book by Wendy J
- 17 Author of The Other Boleyn Girl

DOWN

- 1 Author of The Autobiography of Henry VIII (and it's not Henry!) - Margaret
- 2 Pseudonym of Eleanor Hibbert used for her European royalty fiction, Jean
- 3 The protagonist of Wolf Hall and Bring Up the Bodies by Hilary Mantel
- 4 The Colour of is a novel by Toni Mount
- 6 The Crown, The Chalice and The form a trilogy by Nancy Bilyeau
- 7 Author of Innocent Traitor and The Lady Elizabeth
- 10 Laura Anderson's historical trilogy concerned with Tudor family - The
- 12 The in Splendour is a novel by Sharon Kay Penman
- 13 Brief Hour is a novel by Margaret Campbell Barnes

Answers



THE DUDLEYS

A Drama in Four Acts

by

Derek Wilson

PART FOUR

Biographers, romantic novelists and film makers have all made great play with Elizabeth I's 'heart and stomach of a king speech' delivered at Tilbury camp during the Armada scare but no-one, to the best of my knowledge, quotes in full this splendid piece of oratory and, in particular, its peroration. Turning to the leader of her land army, she declared that he was someone, 'than whom never prince commanded a more noble or worthy subject'

[L.S. Marcus, J. Mueller and M.B. Rose, eds. *Elizabeth I Collected Works*, Chicago, 2000, p.326]

The man she was referring to was Robert Dudley, Earl of Leicester. How could it be that this sage and shrewd monarch reposed such trust in a man whose grandfather, father and brother had been executed for treason? This certainly puzzled the chronicler, William Camden (1551-1623):

Whether this proceeded from any virtue of his, whereof he gave some

shadowed tokens, or from their common condition of imprisonment under Queen Mary, or from his nativity and the hidden consent of the stars at the hour of their birth, and thereby a most straight conjunction of their minds, a man cannot easily say [W. Camden, *The History of the Most Renowned and Victorious Princess Elizabeth*, ed. W.J. MacCaffrey, Chicago, 1970, p.53]

Generations of historians, basing their judgement on the assumption that Robert Dudley came of tainted blood and was a thoroughly 'bad lot' have shared that bewilderment. Thus Conyers Read: 'one of the most amazing things about this amazing woman was her blind faith in Leicester' [C. Read, *Lord Burghley and Queen Elizabeth*, London, 1960, p.435]. Might it just be possible that they were all wrong and that she was right?

Elizabeth and Robert had known each other most of their lives. Although there is some doubt about Robert's date of birth there was, at most, a little over 14 months between their ages. As a boy, Robert was a member of Edward VI's household and would have met the king's half-sister not infrequently. We have no means of knowing what impression Robert made on the princess but he grew into a vigorous, extrovert young man who turned many female heads. In 1550, in what was probably a love match, he married Amy Robsart, the daughter of a Norfolk gentleman. Three years later Robert was in the Tower of London, following the failed attempt to put Jane Grey on the throne. He and his 4 brothers were confined in the Beauchamp Tower where visitors can still see the carvings they made on the walls. Robert's was an oak tree (Latin: *quercus robur* = strong oak) with his initials beneath. From the Tower young Guildford (the would-be king) was led out to execution in 1553 and John, the eldest died the following year of illness sustained in prison. To add to the boys' woes, their much loved mother died early in 1553. Jane Dudley's death seems to have been the signal for the release of Ambrose, Robert and Henry. Philip II of Spain, Queen Mary's husband, was anxious not to attract the hostility of the English no-

bility by appearing excessively vengeful. That does not mean that the brothers were not watched very carefully.

Someone else under close scrutiny was Princess Elizabeth. She spent most of Mary's reign at Hatfield Palace, Hertfordshire, an old royal residence that Edward VI had made over to John Dudley, who, in turn, had exchanged it for lands with Elizabeth, so that she could live comfortably in her favourite childhood home. Robert knew the house well and may well have visited the princess there in the months after his release. It was during this period that a close bond developed between them. Robert had to sell some of his own lands in these difficult years but he made cash gifts to his royal friend, which she later referred to in order to still wagging tongues. The favours she bestowed on Dudley, she claimed, were by way of gratitude to one of the few men who had helped her in her time of need. When it was known that Mary was seriously ill, in 1558, many hopeful courtiers made their way to Hatfield but when Elizabeth knew that she was queen the first person she sent for was Robert Dudley. She made him her Master of the Horse, which meant that he was in charge of all the transport arrangements for the court and in almost daily attendance upon her.

From the outset of her reign it was assumed that the queen would marry. That was what queens did; it was inconceivable that they could perform all the functions of monarchy unaided. That meant that she would either have to choose a husband from a foreign royal house or from the ranks of the English nobility. Both were fraught with problems and Elizabeth did what she frequently did when presented with a choice – she procrastinated. Meanwhile,

she could enjoy the next best thing – the constant attendance of a handsome and lively young man who was devoted to her. The one great advantage Dudley had in this situation was that he was married. There could be no question of ‘courtship’ between them

Then, on 8 September 1560 – Disaster! Lady Amy Dudley died at her Oxfordshire retreat, and she died in suspicious circumstances. The Mysterious Affair at Cumnor Hall is a story worthy of Agatha Christie. The discovery of Amy’s body with a broken neck at the foot of a staircase has been examined and re-examined, explained and explained away over and over again for five and a half centuries and we will never be able to crack the case conclusively. What we can say about this tragedy is that it put an end to an extremely unhealthy situation. Amy had never shared her husband’s court life because, as I believe, the possessive queen wanted Dudley to herself. The result was a great deal of extremely poisonous gossip. Those close to Elizabeth were in despair at the damage she was inflicting on her own reputation and courtiers jealous of Robert’s influence had a field day inventing or exaggerating tales of lascivious adultery. The scandal surrounding Amy’s death put a stop to the ‘Elizabeth and Dudley’ saga. The queen could no longer have her cake and eat it. Robert was now eligible but the scandal meant that he was, in reality, no longer eligible. Elizabeth was determined to retain her favourite but the relationship inevitably moved into a lower gear.

1562 brought a greater crisis. The queen contracted smallpox and came within a whisker of death. Her councillors were in a frenzy at the prospect of a disputed succession. In one of her

moments of clarity Elizabeth, like her half-brother before her, declared her will for the governance of England. If she died Robert Dudley was to be proclaimed Protector of the Realm with a salary of £20,000. I shudder to think what would have happened if this royal diktat had ever been put to the test. On her recovery one of Elizabeth’s first acts was to appoint Robert to her Council. In 1564 she, who was very sparing in the disbursement of honours, raised her friend to the Earldom of Leicester.

As a member of the government Dudley acted responsibly, though intermittently at odds with his old rival Sir William Cecil. He took seriously the public responsibilities his trusted position entailed. He was a leading patron of preachers and scholars and one of the earliest supporters of the Elizabethan theatre. As a committed advocate of maritime endeavour and exploration he was a principal backer of Frobisher’s quest for the North West Passage and of Francis Drake’s pioneer circumnavigation of 1577-80.

As to the ‘Elizabeth and Robert’ story, it would be easy, as many have done, to romanticise what was, in some respects, a tragedy. As time passed, they became an almost typical middle-aged married couple, devoted to each other and occasionally having angry rows. Leicester could never be an unofficial consort, for the queen would permit no trespass upon her royal prerogative. By the same token, he could never be a husband – not to Elizabeth, nor to any other woman. Because of her own enforced spinsterdom, the queen was almost insanely jealous of any of her close attendants who chose to marry. Robert had clandestine affairs and sired a son whose legitimacy was, years later, called

in question. Thanks to Elizabeth's possessiveness, he faced the prospect of his dynasty coming to an end. None of his brothers had had children. In September 1578 the tension proved too great and Robert married his current (pregnant) lover, Lettice Knollys. What passed in secret between Elizabeth and Robert as a result we have no means of knowing but what is clear is that the queen vented her anger on the 'other woman'. Lettice was banished from the court and never re-admitted to royal favour. Like Amy before her, Lettice became a non-person, her existence not permitted to change Elizabeth's relationship with her 'Sweet Robin'.

In politics the two major issues for conciliar debate were religion and foreign relations. Leicester, along with others of the Council, favoured the Puritan cause at home and wished to see England taking a positive stance on the continent against the major Catholic champion, Philip II. Elizabeth was much less pro-active. This was often a cause of tension between Robert and Elizabeth. Not until plots against her, aimed at putting Mary Stuart on the throne, multiplied in the 1580s did Elizabeth consent to send troops to the Netherlands to aid beleaguered Protestants. The man she chose to lead the expedition was Robert Dudley.

The intervention was not a success. Robert found himself caught between the leaders of the United Provinces who wanted vigorous action from him and

orders from the queen that he was not to commit her too heavily. When English action provoked the attempted Armada invasion of 1588 that Elizabeth had always feared, it was again to her old friend that she turned to lead her defensive land forces. On 8 August the queen came to Tilbury camp and made the most famous of all her speeches, including the ringing endorsement of her lieutenant-general.

