



EVERYTHING
YOU NEED TO KNOW ABOUT



THE TUDORS

THE COMPLETE GUIDE TO BRITAIN'S MOST ICONIC DYNASTY



PLUS
PIRACY
PERSECUTION
RELIGION
EXECUTION
DIVORCE
WAR

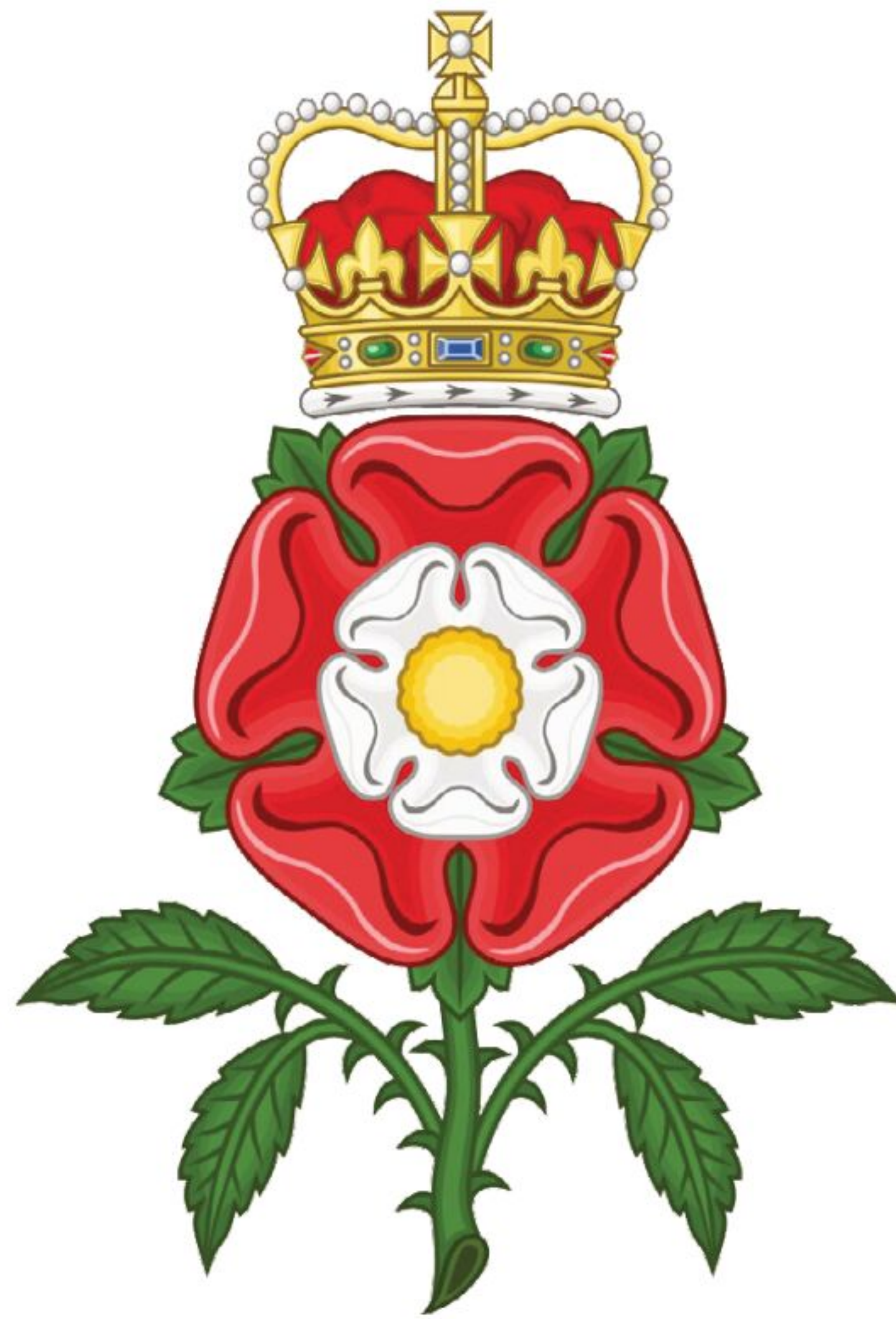
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FUTURE
THIRD EDITION

LIFE AT COURT
How the rich and powerful got ahead

THE LEGACY OF ELIZABETH I
The story behind the empire that England's most iconic monarch left behind

TOWER OF TERROR
The capital offences that would guarantee your head on a block



Welcome



After years of chaotic civil war, King Richard III lay dead on the battlefield at Bosworth. The feud between the Lancasters and Yorks was over, and it was time for a new dynasty to take over: the Tudors. Now you can find out everything you need to know about this royal family. Uncover Henry VII, its founder, and explore how the controversial Henry VIII ruled England and changed it forever.

Discover how Edward, Mary and Elizabeth governed, and take a trip to the bloody Tower of London before meeting Shakespeare himself. To get to know one of England's most iconic dynasties, all you need to do is turn the page.

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F U T U R E
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THE TUDORS

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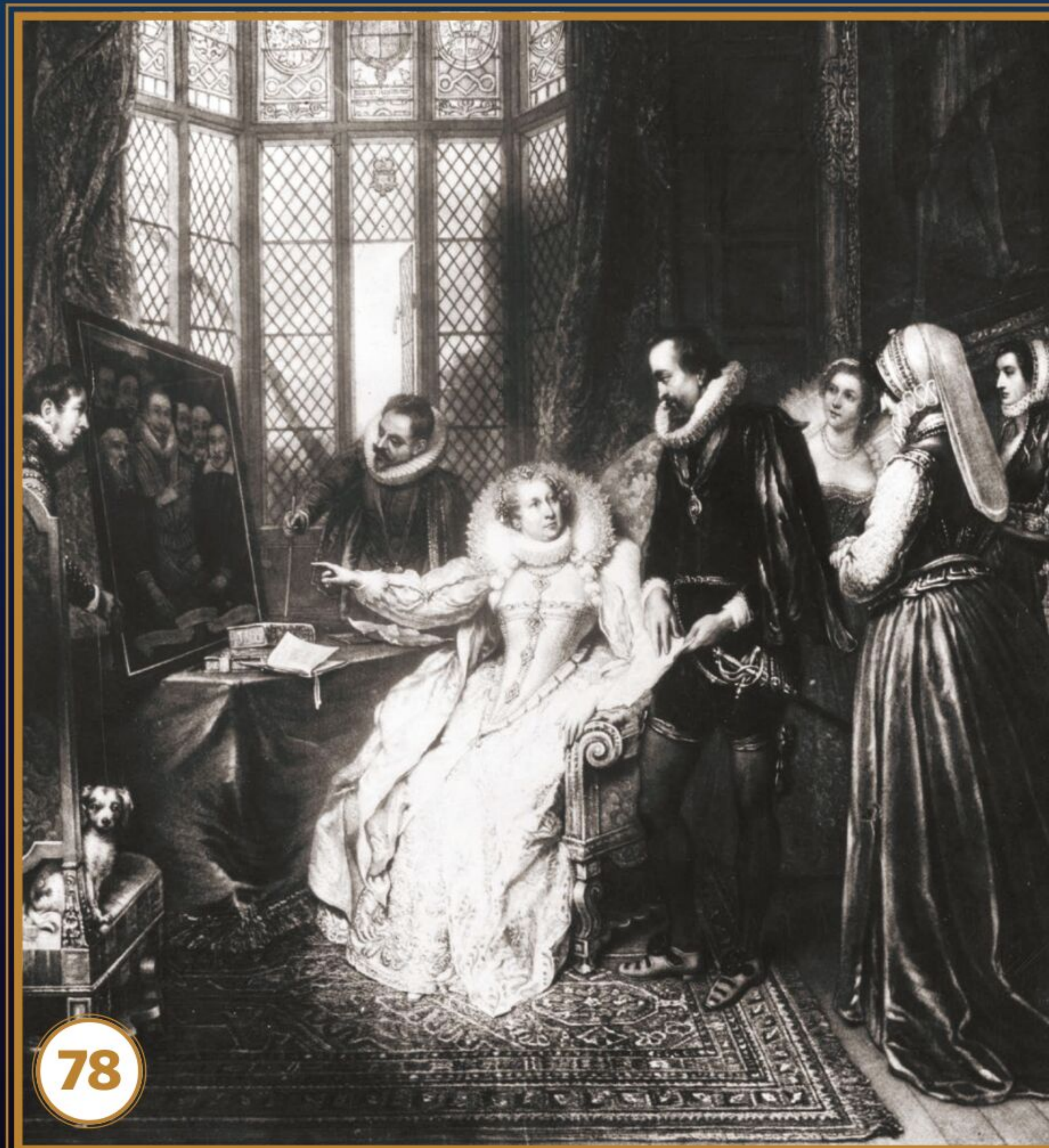
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1485-1603



The
House
Tudor
of

The Tudor dynasty emerged triumphant from years of conflict to reign for more than a century

The Death of RICHARD III at the Battle of Bosworth.



The Plantagenet reign ended when Richard III died at Bosworth



With his mistress Katherine Swynford, John of Gaunt was an ancestor to all English monarchs from the Houses of Tudor, Lancaster and York

A lover of gambling, Henry VIII once lost the stunning sum of £450 (£145,000 today) in a game of dominoes

When the smoke cleared after the bloody Battle of Bosworth, England stood at a turning point. After more than three centuries and 14 kings, the House of Plantagenet had lost the crown and a new family had risen to the throne. The Tudor era was about to begin.

The maternal origins of the Tudor monarchs can be found in a 14th-century tangle of illegitimacy and intimate liaisons, when Katherine Swynford gave birth to a son, John Beaufort, by her lover, Prince John of Gaunt, son of Edward III. Beaufort was one of four children born to the couple, and though he was in his mid-20s when his parents finally married, John and his siblings were all legitimised by the Catholic Church. Even John of Gaunt's legitimate son and heir, Henry IV, recognised the legitimacy of his half-brother, though he was quick to declare him exempt from the line of succession. Yet this tight family background meant that the heirs of Beaufort would maintain ties to the House of Lancaster, John of Gaunt's descendants via his first marriage.

The House of Tudor, meanwhile, originated in Penmynydd on the isle of Anglesey and a family named Tudur. This was the birthplace of Owen Tudor, the commoner whose family would rise to rule England. Yet this is no rags-to-riches tale, for

the Tudors had once been a powerful family, loyally serving the Welsh princes. When Owain Glyndŵr led his uprising against England, the Tudors were his unflinching allies, but their loyalty cost them dear. The English prevailed and those who had fought for Welsh independence were no longer welcome at the English court.

Entrusted with restoring the family fortunes, Owen Tudor was sent to London, where he found a billet as a page at the court of Henry V. It was a fateful move, and the ambitious Tudor rose swiftly through the ranks until he was regularly mixing with the king and his wife, Catherine of Valois, who supposedly fell for Tudor when he tumbled into her lap during a dance. When Henry died, Owen was already a member of Catherine's personal guard, and before too long the couple were lovers. They secretly married in 1429, marking a reversal of fortune for the once disenfranchised Tudors.

It was a time when the future of the throne itself was the subject of intense debate. Two branches of



Lady Margaret Beaufort, the mother of Henry VII, was a driving force behind the rise of the House of Tudor



Henry VII was the first monarch of the House of Tudor

the Plantagenet dynasty, the Houses of York and Lancaster, both believed themselves to be the rightful heirs. Catherine and Owen's children, Jasper and Edmund, were keen supporters of the Lancastrian cause, and Owen's stepson, Henry VI, rewarded both for their loyalty with titles and riches. Edmund cemented the alliance with his marriage to Lady Margaret Beaufort, who could lay her own Lancastrian claim to the crown thanks to her family connections to John of Gaunt. With both the Yorkists and Lancastrians determined to claim victory, conflict eventually broke out in 1455 with the eruption of the Wars of the Roses.

Two years after the conflict began, Edmund and Margaret had a son of their own, Henry Tudor, later to reign as Henry VII. Following Edmund's death, concern grew for Henry's safety, upon whom the Lancastrian claim now rested. Eventually, Henry accompanied Jasper to Brittany, where he was to remain, while in England Lady Margaret hustled on behalf of the House of Lancaster.

When Henry returned to England to pursue his family's claim, he brought with him military support from France and Scotland. He landed in Wales and set out from the land of his ancestors to face the forces of Richard III.