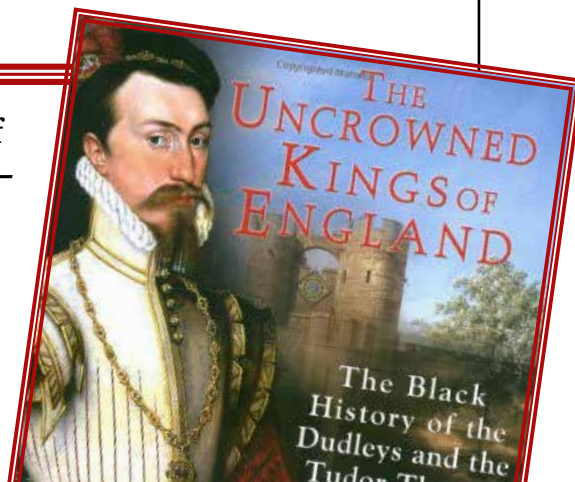
By then the danger was already past and Philip's battered ships were retreating into the storm-tossed North Sea. Dudley returned to court days later before leaving to take the waters at Buxton. What neither he nor Elizabeth knew was that this 'goodbye' was, in fact, 'farewell'. Robert Dudley, Earl of Leicester died on 4 September. Elizabeth was shattered by the news. 'She was so grieved that for some days she shut herself in her chamber alone and refused to speak to anyone, until the Treasurer and other councillors had the doors broken open' [*Calendar of State Papers Spanish*, IV, p.231].

The only son of Robert and Lettice died in infancy, so that, when Ambrose, the last remaining male member of the family died two years later, a remarkable dynasty and one intimately bound up with the Tudors, came to an end.

Or did it? Leicester's 'base son', another Robert Dudley, was still alive and would prove, in some ways, to be the most remarkable member of a remarkable family.



**Derek Wilson is the author of
*The Uncrowned Kings of England –
The Black Legend of the Dudleys***



Every Picture Tells a Story

Melanie V Taylor

Paintings can be a tremendous source of inspiration for writers of fiction: they can also be a fiction in themselves.

The beginning of the sixteenth century was the infancy of the art market in England, but English art does not have the same breadth of subject matter as our European counterparts. The reason for this can be placed fairly and squarely at the feet of the English Reformation. Thanks to the iconoclasm during the reign of Edward VI and Oliver Cromwell's Commonwealth, England has lost at least 90% of our medieval artistic heritage! The accession of Henry VII marked a rebirth of artistic interest in the country.

We have portraits of the Tudor great and the good created by artists of varying levels of talent, but there is very little imagery that conveys a story. Holbein paints incisive portraits that have psychological depth, Levina Teerlinc created complex narratives in the illuminated margins of the 1546 Treaty of Ardres and miniature portraits for both Mary & Elizabeth, but it is not until the arrival of Hans Eworth in the mid 1540s do we see the introduction into England of the allegorical portrait.

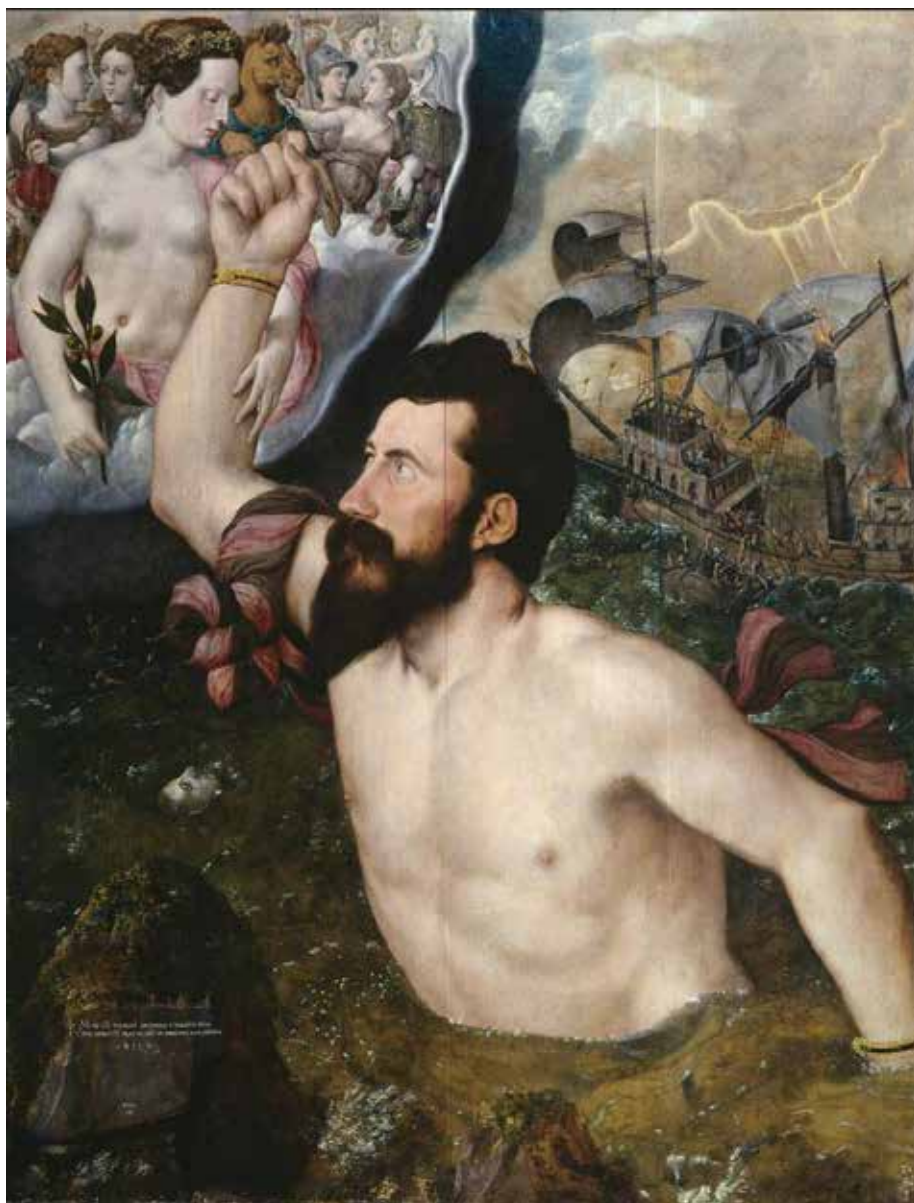
Eworth was born in Antwerp, the commercial capital of the Hapsburg Empire, a city of international banking and the focus of a number of international trade routes. The city where William Tyndale was

charged and found guilty of heresy, then executed. Where Myles Coverdale was in exile and is thought to have helped Tyndale with his translations of the Bible. Where publishing and new ideas flourished. Europe was in the grip of the Protestant Reformation and in 1544 both Hans Eworth and his brother, Nicholas, were expelled from Antwerp for heresy and ended up in England.

Hans had been admitted as a freeman of the Guild of St Luke in Antwerp in 1544, which suggests that immediately on becoming a master painter he is in trouble. There are records showing that Nicholas was living in Southward in 1545 and Hans was granted letters of denization in 1550, making it clear that he intends to settle permanently in England. They both appear in the 1550 records of the Dutch Church in Austin Friars.

Virtually all Eworth's surviving works are portraits and, in particular, this portrait dated 1550 (Courtauld Institute Collection). It was not until 1967 was the sitter identified. It is thought to be the first surviving example of an allegorical portrait of an Englishman.

At first glance you might wonder what this man is doing standing up to his waist in water while a



Beneath this couplet are written the initials S.I.L. and H.E. so not much of a clue as to what is happening in the picture.

There are further inscriptions on the bracelets worn on each wrist of our central figure, but in Latin.

The bracelet on his right hand says “Nec Flexit Lucrum 1550”: and the left “Nec Fregit Discremen”. Together these translate as “Neither swayed by love of gain nor deterred by danger”.¹ Taking the written clues as our guide and the use of a rock to carry the couplet, we learn that this is a man of courage and steadfastness.

Perhaps the ship might give us a further inkling as to the identification of this man.

In a storm tossed sea a ship has been struck by lightning and the main mast is falling. Fire has broken out on the foredeck and there is a boat, full of survivors, being rowed away from immediate danger. To the left of the naked man is a white face floating in the waves – who

ship is sinking behind him and several women have appeared in a cloud above him. Clearly the ladies in the cloud are divine beings – why else would they be in a cloud! Is this man being saved? He has a raised fist and the foremost goddess appears to be caressing his forearm. In her other hand she holds what is clearly an olive branch. Is his clenched fist telling her that he does not want her ministrations?

Why is there a rock (lower left)? Has the ship foundered on these rocks? On further examination we see there is writing on this rock. This might give us a clue.

More than a rock Amydys the Raging Seas
 The constant heart no Danger
 Dreddys nor Fears.

is he?