The decades-long Wars of the Roses reached its climax on 22 August 1485 when the armies of Henry and Richard III met at the Battle of Bosworth. The Lancastrian forces were

Edward VI's uncle Thomas Seymour tried to kidnap him in 1549, an offence for which he was executed



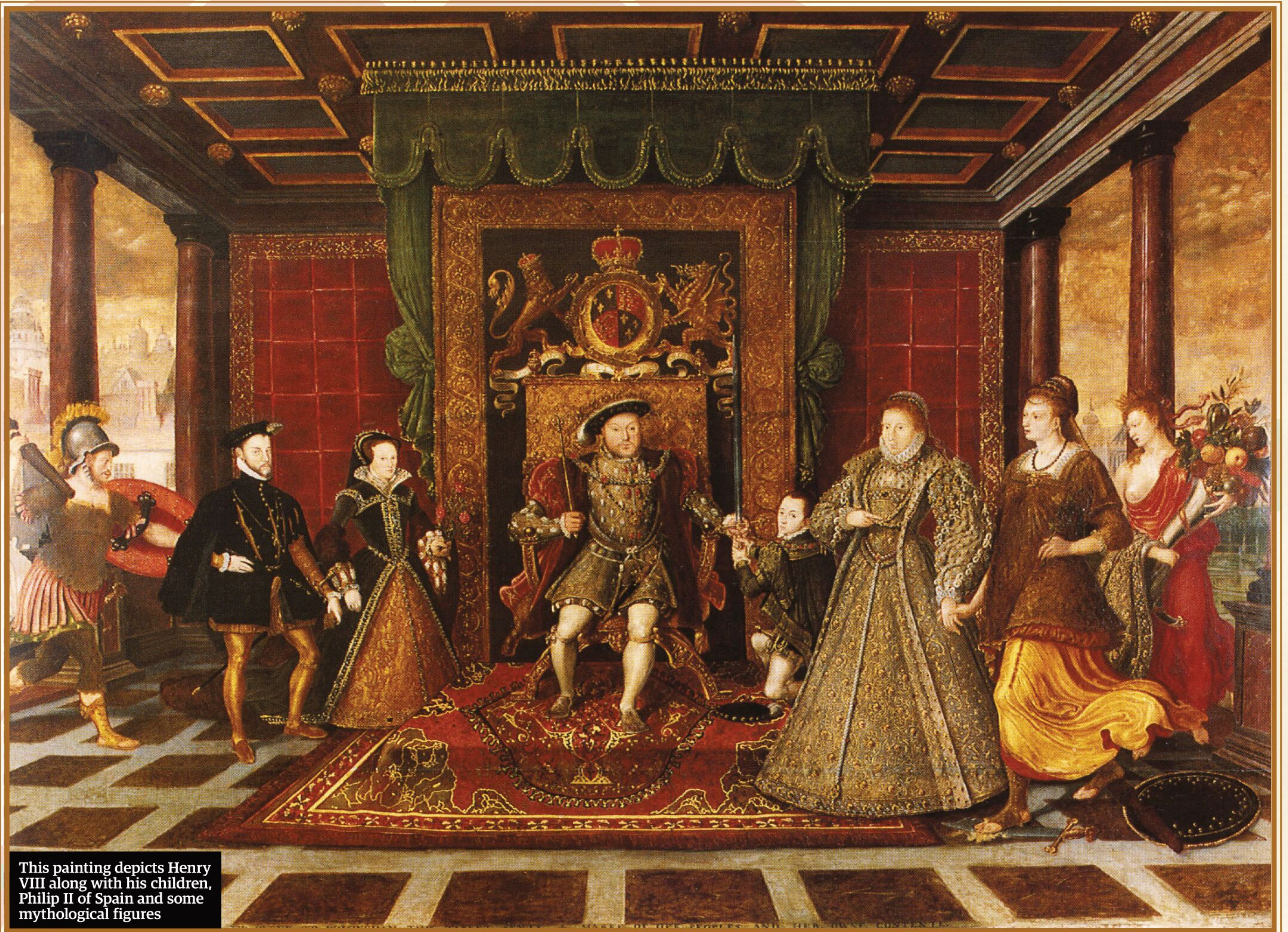
Queen Elizabeth I was the last monarch of the House of Tudor and died without naming an heir

substantially outnumbered and the fighting was fierce, but when the war ended the outcome was clear: after just two years on the throne, Richard III was dead, and with him the Yorkist cause.

Henry VII was the first monarch of the House of Tudor. One year after his victory at Bosworth he married Elizabeth of York, daughter of Edward IV. This united the warring Houses and secured the dynastic claims of his future children. He memorialised the union in the symbol of the House of Tudor, the Tudor rose, which joined the red and white roses of Lancaster and York as one. As king, Henry concentrated on stabilising the finances of the nation. He was keen to avoid unnecessary conflicts with other nations, mindful of leaving something in the coffers for his son.

That son was Henry VIII, and his near 40-year reign was tumultuous. Perhaps best known for his six wives, he was also the driving force behind the Reformation, which separated England from Rome. It was he who established the divine right of kings and presided over enormous changes to the English Constitution, yet unlike his father, he was not a man with great financial sense, and he certainly didn't share his taste for peace. He went to war with France and the Holy Roman Empire in an unsuccessful bid to bring France under his control. He established the union of England and Wales and even added Ireland to his treasures.

Henry was always going to be a hard act to follow, and that dubious privilege went to his son, Edward VI, who succeeded to the throne at the tender age of



This painting depicts Henry VIII along with his children, Philip II of Spain and some mythological figures

nine. Edward was the first English monarch to be raised a Protestant, and due to his youth his realm was governed by a regency council. It was beset with egos that caused constant clashes and plunged the nation into chaos. Financial hardships weren't helped by the expensive war with Scotland, and as the people of England rioted, the child king had troubles of a more personal kind.

At the age of 15, Edward fell dangerously ill and the council began to plan for his succession, desperate to ensure the country would not fall

A year after she took power, Mary married Phillip of Spain, the son of the Holy Roman emperor. With a Catholic once more on the throne, Mary moved to secure the future of her faith, and her violent control of Protestants, including burning more than 200 at the stake, earned her the nickname 'Bloody Mary'. Though her marriage increased trading opportunities for England, Mary and her husband didn't get on and they birthed no heirs. When she died in 1558, the crown passed to a woman who has become a legend: Elizabeth I.

success. She faced numerous plots against her without wavering and became hugely popular. She stood firm against threats both at home and from overseas, with her navy famously sending the Spanish Armada packing in 1588.

The so-called Virgin Queen never married nor had an heir. As she grew older, the calls to name a successor grew louder, yet she resisted, fearing that such a name might lead to a coup by those who disagreed. Others in the queen's government were not so squeamish, and Sir Robert Cecil, Elizabeth's chief minister, openly corresponded with James VI of Scotland, the great-grandson of Henry VIII's sister, Margaret Tudor. Without Elizabeth's knowledge, James agreed to succeed as king on her death, and when she passed away on 24 March 1603, he did just that.

James I was proclaimed king of England on the day of Elizabeth's death. As the first monarch of the House of Stuart settled into the role, the death knell sounded on the House of Tudor. Yet though its time on the throne had passed, its place in history was assured.

“The decades-long Wars of the Roses reached its climax on 22 August 1485 when Henry and Richard III met at the Battle of Bosworth”

into Catholic hands. Edward personally named his cousin Lady Jane Grey as his successor, above his half-sisters Mary and Elizabeth, who were Catholic and Protestant respectively. Famously, Lady Jane Grey reigned for just nine days before Mary seized the throne in July 1553.