Our divine ladies have been identified as Pax, Venus, Minerva and the Three Graces are seen together behind the helmeted Minerva. The Three Graces are, in age order with the eldest first, Thalia (good cheer), Euphrosyne (mirth) and the youngest, Aglaea (splendour). It has been suggested that one of the Graces is holding a bulging purse and reaches into a purse as if the content of this purse requires adding to, but it may be that this person is not a Grace.²

1 p65: Dynasties: Painting in Tudor & Jacobean England 1530 – 1630

2 p65: Dynasties: Painting in Tudor & Jacobean England 1530 – 1630

The central nude is Pax, daughter of Jupiter and Justitia (Justice) who is often portrayed holding an olive branch. To the right of Pax it may be Venus holding the bridle of the war-horse with one hand and her other hand resting on top of some armour.

What is teasing is trying to work out which particular Venus is being alluded to. The sources all agree that the goddess was venerated as the mother of the Roman progenitor, Aeneas. Aeneas was the Trojan

hero who escaped the sack of Troy and fled to Italy and is said to have founded the Roman people.³ His father was the mortal Trojan Prince Anchises. Venus, like many of the Greek & Roman gods and goddesses, has many guises and it may be that in Eworth's painting she is Venus Cloacina – Venus the Purifier. Pliny the Elder relates how in this guise she is a goddess of union and reconciliation because, in the early days of Rome, the Romans met the Sabine tribe at

the spring of Cloaca Maxima to conclude a peace treaty. It was originally a stream, but thanks to the wonders of Etruscan and Roman engineering is now the oldest sewage system in the world!

On the other hand, the deity holding the bulging bag may not be one of the Three Graces, but another reference to Venus, who was also the goddess of

finance. It may be that the woman holding the horse is one of the Graces – Thalia, perhaps.

Minerva stands behind the woman holding the horse. She was the Roman goddess of wisdom and war, who sprang from her father's head. Her father was also Jupiter.

Clearly there are further messages being told here – but do we have the 'wit' to discover them?

There are references to war, wisdom, peace and

love. This suggests our central figure is a soldier, but just who is he?

The first version of this painting is in the collection of the Courtauld Institute, The Strand, London. It is painted on panel; measures 43 x 33 inches (109.3 x 83.8 cms) and was presented to the Institute by Viscount Lee of Fareham in 1950. It was in a very bad state and has undergone much repair and conservation. A later copy of this portrait, dated 1591, hangs in Dunster Castle, Somerset. The



date and commissioner of this copy furnishes us with another clue as to the identity of the naked man. For many years it was thought this later painting was the first version of the one in the Courtauld. It was not until 1960, when a technical comparison was undertaken, that it was discovered that the Courtauld version was the original. It was also revealed that this painting has two different hands: one artist has painted the group in the cloud and another, the main body of the painting. One single hand – different from the other two – painted the 1591 copy. At this

³ Virgin, *The Aeneid*; translated by David West; Penguin Classics, 2003

stage the Courtauld painting had not been identified as being by Eworth, merely as the artist HE. This is a screen shot of the 1591 version now owned by the National Trust, which gives a much clearer picture of what the original looked like.

This link will take you to the page.

<http://www.nationaltrustcollections.org.uk/object/726067>

Not much is known about Eworth's early life and influences so we can only speculate as to what they were. Tabitha Barber proposes that perhaps Eworth's contemporary, Frans Floris, influenced our artist.⁴ Floris was

born in Antwerp, but little is known about his training. His few surviving paintings are often allegorical and it is believed the majority of his works were destroyed by Protestant reformers. We do know that Floris travelled to Rome, probably in the early 1540s, but whether he influenced Eworth is a matter of speculation. What is fact is that there are few English allegorical

paintings surviving from the 16th century. Eworth may have been the one who introduced the genre into England, but as you can see, it is hard work deciphering the messages within such a painting.

So who is this man in our painting and why the complex visual narrative? In 1967 Dame Frances Yates proposed that it was the courtier, diplomat and soldier, Sir John Luttrell and the monogram was that of Hans Eworth. It has since been established that, George Luttrell, Sir John's nephew and heir,

commissioned the 1591 version. Eworth died in 1574, giving us another mystery (to remain unsolved at this time) as to who painted the copy.

The date of 1550 appears after the initials S.I.L. clearly marking a very specific event as well as the date of the painting.

During the war with Scotland (1543 – 1551) Luttrell distinguished himself as a soldier and naval man. He was the son of Sir Andrew Luttrell and Margaret Wyndham. John Luttrell served as a page in Cardinal Wolsey's household and was certainly in the Cardinal's household in 1527. He may have been part of the embassy that went to France in that year.

During the first part of this war, Luttrell was serving with Edward Seymour, Earl of Hertford and, immediately following the capture of Edinburgh, was knighted by Seymour on 11th May 1544. The English landed at Leith having sailed from Tynemouth of the first favourable tide. The Scottish army watched as the English captured two of



King James V's ships and looted the city. Is the dismantled ship a reference to this engagement?

John Luttrell served in France and his brother Hugh, a captain in the English army deserted during the campaign to take Boulogne. From letters by the diplomat Odet de Selve (1504-1563) we learn that his brother Hugh may have attempted to betray the English to the French. As well as the deserter Hugh, one of Luttrell's brothers was killed at Dundee in 1548, so perhaps the head of the corpse floating in the sea is a reference to either one of them, or perhaps both. It may be that the legends on the bracelets may

⁴ p66 *ibid.*

be there to underscore John Luttrell's steadfastness and loyalty to the English crown.

After the death of Henry VIII in January 1547 John Luttrell served Protector Somerset by leading a force of 300 men at the Battle of Pinkie Musselburgh where the Scots were beaten - again. His command of the forces in various Scottish battles was a significant contribution to the war.

Unfortunately Luttrell was captured, imprisoned during this campaign. He was ransomed for £1000. On his release after the signing of the Treaty of Boulogne in 1550 and the payment of the ransom, he was immediately arrested for a debt of £19 11s to a Dundee merchant! The debt was paid by the Scottish Regent, Arran and Luttrell returned to England where he was rewarded with a gift of land by the new head of the King Edward's Council, John Dudley, Earl of Warwick.

For many years it was thought that the Canning Jewel in the Victoria & Albert Museum was a reference to this painting. A Triton, brandishing a scimitar and holding an enamelled shield of a terrifying face was long thought to have been a gift during the 16th century from a Medici to an Indian Mogul Emperor. The craftsman was thought to have been Benvenuto Cellini. The body is made from a baroque pearl and there are diamonds and a significant carved ruby. The armllets are a neat way of covering the join of the enamelled art to the pearl. In many ways the armllet is similar to the fabric tied around Luttrell's arm in the painting.

It may be a trifle gaudy for today's taste, but there are 16th century surviving examples of this type of jewel. However, it has been established that while this jewel was given to Charles John Canning, Governor General of India from 1856 – 1861, it is a 19th century piece.⁵ This demonstrates the sort of family myth that may build up around a particular heirloom and how an art historian saw both the jewel and the painting(s) and drew a novel conclusion.

Various suggestions have been made as to why Sir John is portrayed naked in water. Since this painting is dripping with allegory and Luttrell was part of the combined English forces of land and sea, Yates says that Eworth chose to represent him as a Triton,

that mythical half man, half fish marine deity of the Greeks and Romans.⁶ Depending on the whim of the God Poseidon, tritons would blow their conch shells to command the waves to rise or become calm. There is a similar being in Germanic mythologies called a Nekk who is described as a magical, powerful bearded man with the tail of a fish, who could shape shift and caused storms. What we can deduce is that Eworth was familiar with a form of marine deity and Roman mythology, suggesting he had a classical education.

Eworth is famous for his portraits of Queen Mary, but we know from the royal accounts he also worked for the Office of Revels during the reign of Elizabeth I. His duties would have included designing sets and costumes for the various entertainments required by the Elizabethan Court.

In 1569 he painted this allegory of Queen Elizabeth and the Three Goddesses. It is still in its original frame and hangs in the Queen's drawing room at Windsor Castle. In the background we see a castle on a hill, which is identifiable as Windsor and is thought to be the oldest painted representation of the castle. If you look over the shoulder of the naked Venus, you can see her empty chariot drawn by swans.

Queen Elizabeth emerges from a richly decorated interior holding her orb and sceptre and accompanied by two of her ladies. Outside is the goddess Juno beckoning her to join her and her companions, who just happen to be the goddesses Minerva and Venus; or is she turning to make a quick exit. She has dropped one of her shoes. Venus has taken off her embroidered smock and is accompanied by her son, Cupid, who we recognise from the quiver of arrows lying on the ground and his re-curved bow near his mother's feet. Red and white roses are scattered on the ground – both symbols of the goddess, but we might also interpret them as the roses of Lancaster and York. Minerva wears her breastplate and helmet and carries a banner, but her stance is as if she has been surprised by Elizabeth's appearance.

Eworth has subverted the original story of the Judgement of Paris where the mortal Trojan warrior, Paris, is given the task of judging a beauty competition and deciding which of the three goddesses is the fairest and awarding them a golden apple. In the

5 <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/culture/donotmigrate/3673521/VandA-jewellery-treasures-brought-to-sparkling-life.html>

6 p65 *Dynasties: Painting in Tudor & Jacobean England 1530-1630*.



original story, Juno offers to make him king of all Europe and Asia; Minerva offers him skill in war, but canny Venus offers him the most beautiful woman in the world – Helen, wife of the Greek king Menelaus. Paris awards the golden apple to Venus and takes Helen back to Troy. According to the legend, this is what leads to the Trojan War and there are various accounts of the war by various ancient authors, but Homer’s Iliad is the most famous.

In Eworth’s painting the orb is substituted for the apple and the queen also holds another symbol of her queenship – the sceptre. It is the only known portrait where the queen is shown wearing gloves.

We are guided to a basic understanding of this allegory from the inscription on the frame:

IVNO POTENS SCEPTRIS ET MENTIS
ACVMINE PALLAS / ET ROSEO VENERIS
FVLGET IN ORE DECVS / ADFVIT
PALLAS IVNO PERCVLSA REFGIT
OBSVPVIT PALLAS ERVBVITQ VENVVS.

The entry on the Royal Collection website kindly provides a translation:

*Pallas was keen of brain, Juno was queen of
might, / The rosy face of Venus was in beauty
shining bright, / Elizabeth then came, And,
overwhelmed, Queen Juno took flight; / Pallas
was silenced: Venus blushed for shame*

Clearly this painting is designed to flatter the English queen by showing her triumphant over the three goddesses, but it could also be a piece of propaganda to underline the fact that Elizabeth is queen by virtue of divine right because she is the daughter of a king.

Was it a gift from the artist, or was Eworth commissioned to paint it to be a gift from someone else? We will never know, but we do know that the queen kept the painting because it was seen hanging in Whitehall Palace in 1600 by Baron Waldstein.

During the Renaissance, European artists turned out allegorical paintings by the ton, inspired by

books such as Ovid's *Ars Amatoria* (The Art of Love), Homer's *Iliad* and *Odyssey*, the writings of Seneca the Elder and the Younger, the works of Livy and so many more. I find it such a shame that these classical tales are not taught today. The glimmer of hope on the horizon is that designers of computer games have discovered them and found that these stories have boundless opportunities for inspiring cyber adventures. Before online gaming, the antics of the classical gods provided artists with the inspiration and opportunity for portraying the female nude, which never really caught on as a

genre in 16th century England. In the rest of Europe those privileged to see these works of art would have revelled in the stories they tell and would have had no problem understanding the references to Greek/Roman mythology.

Paintings provide an eye on to the world of the Tudor artists. You just have to walk through any the picture frames to greet them, then listen as they tell you their story.

MELANIE V. TAYLOR

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www.perseus.tufts.edu Translation of Pliny the Elder's *The Natural History*: John Bostock, MD FRS & H T Riley BA, Ed. Published in 1855.

www.internetstones.com/the-canning-jewel-india-viscount-earl.html

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Ovid: *The Aeneid*; Penguin Classics. Translated by David West.

Further Reading to help in understanding and deciphering allegorical paintings.

Waterfield, Kathryn: *The Greek Myths: Stories of the Greek Gods & Heroes Vividly Retold*; published by Quercus 2013. Available on Amazon.

Classical authors

Anything by the ancients: Ovid, Homer, Virgil, Livy, the Senecas – Older & Younger, the list is long & their works are still available.

Early Renaissance & Early modern authors

Petrarch: available online www.petrarch.petersadlon.com

Dante, Boccaccio, Castiglione – their work is still available in print and has been translated.

Melanie Taylor is the author of "*The Truth of the Line*" and a regular contributor to the Tudor Life magazine. She's making a name for herself in the Tudor and Medieval art world, specialising in works by Teerlinc and Hilliard. She is also preparing a course for the new online courses website MedievalCourses.com as well as working on a number of new non-fiction works.





**JUNE'S
GUEST SPEAKER IS
CONOR BYRNE**

“THE GREY SISTERS”





Annus. 1564
M. Whitho

THOMAS WHYTHORNE

THE FIRST ENGLISH AUTOBIOGRAPHER

by Jane Moulder

DURING the run-up to Christmas, bookshops are usually full of the latest celebrity's tell-all autobiography. These books are big business and are eagerly snapped up by avid fans wanting to find out the gossip and the back-story of their favourite personalities. More often than not, a ghost writer has been employed to actually write the book rather than it being penned solely by the famous person's hand. One often wonders therefore how much is truth and how much is fiction. You may be surprised to find that this "21st century phenomenon" is nothing new. The fashion for the autobiography as a vehicle for self-promotion started back in Tudor times.

Thomas Whythorne (1528 – 1596) has two major claims to fame. Firstly, that he was the first English composer to print and publish secular music in 1571 and, secondly, that he wrote his fascinating autobiography, again the first of its type in England.

Thomas was a musician, music teacher, dancing master and composer and he would have not been known today save for two people: the composer Peter Warlock and the social historian, James Osborn.

Dr Charles Burney, the 18th century music historian, scathingly dismissed the musical accomplishments of Thomas Whythorne and because of this, subsequent musicologists and the Dictionary for National Biography followed suit. It seemed that Whythorne's talents as a composer and musician were destined to be dismissed and forgotten. However, in 1925, the composer Peter Warlock published a pamphlet titled "Thomas Whithorne, an unknown English Composer" and the publication included 12 of his madrigals. It seems Thomas was to be unknown no more!

The compositions are remarkable for being the earliest known printed secular songs in England – *Songes for Three, Fower and Five Voyces*, published

in London in 1571, was a collection of part songs and madrigals. The madrigal was an Italian form of song, usually for a number of unaccompanied voices. Whilst the form developed in Italy in the early 1500's, it wasn't until the mid-1550's that madrigals appeared in England and then, only in court and aristocratic circles. The well-known composers, Thomas Morley and William Byrd, were to take up the madrigal form and develop a uniquely English style but this wasn't until the end of the century. So, Thomas Whythorne was certainly a pioneer and he also broke free from the conventional madrigal form established by the Italians. In fact, the 1571 volume contained a song "Buy New Broom" which was for a solo voice and a quartet of viols (a type of stringed instrument) and this is said to be the first printed example in England of music for voice and instrumental accompaniment. Thomas continued to compose and, nearly 20 years after his first publication, he produced another volume of songs in 1590. This time it was a collection of duets.

'For to reclaim to frend a froward fo' from Thomas Whythorne, *Songes for Three, Fower and Five Voyces* (1571)

The second part of Songes composed by Thomas Whythorne, conteyning Songs for fower voyces.

D: to reclaim to frend a froward fo, o: being to pas affairs tonighte a great, if
 patience cheefly doth wurk it fo, no vertue rare it may be choyd in fear. For such
 in whom that thing is fo to find, though thich be cotow, yet most sping out of kind, for such in
 whom that thing is fo to find, though thich be cotow, yet most sping out of kind.
 The gifts of nature well disposed are plesant to the sight, the like of fortune rule the rest, be it in

Whilst Whythorne's reputation as a composer deserves a more favourable assessment than that given by Charles Burney, it is Whythorne's autobiography which will really mark his place in history. Although it will never hit the bestsellers list at Christmas, it is a fascinating and gripping document as it is rich in self-exploration and social commentary and it opens a window to the everyday life and loves of an ordinary Tudor gentleman. Throughout the book, Thomas Whythorne reflects on his dreams, hopes, anxieties and uncertainties in both life and love.

It was a fluke that the document ever came to light in the first place. It was found, wrapped in brown paper, at the bottom of a wooden crate full of old legal papers which belonged to a Major Foley who lived in Herefordshire. In 1955, Foley entered it into an auction where it was bought by the American collector and literary historian, James M Osborn. James Osborn then transcribed the manuscript and printed two editions. The first appeared in 1961 with the original Tudor phonetic spelling (Whythorne intended to "wryte wurdas as they be sownded in speech") and this made it very difficult to read. So Osborn issued another edition in the following year but this time in modern spelling. He then donated

the manuscript to the Bodleian Library where it resides to this day.

Thomas Whythorne prefaced his "new orthography" with the descriptor "A book of songs and sonnets, with long discourses set with them, of the child's life, together with a young man's life, and entering into the old man's life". As well as the story of his life, the book contains over 200 poems and, whilst is addressed to the reader, it was obviously never intended for publication.

Thomas was born in Somerset in 1528 and he learnt to read, write and sing music as a young boy. He describes how his uncle, a priest near Oxford, asks him whether he wants to be a priest, a physician or a lawyer when he grows up. Thomas however, chooses none of these and elects to be a musician. He consequently spent six years at Magdalen College, Oxford after which he was "desirous to see the world abroad" and became a servant and scholar to the dramatist, John Heywood. Whilst in his service, Thomas learned to play the virginals and lute and also to write poetry, and in this skill he was guided by his master. Whythorne then lived in London where he attended dancing and fencing schools and also learned to play the gittern and cittern (stringed

instruments). These were relatively new instruments to England at the time and Whythorne deliberately chose to take them up as they were “more desired and esteemed” and therefore he could presumably gain work or command a higher fee by being at the forefront of musical fashion. Whythorne decided to earn his living as a music tutor to some wealthy households rather than be a full time musician. It is at this point that the autobiography gets interesting because Thomas’s love life gets intertwined with that of his profession.