Elizabeth was the last Tudor monarch and the longest reigning, at a remarkable 45 years. Gloriana, as she was known, was the daughter of Henry VIII and Anne Boleyn and had been exiled on her mother's execution. Now she returned as a Protestant monarch who promised stability and



The Tudor family tree



Henry VII (1457-1509)

Emerging as victor from the bloody Wars of the Roses, Henry Tudor quickly set about building a powerful dynasty, marrying his children into the royal families of France, Spain and Scotland. All of these relationships would be undone by his second son, but the last would bear unexpected fruit.



Elizabeth of York (1466-1503)

Daughter of Edward IV, niece of Richard III and sister to the 'Princes in the Tower', Elizabeth of York's royal lineage united the warring Houses of York and Lancaster, giving Henry VII the royal legitimacy that he craved.



Arthur Tudor (1486-1502)

Groomed for greatness, the Tudor heir died aged 15 from a mysterious malady. His marriage to Catherine of Aragon was short-lived and - according to her, at least - unconsummated. Arthur's death placed his younger brother in line to the throne and broke Henry VII's heart.



Catherine of Aragon (1485-1536)



Henry VIII (1491-1547)

Arguably the most infamous of the Tudors, Henry VIII's desire for a male heir saw him break with Rome to marry six times, instigating not just a dynastic crisis, but a religious one that would only grow more urgent under the reigns of his children.



Anne Boleyn (c.1501-36)



Jane Seymour (c.1508-37)



Anne of Cleves (1515-57)



Catherine Howard (c.1523-42)



Philip II (1527-98)



Mary I (1516-58)

Henry VIII's eldest daughter, Mary was monered as 'Bloody Mary' by Protestants for her persecution of their faith and her marriage to Philip II of Spain, who ruled England with her as joint sovereign. Her death saw England break with Catholic Europe for the last time.



Elizabeth I (1533-1603)

The fifth and final crowned Tudor survived the machinations of her siblings to reign for 45 years, standing strong against the threat of invasion and establishing England as a colonial power. Despite her many suitors, she never married and died without a direct heir, passing the crown instead to the son of her arch-rival Mary, Queen of Scots.



Edward VI (1537-53)

Henry VIII's only surviving son became king at the age of nine. Fiercely anti-Catholic and staunchly Protestant, England was ruled in his name by a like-minded regency council who fashioned the Church of England in their image, pressing the infant monarch to disinherit his sisters and name Lady Jane Grey his successor before he died at 15.



Henry FitzRoy (1519-36)

Henry VIII's only recognised bastard, the lack of male heir after 14 years marriage to Catherine of Aragon saw him raise Henry FitzRoy to a prestigious northern dukedom and give the young 'prince' numerous official duties. Unfortunately, he died aged 17, forcing Henry VIII to look elsewhere for a male successor.



James Hepburn (c.1534-78)



Henry Stuart (1545-67)



Greyhound

The white greyhound was the symbol of the Honour of Richmond, a barony in North Yorkshire, which was willed to Henry VII and used to punctuate his claim over the remnants of the defeated House of York.

Dragon

The red dragon of Cadwaladr ap Cadwallon was first adopted by Owen Tudor, who claimed descent from the mythical Welsh king. Henry Tudor adopted the red dragon banner during the Wars of the Roses to add thunder to his claim.



James VI and I (1566-1625)

With the death of Elizabeth I at the ripe old age of 69, James VI of Scotland accepted the crown of England as James I. The age of the Tudors had ended and a tumultuous new one was about to dawn for the whole of Great Britain.



For 118 years, the Tudor dynasty ruled England in a period of great change, an age of religious upheaval, insurrection, exploration and war. Discover how this family's complicated family ties shaped the British Isles and beyond

Key

Family via marriage



Family via blood



Catherine Parr (1512-48)



Margaret Tudor (1489-1541)

Married to the Stuart king James IV of Scotland, Margaret ruled as regent for her son following her husband's death at Flodden fighting the army of her brother Henry VIII. Margaret Tudor's descendants would eventually unite the crowns of England and Scotland.



James IV (1473-1513)



Louis XII (1462-1515)



Mary Tudor (1496-1533)

Briefly married to the ageing French king Louis XII, Mary was conveyed home following her husband's death by Charles Brandon, 1st Duke of Suffolk. Breaking Henry VIII's trust, Mary and Brandon married in secret.



Charles Brandon (c.1484-1545)



Mary of Guise (1515-60)



James V (1512-42)

Like his father before him, James V was defeated in battle by the army of his uncle Henry VIII, falling ill shortly afterwards and, as his father had done, leaving an infant to inherit the throne of Scotland. A stalwart defender of Catholicism and ally of France, James V persecuted Protestants and antagonised his uncle by claiming his title, lord of Ireland.



Henry Grey (1517-54)



Frances Brandon (1517-59)

Married to Henry Grey, Duke of Suffolk, and mother of Lady Jane Grey, Frances was a canny political operator who parachuted her daughter into the inner circle of the young Edward VI. Following Jane's execution, she begged for the lives of her three remaining daughters and ended her life in near poverty under the watchful eye of Mary I.



Mary, Queen of Scots (1542-87)

The French-educated Scottish queen ended her days a prisoner of her second cousin, Elizabeth I. Mary's claim to the English throne would be strengthened through her second husband (and first cousin) Henry Stuart, Lord Darnley, who was also a descendant of Henry VII via their grandmother, Margaret Tudor.



Francis II (1544-60)



Lady Jane Grey (c.1537-54)

The 'Nine Day Queen' was named heir to the throne by the staunchly Protestant Edward VI fearing a Catholic resurgence under his eldest sister, Mary. As support for the most obvious heir - Henry VIII's eldest child - grew, Jane's supporters switched allegiances and she was executed for high treason.

Who were the Stuarts?

The House of Stewart (later Stuart) had ruled Scotland since 1371. Scotland had long borne the brunt of England's territorial ambitions and an opportunity for peace came with the ascension of Henry VII, who married his daughter to James IV, bringing the Stuarts into the English succession. That peace was short-lived and Henry VIII's reign began with an invasion of the north that saw his brother-in-law, James IV, killed, while his daughter Elizabeth I would have Mary, Queen of Scots, executed.