Whythorne was hired by a wealthy unnamed widow as a domestic tutor to both her and her children. The “suds-of-soap widow” is depicted as a strong and complex woman who was not averse to interfering with his teaching. Whythorne was aware of the clear lines that had to be drawn between master and servant and was reluctant to “use sharp words as with other scholars” as she was mistress of the house. But she was certainly flirtatious with him, gave him extra portions of meat, told him how to dress and was seemingly very jealous, especially if he had “talked with any woman in her sight”. Eventually Thomas decides to woo her in earnest even though he did not love her and he suspected that she, equally, did not truly love him either. He wrote and sang her a song declaring his intentions, thus hedging his bets: if the overture was taken the wrong way he could simply declare it as a song he had written on the subject of love. The ploy worked but Whythorne was keen to point out the limitations of the relationship:

“Whereas you and such other suspicious heads would think that so much friendship as I spake of in the foresaid song could not be, except a conjunction copulative had been made. To which I must say, and say truly, that neither my hand, nor any other part of mine, did once touch that part of hers where the conjunction is made. Thus much may I say, that I, being loath that she should withdraw her good will from me, was very serviceable to please her; and would sometimes be pleasant and merry and also somewhat bold with her. After which time, she would sometimes tell me in a scoffing manner that I was a huddyprick [simpleton] and lacked audacity. But I knew that those words did proceed from one who did know her game.”

It seems that the widow did know her game! She began, he said “to use me as she would use one to whom she was willing to give the slip”. Thus began a

long, confusing game of hard to get. Whythorne was not put off and he went to extra lengths to win her, such as hanging a portrait of her in his room, writing more songs to her and even buying special clothing. But all his efforts were in vain and the relationship, together with his employment, ended with the accession of Queen Mary in 1553 which “changed my mistress’ estate from high to low, which hindered me also”. Poor Whythorne then likens his situation to being “drowned in the lake of love”.

Whythorne eventually saw this change of circumstances as an opportunity and he left England to “spend time in foreign and strange countries”. Sadly, the account of his two years’ travels is now lost but it seems that he spent a significant amount of time in Italy and Flanders, as well as travelling through Germany and France. Whythorne returned in 1555, impressed by the continental respect for music and musicians that he felt was absent in England. He later railed against the “blockheads and dolts” who failed to appreciate music.

On his return he hoped to marry a lawyer’s daughter but he found that lawyers “prefer those who delight in discord to those who delight in concord”. He then thought that his fortune was made when he was engaged as a music tutor and servant in the household of a nobleman. Whilst all of the characters in the book are nameless, from the various references and descriptions, it has been assumed that Whythorne’s new patron was the Duke of Northumberland. But it seems his optimism was short lived as “then my cake was dough”. He then spent two happy years in Cambridge where he was a tutor to the son of a London merchant, William Bromfield. Despite thinking that he was now “on the top of Fortune’s wheel” his optimism wasn’t to last as he was out of work again following Bromfield’s death.

However, in 1571, following the publication of his first collection of songs, he came to the attention of Archbishop Parker and Whythorne was appointed as master of music at Lambeth Palace, a position he retained until Parker’s death in 1575. The autobiography ends more or less at this point and very little is known about Whythorne’s later life other than the publication of his second volume of music in 1590 and that he died in 1596.

Throughout his book we learn of Whythorne’s many, unsuccessful, attempts to woo – or be wooed



Woodcut by an unknown artist, based on the 1569 portrait. National Portrait Gallery, London.

by - women. He tries various tactics including writing poetry and amusing stories “all which some do call courting” but despite this he confesses to being very bashful around women. On one occasion he finds a poem left between the strings of his gittern but he doesn’t know whether it was written by a woman, “of purpose for love” or a man “in mockage”. It turns out that the author is a young woman, a servant, and when the story gets out she is dismissed. Thomas escapes from “an ancient matron and maid” by taking her amorous overtures as a joke. A widowed hostess was avoided by him flirting with two other married ladies as he felt he was safe if he played three at a time! At the age of 40, Thomas tried to woo a wealthy widow but she was having none of it and so he concluded that Venus must have been in retrograde at the time of his birth. But he reflected philosophically by saying that “I am not only alive but also then I did both eat my meat and drink my drink and sleep well enough”. He is pursued by Mistress Elizabeth and has a dalliance with a married “Court lady”. Whythorne seems to have had his fill of widows and has some pithy proverbial advice on the subject: “He that wooeth a widow must not carry quick eels in his codpiece.” And: “He who weddeth a widow who hath two children, he shall be cumbered with three thieves.” Eventually Thomas Whythorne did marry, in 1577, to a spinster, Elizabeth Stoughton. By this date, the book had ended so we have no idea about the courtship and whether or not it was finally true love. Elizabeth outlived her husband and, according to the parish records, married again within three months of his death.

Another interesting aspect to Thomas Whythorne is that he was fond of having his portrait painted. So much so that he sat for his portrait at least four times. The first occasion was when he was 21 years old and he writes that he had himself depicted playing the lute and that it was painted on the lid of his virginals. The second portrait was done only a year later after he had recovered from a long attack of the ague. He

declared that the purpose of the painting was to see how much the illness had changed his appearance. It was just after he had commissioned the artist to paint the portrait of the “Suds-of-Soap” widow and he was obviously so pleased with it, that Thomas decided to have one done of himself. The third portrait dates from about 1562 when Whythorne was 34. He asked the same artist who had painted portrait number two and apparently it depicts him with a long, full beard, a wrinkled face and hollow eyes. Neither this painting, nor the two earlier ones survive.

Paradoxically, the one portrait of Thomas Whythorne that survives to this day is not mentioned in the autobiography. However, Thomas describes in his book how the 1569 portrait was used as the model for a woodcut which was to be used to illustrate his 1571 book of songs. It is interesting that a man of relatively modest means obviously had a liking for having his portrait painted and that this was not something that was reserved for courtiers and upper classes. Thomas seems to have relished in the fact that each portrait showed him at a different stage in his life.

Whilst it is frustrating that we do not have all the information we would like about Thomas Whythorne and his life, we must be very grateful to the serendipitous discovery of his autobiography. This account gives a tantalising insight into the life of an “ordinary” musician and a gentleman. Having read his book, I am left wondering what other documents and books are still out there, wrapped in brown paper, waiting to be discovered. If just one gentleman can give such a fascinating account of his life and loves, just imagine how our knowledge of the period could be extended by finding more, similar journals! Reading Thomas’s experiences and thoughts makes me realise that the truth is very often stranger (and more interesting) than fiction.

JANE MOULDER

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Charlie

THE TUDOR ROSE

by Jennifer
Draskau

Our Books



When reading about the Tudor period, many people tend to focus on either Henry VIII and his wives or Elizabeth I. Henry VIII's siblings are often forgotten in books and fiction or only mentioned in passing such as in relation to their descendants (Lady Jane Grey, Mary Queen of Scots). Jennifer Draskau changes that and instead focuses her biography on Henry VIII's sister, Mary, Queen of France.

Draskau starts off by examining Mary's personal relationships, focusing specifically on the marriage of Katherine of Aragon and Henry VIII and about how Mary was close to Katherine. She then moves on to provide context to the story, briefly explaining about Henry VII's death, the Wars of the Roses, etc. The author does jump backwards and forwards a little in explaining certain events, such as when she mentions Katherine of Aragon but then goes back to talk about the birth and baptism of Mary:

'The baptism of the last of Elizabeth's children to survive infancy, her second daughter, Princess Mary Rose, in 1495, had been overshadowed by the climate of civil sedition and dissension in the country. But Lady Margaret Beaufort insisted that her grandchildren's christenings should follow traditions observed for Edward IV's many offspring, including the prescribed height of the dais on which the silver-gilt font was mounted.'

Draskau briefly mentions Princess Mary's childhood, of which we know little about, and can assume was like most royal children's. The author inserts interesting little facts here and there, such

as *'her handwriting was soon better than her sister Margaret's, although when distressed she scribbled'*.

However, the book finally goes into more detail about Mary's life once it moves on to her marriage. Mary's marriage and betrothal ceremonies are described in great detail, using both evidence from accounts and what is known about royal rituals. Like many young and royal marriages, Mary was married *'to a child she had never seen'*, this was not unusual and done mainly to make alliances between countries, seen more like a business transaction than anything.

One of the most interesting relationships described in the book is the one of Katherine of Aragon and Princess Mary. They were close, as Draskau notes at the beginning, and Mary even took steps to try to help her after the death of Prince Arthur:

'Now, as Princess of Castile, Mary took precedence over her friend and sister-in-law, the Dowager Princess of Wales, but Mary loved Katherine, and was not one to flaunt her advantage. Nonetheless, writing again to beseech her father for money to pay her household, the humiliated Katherine of Aragon wept for shame.'

Henry VIII's close relationship with his younger sister is another interesting relationship, especially as it is often left out in books in favour of his romantic relationships:

'Henry indulged his young sister, 'our well-beloved sister the Lady Mary', lavishing gifts of jewels and fine apparel upon her, and insisting on her

presence at Court. Mary was only too glad to comply; she shared his love of music, and delighted in the dancing, pageants and disguisings.'

Draskau even goes on to say that, when Mary was away from court, Henry 'constantly sent her little gifts, entreating her to return'. This helps put into context Henry's later forgiveness of her secret marriage to Charles Brandon.

For obvious reasons, Charles Brandon is a large part of this book and Mary's life. Draskau slowly introduces him and comments on his lack of status and how close he was to Henry, described as 'the ideal companion for the new King'. However, he was a man without prospects, and no one could have predicted that he would end up marrying the King's sister:

'Brandon, although a close companion and confidant of Mary's brother the new King, had no immediate prospect of advancement which would make him a suitable applicant for the hand of a Princess. He belonged to a large, ill-defined class of the gentry - some 1,500-2,000 families - but not to the more exclusive, tightly knit superior circle of the nobility.'

One event in which Draskau questions is whether Henry VIII actually agreed to Princess Mary marrying whoever she wanted after the death of her first husband (who was in his 50s at the time of the marriage), Louis XII of France. Draskau proposes the idea that Henry did agree to this. However, he had probably made it 'on the spur of the moment' and had little intention of keeping his word, 'his sole aim being to get the French marriage accomplished quickly, with as little protest from the bride as possible'. He seems to have known that a marriage between Brandon and Mary was a possibility, due to a later promise he extracts from Brandon, and Draskau succeeds in showing how manipulative Henry could be:

'Henry guessed that Mary, homesick and depressed, might fling herself at Brandon. Consequently, in early January 1515, at Eltham,

the King extracted a promise from Brandon that he would not propose marriage to her.'

The author shows that Henry was not the only one who could go back on his word as Brandon and Mary quickly married anyway. Draskau only quickly covers these events and only briefly comments on the year following, which was a little disappointing.

The events after are also only briefly mentioned, with the birth and significance of Mary and Brandon's first son receiving most of the attention, contrasted with the King's lack of a male heir,

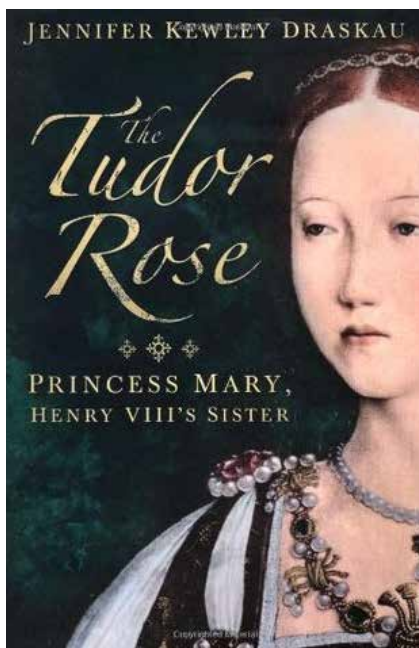
'obsessed with dynastic succession, people reflected that, if the ageing Queen continued to fail to produce a male heir, baby Henry Brandon might eventually inherit the throne'.

Not long after this in the book, Draskau drops a few hints that things aren't what they seem and once again connects it with what was occurring at court. For example, she notes that 'at least one contemporary attributed Mary Rose's early death to her grief over the treatment of her friend, Queen Katherine'.

I like the fact that she often includes extracts from sources to back up her arguments and theories, such as some of the letters Mary and Wolsey wrote to each other while she was Queen of France. Including extracts from these sources I find helps readers understand and consider the author's ideas and also gives the reader the opportunity to read their words, which may not be possible to do otherwise.

Overall, I do find that this book moves away from Mary frequently and, although we do need context to understand some of the events, it sometimes feels less about Mary herself and more about the people around her. Near the end of the book, it starts to move away from Mary completely, with whole chapters focusing on her heirs. I would recommend this book to those wanting to find out more about Mary and Charles Brandon's life and family, instead of just Mary herself.

CHARLIE FENTON





OLGA HUGHES' Tudor Kitchen

Fact VS Fiction

Modern taste is so different from that of four or five hundred years ago, that scarcely one of the favourite dishes served at feasts would now be found eatable...Scarcely anything was prepared in what would now be regarded a simple and natural fashion...The ideal, apparently, was that nothing should be left in its natural state, but rather devilled and hashed and highly spiced...Few things are more extraordinary than the things our ancestors ate...Much medieval food was chopped up small or pounded in a mortar...The reason for this constant maceration is to be found in the lack of forks.¹

¹ Ritchie, Carson I.A., *Food in Civilisation*, Methuen 1981 pp. 61

CAN YOU PICTURE William Edward Meade wringing his hands as he imagined this account of a medieval table? History has two great enemies – exaggeration and a lack of common sense. This sort of description of peoples of the Middle Ages and the Tudor period as alien creatures who were so far removed from us in every way, physically, mentally, socially, may be entertaining in a fictional setting, but it tends to overshadow the reality of medieval life. Comedic representation of the Tudors have left lingering impressions of hordes of stupid, dirty, toothless people dining on enormous roasted animal legs. Yet, in some ways it has entered a collective consciousness, and many think that our ancestors spent much of the day shrieking about witches, trying not to fall off the edge of the earth and avoiding bathing. And there many myths about the Tudor kitchen, and the Tudor household.

Scarcely one of the favourite dishes served at feasts would now be found eatable

We'll start with William Edward Meade's florid claim. Food has changed far more in the farming and production over the centuries than it has in the actual basic preparation. It is true tastes have evolved. But there are many, many dishes enjoyed in Tudor society that we still eat today; savoury stews, meat pies, roasted meats, soups, savoury puddings, sausages, bread, butter, cheese, cream, sweet pies and pastries, cakes, wafers, the list goes on and on. Even the popular banqueting dish of multiple-bird roasts has made a comeback in the form of a Turducken. The diet of monarchs and their courts was certainly elaborate, and we discussed some strange Lenten dishes in March. But for the working classes food was much the same as it is now, although the lack of refrigeration means the Tudors ate more preserved and salted meats. They also seasoned their food differently and were heavy-handed with spices. Which brings us to the next myth...

Spices Were Used to Disguise the Flavour of Rotting Meat

How exactly this popular myth took hold is a bit of a mystery, for anyone who is at all familiar with Tudor history knows just how expensive spices were. Ordinary households certainly could not afford all of the spices mentioned in many of the Tudor recipes we have become familiar with. Henry VIII's Hampton Court Palace had its own Spicery, which stored spices such as ginger, pepper, nutmeg, mace, cloves, cinnamon, saffron and galangal. The Hampton Court Spicery had its own Chief Clerk who distributed spices to the various officers of the kitchens. The Spicery also had a Yeoman who ground the spices in a special "mortar mill". The whole spices were stored in lockable boxes and they were certainly a precious commodity. To use them on tainted meat was unthinkable, and for a cook to serve tainted meat to his master and guests even more so.

No Concept of Sweet or Savoury

That the Tudors 'had no concept' of sweet and savoury food is a strange statement. Last month we took a lengthy look at the Tudor banquet, a whole meal dedicated to sweet delights, so the historical records speak for themselves. We know the Tudors loved sweets, so certainly they could identify a sweet dish. Fruit appeared on the table with the savoury courses during Henry VIII's reign, and although

fruits may have been cooked, they were still relatively simple dishes. The main confusion may stem from the fact that in Henry's reign the delicacies were served last, and they were not restricted to sweets. This meant that all the sweet confections and subtleties created to impress guests in the last course might be served alongside delicacies such as tiny larks. The idea was the complexity and expense of the dish rather than whether it was sweet or savoury.

Tudor Table Manners

Comedic representations of the Tudors have left an enduring visual impression of dinner as an anarchic affair; with drunken, lurching guests spilling food on their expensive clothing and throwing bones on the floor for the dogs. Certainly the ordinary household did not hold a lavish dinner and supper for the family and guests each day, but that is no reason to suppose that they had no table manners. Court life was another matter again. The strict regulating of seating, the serving of food to tables according to their rank and the shared portions rules out any misbehaviour during dinner. Dogs were also not allowed in the hall for dinner. The monarch was always served first while the other diners waited. When the rest of the diners were served, four diners shared a "messe", a portion of four. Diners used a knife and a spoon to help themselves to food, and in these close quarters good manners were certainly a necessity. Diners did not use their fingers to serve themselves from the messe. And they brought their own cutlery to dinner, but did they use forks?

To Fork or Not to Fork?