The Tudor Legacy

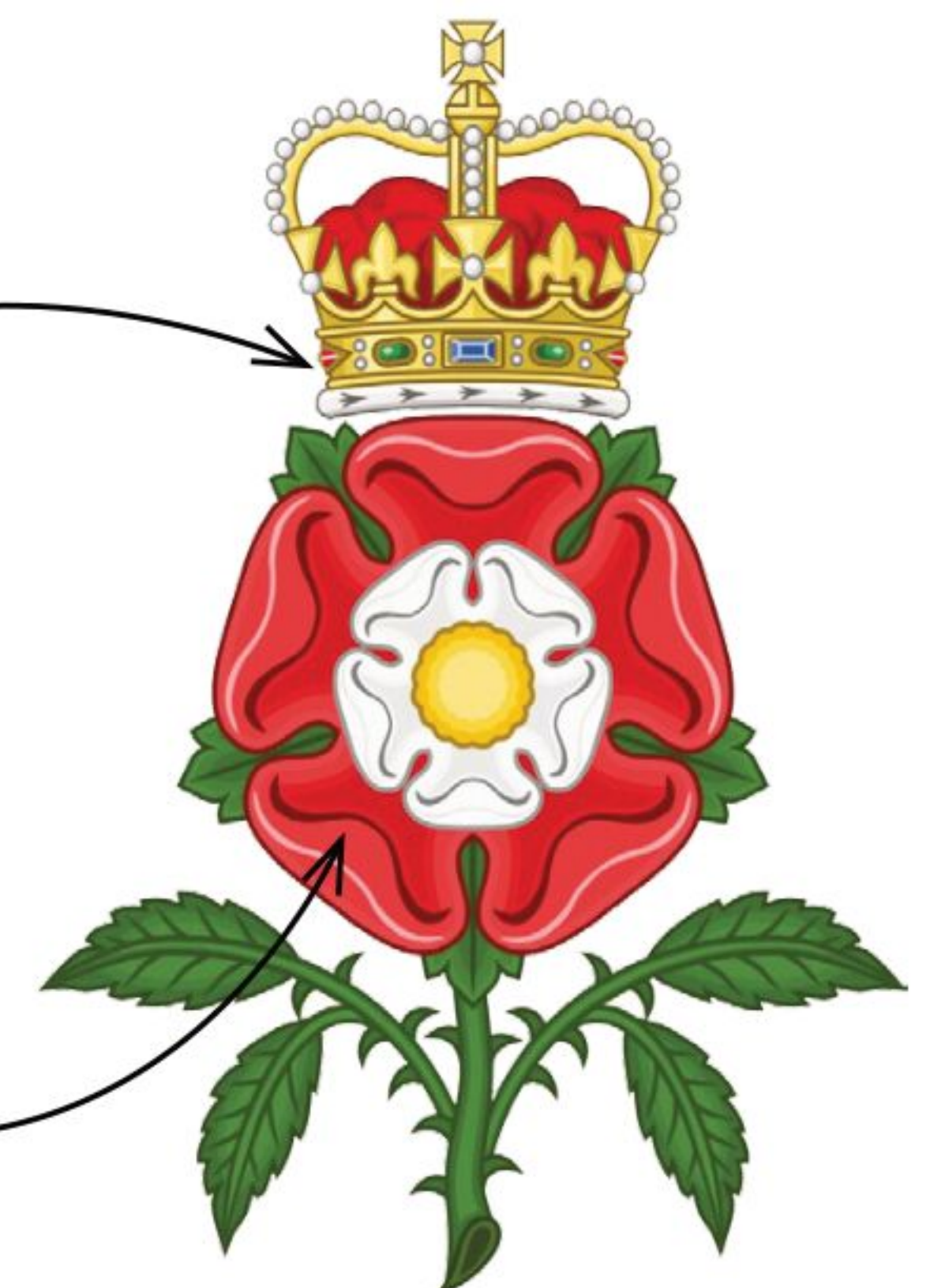
Under the tumultuous Tudors, Wales became formally incorporated into England, the touchpaper was lit in Ireland by the declaration of Henry VIII as its king, and the seeds were sown for union with Scotland that would come to pass under the Stuarts. Most critically, the English Reformation begun under Henry VIII, accelerated by Edward VI, halted by Mary I and restarted by Elizabeth I transformed the culture of the island, created fault lines that still define the British Isles, and fractured England from much of the continent. For good and ill, the legacy of the Tudor dynasty is still felt today.

Crown

The Tudor Rose has been used as a royal badge by every English and British monarch since Henry VII. It's perhaps the most visible symbol of continuity, having survived the Stuarts, Hanoverians, and the modern royal family.

Rose

The white rose within the red symbolised the joining of the Houses of York and Lancaster under Henry VII. The red rose wasn't used as a symbol of the Lancastrian cause during the Wars of the Roses but was created later to add 'poetry'.



Life in the Tudor Court

For those living close to the king or queen, rich rewards were on offer. But displease a royal, or attract an enemy, and heads would almost certainly roll



Almost immediately, Henry VII, the first Tudor ruler, sought stability, knowing it was vital if he was to hold on to the throne. As well as banning rich nobles from owning their own armies, he built a strong and sizable court. Believing it important to bring England's wealthiest individuals closer to the seat of power, and handing out important roles, he gained the support of around 1,000 influential people. They helped him fix a financially broken England and backed his austerity measures. The court also built a country free from international war; one that was open to foreign trade.

Henry VII sought intellect among his courtiers, with literature and music coming to dominate. The king surrounded himself with poets and sculptors, and he also enjoyed the company of scientists, humanists and historians. William Caxton was supported by Henry, who recognised his stature as the first printer of England. Such people would also come into contact with Henry's son - his successor Henry VIII - and they would shape the future king's cultural outlook.

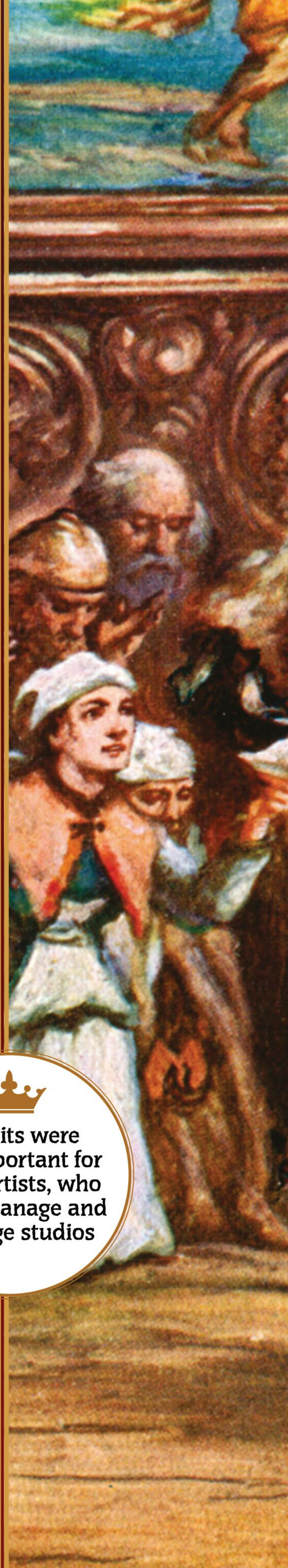
Even so, political strife was never too far away and those attracted to the court often caused jealousy. "The king has the greatest desire to employ foreigners, but can not do so for the envy of the English is diabolical," a Spanish resident

noted. "They have an antipathy to foreigners, and imagine that they never come into their island, but to make themselves masters of it, and to usurp their goods," a Venetian quipped.