The question over whether or not the Tudors used forks can be solved very easily. In an inventory of the royal jewell house taken in 1574, only thirteen silver forks were inventoried.² They were not a popular item for dining with in England, despite their regular use in other European countries. Forks were still two-pronged affairs at this point, and while they were used for holding the meat while carving they may not have served much more purpose for eating than the knife already did. Even by the seventeenth century forks were still not in regular use. A traveller, Thomas Coryat observed in 1617:

I observed a custom in all those Italian cities and Townes through which I passed that is not used in any other country I saw on my travels, neither do I think that any other nation in Christendom doth use it, but only in Italy. The Italians and also most strangers that are commorant in Italy do always at their meals use a little fork when they cut their meat. For while with their knife which they hold in one hand they cut the meat out of the dish, they fasten their fork, which they hold in their other hand upon the same dish, so that whatsoever he be that sitting in the company of any others at meat, should unadvisedly touch the dish of meat with his fingers, from which at all the table do cut, he will give occasion of offence unto the company, as having transgressed the laws of good manners in so much that for his error he shall be at the least brow beaten, if not reprehended in words...The reason of this curiosity is, because the Italian cannot by any means endure to have his dish touched with fingers, feeling all mens fingers are not clean alike.³

² Sim, Alison, *Food and Feast in Tudor England*, Sutton 1997, pp. 99

³ *Ibid* pp. 99-100

All Men's Fingers Are Not Clean Alike

One of the most oft-repeated myths is that the Tudors “didn't know about hand-washing”, which is a clumsily-worded way of trying to say the Tudors understood the spreading of germs and bacteria differently than we do now. Unfortunately the wording has stuck and it makes for some rather unrealistic scenarios. Humanity does, of course, like to feel superior, so many who make fun of medieval and early modern concepts of medicine fail to mention that even our modern understanding of bacteria is relatively new. From ancient times right up until the nineteenth century it was widely thought that infection was spread by odours or “bad air”, known as a *miasma*. But even in the 20th century there were constant improvements in sterilisation in the medical field and in food hygiene. Many of us will easily remember a time before latex gloves and anti-bacterial wash, and it has only been in the last few decades that sterilisation of equipment in hospitals has improved.

In any case the Tudors were not ignorant of the benefits of cleanliness. We have all heard the story of the infant Edward VI's team of servants washing his apartment walls and floors with soap and water thrice daily. Henry's Master Cook John Bricket's responsibilities confirm that cleanliness and hygiene was of the utmost importance in kitchens. John must ensure that the kitchens were free from “*corruption and uncleanse...which doth engender infection, and is very noiseome and displeasent unto all nobleman and others*”⁴

The Tudors were, in fact, rather enthusiastic hand-washers. In Alison Sim's *Food and Feast in Tudor England* there is a picture of a wonderful mechanical hand-washing device that was used at the dinner table, presented to the Mercer's company by William Burde in 1554.⁵ Made of gold, the mechanism, which is still in working order today, is comprised of a little wagon holding a tun. The tun drips rosewater onto the guests hands as the wagon rolls down the table.

For everyday hand-washing, household instruction manuals of the day gave recipes for scented soaps and washing waters. Sir Hugh Plat, in his *Delights for Ladies*, gives instructions for a “*delicate washing ball*” which used Castille soap, an expensive imported olive oil soap.

Sir Hugh did not neglect the ordinary housewives either, with his budget hand-washing water formula.

An excellent hand water or washing water very cheap

Take a gallon of faire water, one handful of Lavender flowers, a few Cloves and some Orace powder, and four ounces of Benjamin: distill the water in an ordinary leaden Still. You may distill a second water by a new infusion of water upon the secas: a little of this will sweeten a basin of faire water for your table.

A delicate washing ball

Take three ounces of Orace, half an ounce of Cypres, two ounces of Calamus Aromaticus, one ounce of Rose leaves, two ounces of Lavender flowers: beat all these together in a mortar, searching them through a fine Searce, then scrape some castille soap, and dissolve it with some Rose-water, then incorporate all your powders therewith, by labouring of them well in a mortar.

4 Brears, Peter, *All the King's Cooks: The Tudor kitchens of Henry VIII's Hampton Court Palace*, Souvenir Press 2011, pp. 88-90

5 *Ibid* pp. 85

Sweet handwaters

Sir Hugh had even more lengthy instructions for “sweet handwaters”:

Diverse sorts of sweet handwaters made suddenly or extempore, with extracted oils of spices.

First you shall understand, that whensoever you shall draw any of the aforesaid Oils of Cynamon, Cloves, Mace, Nutmegs, or suchlike, that you shall have also a pottle or a gallon more or less, according to the quantity which you draw at once, of excellent sweet washing water for your table: yea some doe keep the same for their broths, wherein otherwise they should use some of the same kind of spice.

But if you take three or four drops only of the oil of Cloves, Mace, or Nutmegs (for Cinnamon oyle is too costly to spend this way) and mingle the same with a pint of faire water, making agitation of them a pretty while together in a glass having a narrow mouth, till they have in some measure incorporated themselves together, you shall find a very pleasing and delightful water to wash with, & so you may alwaies furnish your self of sweet water of several kinds, before such time as your guests shall be ready to sit down. I speak not here of the oil of Spike (which will extend very far this way) both because every Gentlewoman doth not like so strange a scent, & for that the same elsewhere commanded by another Author. Yet I must needs acknowledge it to be the cheaper way, for that I assure my self there may be five or six gallons of sweet water made with one ounce of the oil, which you may buy ordinarily for a groat at the most.

OLGA HUGHES

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THE TUDOR SOCIETY

June Bulletin

Dear Member,

How did you get on last month telling someone you know that you are a member of the Tudor Society? It was our member “challenge” for last month. I’d still love to hear about how it went... Like you, I’m passionate about growing the Tudor Society to rival that of some other historical societies. I know that the Tudor period is *so fascinating* that I want everyone to know about it!

This month, I’ve decided to focus on seeing if there is anything that you would like us to provide to help you to spread the word about the Tudors. Sometimes, when I am involved in something every single hour of the day, it’s hard to “see the wood for the trees” as the saying goes. What I’d like to do is to provide you with the tools to spread the word about the Tudor Society in an effective, fun and easy way.

So what is it that you need?

- a wallet/purse sized list of the Tudor monarchs, with their important dates?
- a short “elevator” speech which you could learn (and share with others)?
- a pin badge that you could proudly wear to promote discussion?
- wording for an email you could send to your contacts?
- a “cheat sheet” of facts you can use to open a conversation?

Why not send me an email telling me what **you** need to be able to let others know you are a member of the Tudor Society. After all, I know that, like me, you’re proud to be a Tudor Society member. Together we’ll grow. THANK YOU!

Please do get involved with the Tudor Society

WE RELY ON YOUR ACTIVE MEMBERSHIP

JUNE FEAST DAYS

2 JUNE – THE FEAST OF ST ELMO OR ST ERASMUS

This feast day commemorates the martyrdom of St Erasmus/St Elmo of Formia, Bishop of Formium in Italy. He was tortured and executed for being a Christian in the year 303. He is venerated as one of the Fourteen Holy Helpers, saints whose intercession is believed to be particularly effective against disease.

It is said that St Elmo was once tortured by having hot iron hooks stuck into his intestines but he miraculously endured his suffering. This story led to him becoming the patron saint of abdominal pain and can be invoked against stomach pain and colic. He is also the patron saint of sailors. According to legend, he carried on preaching when a thunderbolt struck the ground next to him and the blue lights that can be seen at the top of ships' masts during thunderstorms became linked with St Elmo because sailors believed that the lights were souls rising to glory due to the saint's intercession. The lights were seen as a good omen because they showed the presence of St Elmo and they became known as St Elmo's fire.

Other stories and legends about St Elmo include that he was fed by a raven while living in solitude at Mount Lebanon, where he'd fled to avoid persecution, and that an angel released him when he was imprisoned.

In the medieval and Tudor calendar, St Elmo's Day became the traditional time for shearing sheep.

11 JUNE – THE FEAST OF ST BARNABAS

11th June is the feast day of St Barnabas, an early Christian who was born Joseph in Cyprus. He was renamed Barnabas when he joined the Apostles in Jerusalem. He carried out several missionary journeys with Paul the Apostle and is mentioned in the Book of Acts. According to Christian tradition, Barnabas was martyred in Cyprus in 61 AD, being stoned to death. He is seen as the founder of the Cypriot Orthodox Church.

According to Steve Roud, in *The English Year*, St Barnabas's Day was celebrated in the 15th and 16th centuries by decorating churches with garlands of flowers such as roses, woodruff and lavender. He also writes of how "maidens went 'gathering' for church funds, and money was paid out for 'bread, wine and ale for the singers of the King's Chapel and for the clerks of the town.'"

24 JUNE – THE FEAST OF ST JOHN THE BAPTIST AND MIDSUMMER'S DAY

Here in my area of rural Spain, the feast of St John, or San Juan as he is called here, is a special time. People gather on the night of 23rd at our local natural thermal pool and at midnight they all jump in (or get pushed in!). Like the baptisms that John the Baptist did, this is seen as symbolising the washing away of sins. Then, sardines are cooked on open fires. In coastal areas, sardines are cooked on bonfires on the beach, people jump over the fires for luck and then run into the sea at midnight.

The Feast of St John the Baptist was also an important celebration in medieval and Tudor England, coinciding with Midsummer, the pagan celebration of the summer solstice. It was a time when it was believed that the fairy folk were abroad and humans could be magical. Just as in Spain today, fire was at the heart of the celebrations and people back then would also jump through the fires to bring good luck. It was also believed that evil spirits were roaming free and that the fires warded them off. The actual evil that was around at this time was disease, brought by fleas and mosquitoes which bred at this time of year and which spread malaria and the Plague. One fire that was lit at this time was the “bone fire”, or bonfire, which was made up of bones. Its pungent smell was believed to ward off evil and scare off dragons. Fire could also be used to predict the farmer’s fortune. A cartwheel was wrapped in straw, set alight and then rolled down a hill. If it was still burning when it got to the bottom then the farmer would have a good harvest.

There was also plenty of dancing, drinking of ale and socialising, as there is today in my community.

Unfortunately, the Midsummer bonfires were seen as superstitious by religious reformers and so were eventually stopped.

Midsummer was also the time for haymaking and other midsummer traditions include decorating churches with birch boughs, decorating houses with greenery, and processions and parades. It was also a time linked with love divination. These divinations included girls throwing hemp seed over their shoulders to see the form of their future husband and girls sticking orpine flowers up in the joist of buildings in pairs, one to symbolise the man and the other the woman. “Accordingly as the orpine did incline to, or recline from ye other, that there would be love, or aversion; if either did wither, death.” (John Aubrey, 1686, quoted in Steve Roud’s book).

29 JUNE – FEAST OF ST PETER AND ST PAUL

The Feast of St Peter and St Paul, which commemorated the martyrdom of the two apostles, was the traditional time for the “rushbearing” ceremony, a feast of dedication when the parishioners would process to the church and strew the church floor with newly cut rushes, new mown hay from the hay-making, and wild flowers.

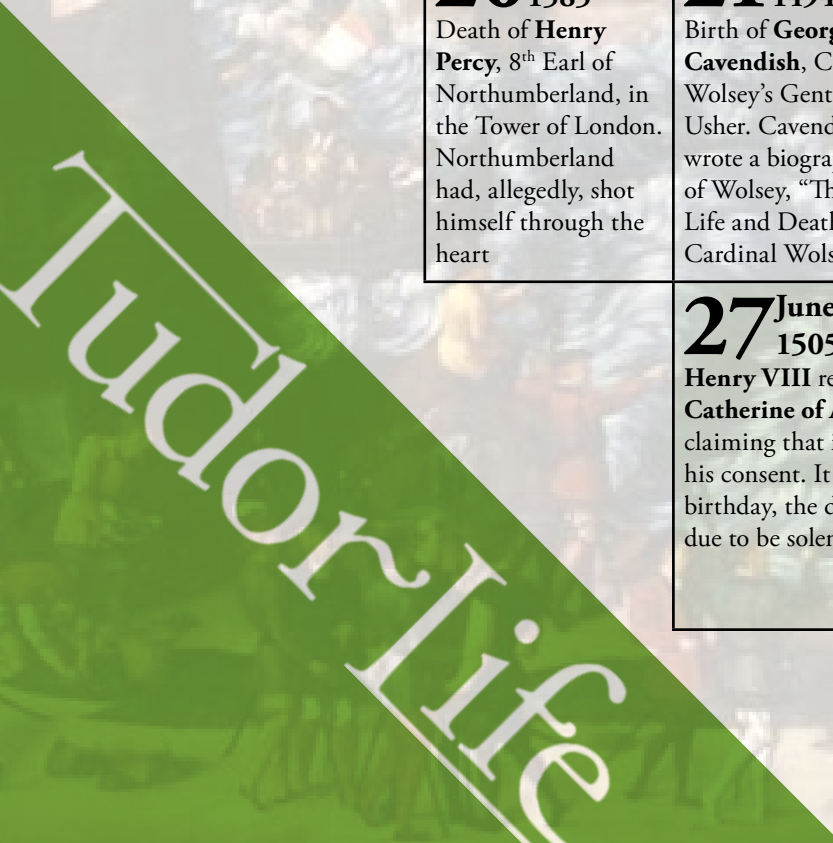
CLAIRE RIDGWAY

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JUNE'S ON THIS

<p>1 June 1573</p> <p>Birth of explorer James Rosier in Suffolk. Rosier went on the 1605 voyage to explore the fishing grounds off the Maine coast as “cape merchant, observer, and reporter”, and recorded the voyage in a journal.</p>	<p>2 June 1536</p> <p>Jane Seymour’s first appearance as Queen.</p>	<p>3 June 1535</p> <p>Thomas Cromwell, Henry VIII’s Vicar-General, ordered all bishops to preach in support of the royal supremacy and to remove all references to the Pope from mass books and other church books.</p>	
<p>8 June 1536</p> <p>Henry Fitzroy, Duke of Richmond, made his last public appearance (at Parliament) before his death.</p>	<p>9 June 1573</p> <p>Death of William Maitland of Lethington, Scottish courtier, politician and diplomat. He died in prison in Leith, in suspicious circumstances.</p>	<p>10 June 1584</p> <p>Death of Francis, Duke of Anjou and Alençon, a suitor whom Elizabeth I dubbed “Frog”, in Paris. It is thought that he died of malaria.</p>	 <p>Francis, Duke of Anjou</p>
<p>14 June 1598</p> <p>Death of Sir Henry Knyvet, MP and soldier, at Charlton in Wiltshire. He wrote “Defence of the Realm.”</p>	<p>15 June 1559</p> <p>Death of William Somer (Sommers), court fool to Henry VIII, Edward VI and Mary I.</p>	<p>16 June 1487 ✂</p> <p>The Battle of Stoke Field between Henry VII’s forces and the Yorkist forces of Lord Lovell and John de la Pole, Earl of Lincoln</p>	
<p>20 June 1585</p> <p>Death of Henry Percy, 8th Earl of Northumberland, in the Tower of London. Northumberland had, allegedly, shot himself through the heart</p>	<p>21 June 1494</p> <p>Birth of George Cavendish, Cardinal Wolsey’s Gentleman Usher. Cavendish wrote a biography of Wolsey, “The Life and Death of Cardinal Wolsey”</p>	<p>22 June 1528</p> <p>Death of William Carey, courtier, distant cousin of Henry VIII and husband of Mary Boleyn. He died of sweating sickness.</p>	<p>23 June 1576</p> <p>Death of Levina Teerlinc, painter and miniaturist and court painter to Edward VI, Mary I and Elizabeth I.</p>
<p>27 June 1505</p> <p>Henry VIII renounced his betrothal to Catherine of Aragon, his brother’s widow, claiming that it had been contracted without his consent. It was the day before his 14th birthday, the day on which the marriage was due to be solemnised.</p>	<p>28 June 1461</p> <p>Coronation of Edward IV and his consort Elizabeth Woodville.</p>		



DAY IN TUDOR HISTORY

<p>4 June 1561</p> <p>The spire of St Paul's Cathedral caught fire after being struck by lightning. The fire melted the Cathedral's bells and lead from the spire "poured down like lava upon the roof".</p>	<p>5 June 1600</p> <p>Robert Devereux, 2nd Earl of Essex, was charged with insubordination during his time in Ireland. He was ordered to remain under house arrest.</p>	<p>6 June 1618</p> <p>Death of Sir James Lancaster, merchant and Director of the East India Company, in London. He was buried in All Hallows, London Wall.</p>	<p>7 June 1618</p> <p>Death of Thomas West, 3rd Baron De La Warr, colonial governor of Virginia, at sea, on his way to Virginia.</p>
<p>11 June 1560</p> <p>Death of Marie de Guise (Mary of Guise), former consort of James V and regent of Scotland, at Edinburgh Castle</p>	<p>12 June 1553</p> <p>Edward VI's council commanded the judges of the King's Bench to turn Edward's "Devise for the succession" into a legal will.</p>	 <p>Thomas West, 3rd Baron De La Warr</p>	<p>13 June 1595</p> <p>Burial of William Wickham, Bishop of Winchester, in Southwark Cathedral.</p>
<p>17 June 1567</p> <p>Mary, Queen of Scots was imprisoned at Loch Leven Castle after her surrender to the Protestant nobles at the Battle of Carberry Hill a couple of days earlier.</p>	<p>18 June 1546</p> <p>Anne Askew was arraigned at London's Guildhall for heresy, along with Nicholas Shaxton.</p>		<p>19 June 1573</p> <p>Execution of Thomas Woodhouse, Jesuit priest and martyr, at Tyburn. He was the first priest to be executed in Elizabeth I's reign.</p>
<p>24 June 1604</p> <p>Death of Edward de Vere, 17th Earl of Oxford. Oxfordians believe that de Vere was actually the author of Shakespeare's works.</p>	<p>25 June 1503</p> <p>Catherine of Aragon was formally betrothed to Prince Henry, the future Henry VIII</p>	<p>26 June 1596</p> <p>Burial of Sir John Wingfield in the cathedral at Cadiz, Spain. He was shot in the head in the attack on Cadiz on 21st June. At the funeral, "the generalls threw their handkerchiefs wet from their eyes into the grave" and the poet John Donne, composed a tribute to Wingfield: "Farther then Wingefield, no man dares to go".</p>	
<p>29 June 1540</p> <p>Bill of attainder passed against Thomas Cromwell for the crimes of corruption, heresy and treason, stripping him of his honours and condemning him to death.</p>	<p>30 June 1537</p> <p>Execution of Thomas Darcy, Baron Darcy of Darcy. He was beheaded on Tower Hill.</p>		



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