It wasn't long, therefore, before factions emerged, with various groups of individuals coming together with a common purpose and willing to do all they could to get their ideas through. Combined with the general paranoia felt by many royals during the Tudor era, these groups were convinced that they could influence the thinking of the powerful. In doing so, they created incredible tension not only within the ruled lands, but overseas, too. Court became both a desirable and treacherous place.

To get close to a king or queen - or at least close to someone close to a king or queen - would allow a courtier a sense of success and boost their chances of privilege and wealth. As the commoners outside the court farmed the land, traded in market towns and worked their fingers to the bone to scrape a living, the landowners, merchants, lawyers, noblemen and learned scholars were among those seeking patronage and power.

The two sets of lives could not have been more disparate and it was very easy to spot the difference in stature. As the public wore clothing



Portraits were very important for Tudor artists, who would manage and run large studios



Cardinal Thomas Wolsey going in procession to Westminster Hall



Lady Jane Grey was executed at the Tower of London after being imprisoned there for several months

Tower Green

Two of Henry VIII's wives – Anne Boleyn and Catherine Howard – were executed on a scaffold erected here, as well as Lady Jane Grey. Execution inside the tower, away from the gawping crowds, was a privilege reserved for those of high rank or with dangerously strong popular support.

Queen's House

This half-timbered house was built during the reign of Henry VIII. It is believed the original house was built for Anne Boleyn, who stayed here before her coronation, and also, ironically, before her execution.


The Lord Chamberlain was the most important court figure as he oversaw everything

Bell Tower

There is a small wooden turret on top of the Bell Tower that contains the Tower's curfew bell. It was used both as an alarm and to tell prisoners to return to their cells. Elizabeth I was imprisoned here by her sister, Mary I, for assisting a rebellion against her.

made from cheap material, the male courtiers would wear attractive patterned shirts created in wool, linen or silk, over which would be a jacket. They also wore hose. The women would don lavish velvet or silk gowns that flowed to the floor, and their hair would be swept beneath a French hood. Court was a rich place to be.

Bishop Thomas Ruthall knew this more than most. He had amassed great wealth from land that exceeded the cash being generated for the king. Cardinal Thomas Wolsey also noted the trappings that court life offered, not that it was ever hidden. The problem for Wolsey was that he was a low-born man – it was because his intellect was so great that he had been able to better himself through the Church. He graduated from Oxford, becoming a royal chaplain and gaining himself a place on the King's Council. He would become archbishop of York and a cardinal, and the king passed much of the work of running the realm to him, which gave him power and wealth.

Henry VIII welcomed Wolsey, not minding his social climbing and actually believing it to be a bonus. The monarch was paranoid about the influence some of the noblemen and wealthy courtiers had on those around him and he felt that Wolsey would be more grateful for his place within court circles. Yet the nobles resented Wolsey's success and they repeatedly clashed with him. It didn't help that Wolsey would often use his intellect to humiliate them.

Wolsey believed the nobles to be inferior and lucky to have power only through birth, not hard work. For Bishop Ruthall, pushed aside by the cardinal, the animosity could not have been greater. Ruthall worked under Wolsey and hated being accountable to him. On one occasion Wolsey asked for a survey of the royal revenues, but Ruthall accidentally presented him with an inventory of his own fortune. Wolsey delighted in showing this to the king, and the stress caused much ill-health for Ruthall, who died as a result.

Wolsey also clashed with Charles Brandon as well as Thomas Howard, Duke of Norfolk. The latter delighted in Wolsey's eventual downfall, while Brandon would go on to replace him as the king's main confidante. But before Wolsey was cast aside, he is said to have been responsible for the death of Edward Stafford, Duke of Buckingham. The pair had fought because Stafford resented Wolsey's low birth, while Wolsey hated that Stafford had been given land, wealth and descent from Thomas of Woodstock, son of Edward III. So when Wolsey received a letter that accused the duke of treason, he was only too happy to pass it to the king. Execution came swiftly.

Thomas Cromwell, a close ally of Wolsey, was also opposed by court factions, his low birth and closeness to the king making him unpopular. Cromwell had cleverly steered England through the break with Rome and the dissolution of the monasteries, but they opened up fresh conflict

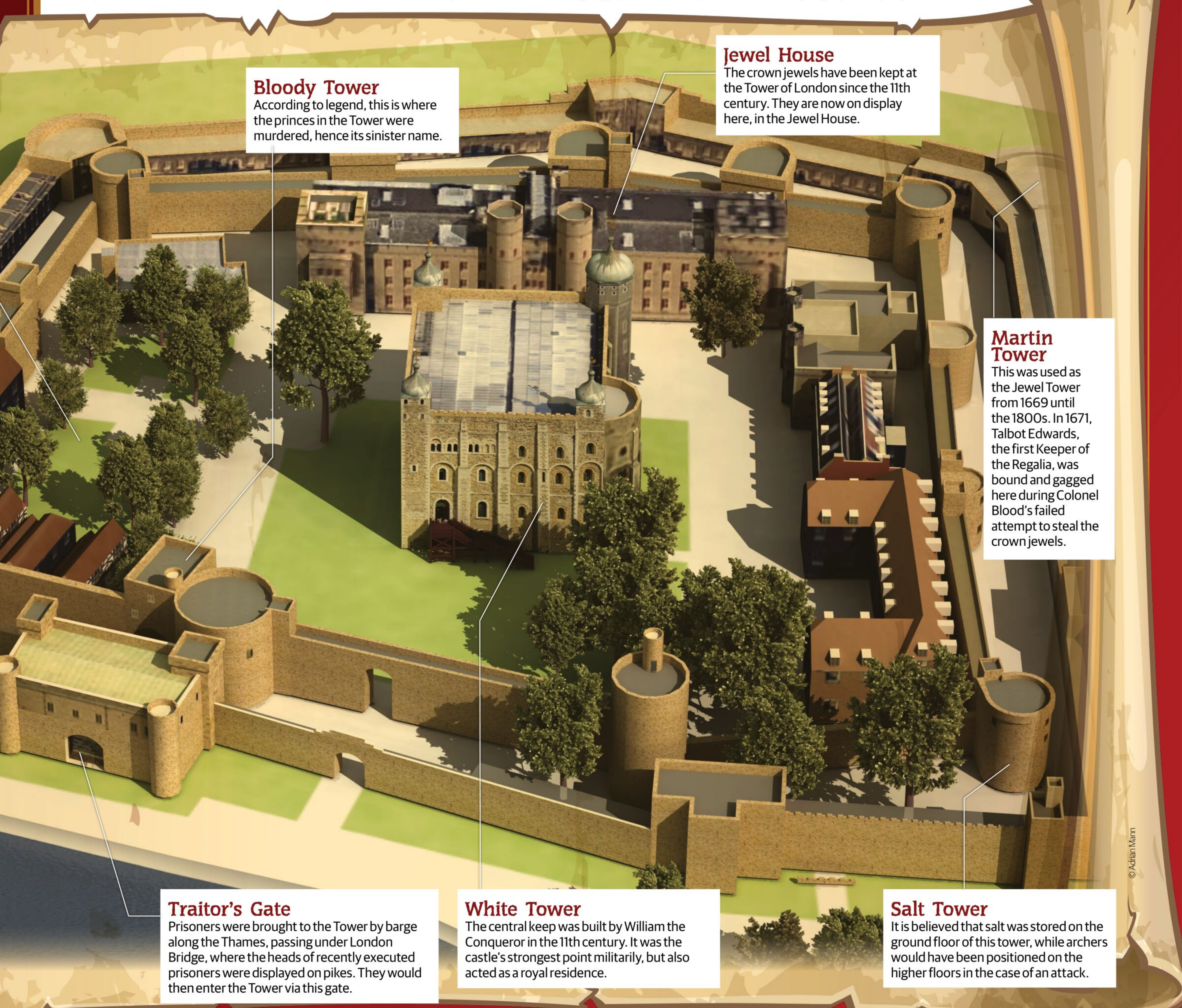
The Tower of London

An iconic part of England's capital city for close to 1,000 years, the Tower of London built under the commission of the country's conqueror, William, Duke of Normandy. The first foundations of the 27-metre-high stone fortress known as the White Tower were laid in 1078 and it initially served as a fear-inducing residential palace with walls an impenetrable 4.5 metres thick. As subsequent monarchs took to the throne, the Tower of London evolved with extra walls, towers, buildings and a moat also being added to expand it.

King Henry VIII used the Tower to store weapons, documents and precious possessions including jewellery. His collection of lions and exotic animals was housed in the Lion Tower and there were extensive lodgings, carefully renovated and modernised, with the Queen's Great Chamber, Great Hall and kitchens being given careful attention.

Of greater note, though, were the gruesome goings-on taking place within its walls. The Tower was used to imprison and torture many high-profile victims,

particularly from 1534, the year in which the king was granted Royal Supremacy that declared him the supreme head of the Church of England. Before Henry VIII's reign, only one person had lost their head in the Tower of London, but during his later years, political opponents would be snatched from the streets - usually on trumped-up charges of treason or heresy - and locked away in the most squalid of conditions. Executions, which were usually beheadings, became commonplace and many high-profile people were killed.



Bloody Tower
According to legend, this is where the princes in the Tower were murdered, hence its sinister name.

Jewel House
The crown jewels have been kept at the Tower of London since the 11th century. They are now on display here, in the Jewel House.

Martin Tower
This was used as the Jewel Tower from 1669 until the 1800s. In 1671, Talbot Edwards, the first Keeper of the Regalia, was bound and gagged here during Colonel Blood's failed attempt to steal the crown jewels.

Traitor's Gate
Prisoners were brought to the Tower by barge along the Thames, passing under London Bridge, where the heads of recently executed prisoners were displayed on pikes. They would then enter the Tower via this gate.

White Tower
The central keep was built by William the Conqueror in the 11th century. It was the castle's strongest point militarily, but also acted as a royal residence.

Salt Tower
It is believed that salt was stored on the ground floor of this tower, while archers would have been positioned on the higher floors in the case of an attack.

COURTLY PLAYERS

CHARLES BRANDON

As one of Tudor England's most ruthless social climbers and a prominent courtier, Charles Brandon was the first duke of Suffolk and a loyal ally of King Henry VIII. He married the king's sister Mary Tudor around 1514, and in 1529 he helped to overthrow the chief minister, Cardinal Thomas Wolsey.

WALTER RALEIGH

Explorer Walter Raleigh charmed his way into the good books of Queen Elizabeth I, who knighted him and made him captain of the Queen's Guard in 1587. She locked him up in the Tower of London five years later when she jealously discovered he had secretly married Elizabeth Throckmorton, one of her ladies-in-waiting.



PHILIP SIDNEY

Shakespeare and Marlowe were great Tudor-era playwrights, but poet Philip Sidney was a prominent courtier who was sent as ambassador to the German emperor and the Prince of Orange, and promoted the arts. He nurtured poets such as Edmund Spenser, who inked *The Faerie Queen*, which celebrated Queen Elizabeth I and the Tudor dynasty.

WILLIAM COMPTON

When his father died, William Compton became a page to two-year-old Prince Henry, becoming close friends. Compton was later appointed as Henry VIII's groom of the stool - serving the king while he used the latrine. Henry's trust earned him promotions and Compton became a wealthy, influential man with numerous crown posts.

SIR FRANCIS WALSHINGHAM

Brought into the fold by William Cecil, who admired his talent, Walsingham flourished during Elizabeth I's reign. The spymaster's effective intelligence network focused on foreign enemies and those suspected of plotting from within. He discovered the Babington Plot to assassinate Queen Elizabeth I, which led to the execution of Mary, Queen of Scots.

within the court. With some courtiers displeased over the issues regarding Henry's marital life and the shift to Lutheran thinking, there was backstabbing aplenty as Protestant and Catholic factions emerged.

Thomas More campaigned against the Reformation, which brought Protestantism to England and put Henry VIII at its head. Howard detested Cromwell and arrested him with glee when, despite becoming a favourite of the king, he made an error by suggesting Anne of Cleves as a suitable queen. During some bloody years, the Boleyns, Poles and Howards were destroyed. Displeasing the king was disastrous.

The court of Henry VIII had much internal unrest, but the monarch was far more lavish than his father and he did much to undo the years of financial grafting with a rather more carefree outlook. Foreign influence was welcomed and it saw eminent scholars such as Desiderius Erasmus becoming a regular visitor to the court. He was a great thinker who taught at Cambridge and who rallied against the radicalism of some of the most extreme leaders of the Protestant Reformation in England.

Staying on the right side of the king was crucial, though. If nothing else, it guaranteed good food. To be able to feast on delightful meats in lavish banquets was a real treat, and courtiers filled their stomachs with peacocks, swans, blackbirds, boar, deer and geese. The diet

of the rich was poor in vegetables since they were seen as the foodstuffs of the have-nots. But as they carved at their food with knives, scooped with silver spoons and dug in with their hands, they savoured every mouthful. They would enjoy the flavours of imported spices and locally grown herbs, while washing it down with wine. If their expensively tailored clothes were not bursting at the seams after this, they would gobble down rich, attractive desserts made of marchpane, a marzipan made of ground almonds and sugar.

At the same time, the courtiers were kept entertained. Leisure time was valued in the court, primarily because Henry VIII loved to frolic. He enjoyed hunting and sport, and they became common pastimes for the courtiers, too. Jousting tournaments were enjoyed on special occasions, and there was also much time for music. The king was a keen musician and composer, but there were many influences and visitors from Europe. The opera, anthem, masque and madrigal emerged during the Tudor period, with Thomas Tallis, Robert Johnson and John Dowland among the great English composers.

Edward VI's coronation did not create a cultural morass, but it did lead to more jostling for power. The duke of Somerset was initially the young king's protector, but the duke of Northumberland persuaded the king to remove him from power and then took over the role. However, a true paranoid period emerged when Mary I was

“Staying on the right side of the king was crucial, though. If nothing else, it guaranteed good food”



After 20 years of being locked away by Elizabeth I, Mary, Queen of Scots, was sentenced to death




Food for courtiers became more interesting and exotic thanks to further world exploration

Queen Elizabeth I pictured here in procession with some finely dressed courtiers

crowned after deposing the Protestant proclaimed queen Lady Jane Grey.

Mary brought Catholicism back to England, burning Protestants and allying herself with Spain. It split the country, led to underground movements, and created martyrs such as archbishop Thomas Cranmer. He had helped Henry VIII divorce Catherine of Aragon and become the Protestant archbishop of Canterbury - but that put him at odds with Queen Mary and he was burnt to death. Mary's entire reign was marked by bloodshed and the Tower of London became a busy place. Indeed, torture was routine for courtiers who fell out of favour, with all manner of devilish devices invented for maximum pain and discomfort. A trip to the Tower of London was no treat.

Elizabeth I's court was no less troublesome. She spent much of her time in Whitehall, although she also had the pick of many other royal palaces. Courtiers would socialise and be entertained in the queen's presence in the Presence Chamber, where music, plays, a masque or ball would be staged. Bear- and dog-baiting attracted crowds of courtiers. The men in Elizabethan times would be impeccably dressed, padded round trunks replacing the tight-fitting hose of before. The women had wire within their dresses to give them a look of narrow waists. The tops would generally reveal more than a hint of bosom.

The queen demanded great respect, love and loyalty from the courtiers, and she wanted them to be flirtatious while understanding that she would never reciprocate. The courtiers playing music and

declarations of devotion helped to focus attention on her, but the men were happy to play around as it offered them a chance of favours that would hand them power and wealth. Under Elizabeth, England flourished. To some extent, her courtiers were like an extended family, and she would hand gifts to courtiers and servants with gold-plated items reserved for the higher ranks. She also invited key explorers into her court, including Francis Drake, who raided Spanish ships with the queen's support.

Throughout the early parts of Elizabeth's reign, though, Mary, Queen of Scots, was ever-present, although she had been locked away for some

20 years. The Catholics threatened to remove Elizabeth from power and install Mary instead. Despite being the queen's cousin, Mary was beheaded in 1587 and while Elizabeth agreed to the execution, she had tried to backtrack. Her secretary William Davison was blamed for delivering the warrant despite the change of heart, and he was fined and imprisoned in the Tower of London as a result.

But Elizabeth would be the last of the Tudors, who were replaced by the Stuarts. In 1603, after 118 years, an exciting and eventful chapter in British royal history had come to an end.

What do we mean by 'Tudor court'?

The kings and queens of the Tudor period lived in many different places, from the Palace of Westminster to Baynard's Castle. Surrounding the monarch were hundreds of noblemen and servants who looked after them, both personally and supportively. Each was selected for their talents and collective ability to highlight the rich, powerful and important nature of the royals.

Already wealthy in their own right, courtiers would enjoy the best clothes, the tastiest, meatiest food, and the finest music, poetry and art. Their lives were a world apart from the poor, but there was much pressure to remain within: those who displeased the king or queen risked being banished or executed. This naturally led to feuding as courtiers tried to position themselves as close to

the ruler as possible so that they might gain the greatest favours from them.

There was an important physical court, too: Hampton Court. Acquired by Cardinal Thomas Wolsey in 1514, what had been a large house became a true display of wealth and power. Wolsey used it to host diplomatic visits and to entertain, reinforcing his position as the second most powerful man in the realm. But when he lost his power, he also lost his home. Seized by Henry VIII in 1528, Hampton Court became the king's favourite residence. Equipped with huge kitchens, a chapel and Great Hall for dining, its gardens were magnificently landscaped and there was good sanitation. It provided a beautiful country retreat and was perfect for impressing foreign delegations.



1457–1509

**Henry
VII**

Meet the king who won his crown through battle and had to fight throughout his reign to keep it, establishing the mighty Tudor dynasty

An invasion force set off from France and landed in Wales before heading into the heart of England itself. The year was 1485 and at the head of this ragtag army was a man who, for most of his 28 years on Earth, had been on the run, constantly looking over his shoulder and unable to find peace. This man was Henry Tudor and when he first set foot on the wet sand of Wales, he is said to have fallen to his knees and uttered, "Judge me O Lord and favour my cause." It was unsurprising that he was praying, for the odds seemed stacked against him; his claim to the throne was weak and the army of the King Richard III of England was much stronger than his.

There were two reasons why the force landed in Wales - Henry wanted to remain undetected for as long as possible to give him time to build up support, and it was also the land where he had been born in 1457. The man who would go on to found the Tudor dynasty was born to an earl and a countess, and he had a minor claim to the throne through his mother, Lady Margaret of Beaufort, a descendant of Edward III. Despite this tenuous lineage, by the early 1470s he was the main Lancastrian claimant remaining, as the Wars of the Roses - a battle for the crown between the houses of Lancaster and York that began in 1455 - had resulted in the deaths of the rest.

When the course of the Wars of Roses changed again in 1471 with the reclaiming of the throne by the Yorkist king Edward IV, Henry fled to Brittany

for safety. He would not set foot in England again for 14 years and this life of constantly being under threat, of never feeling safe, would affect how he ruled when he became king.

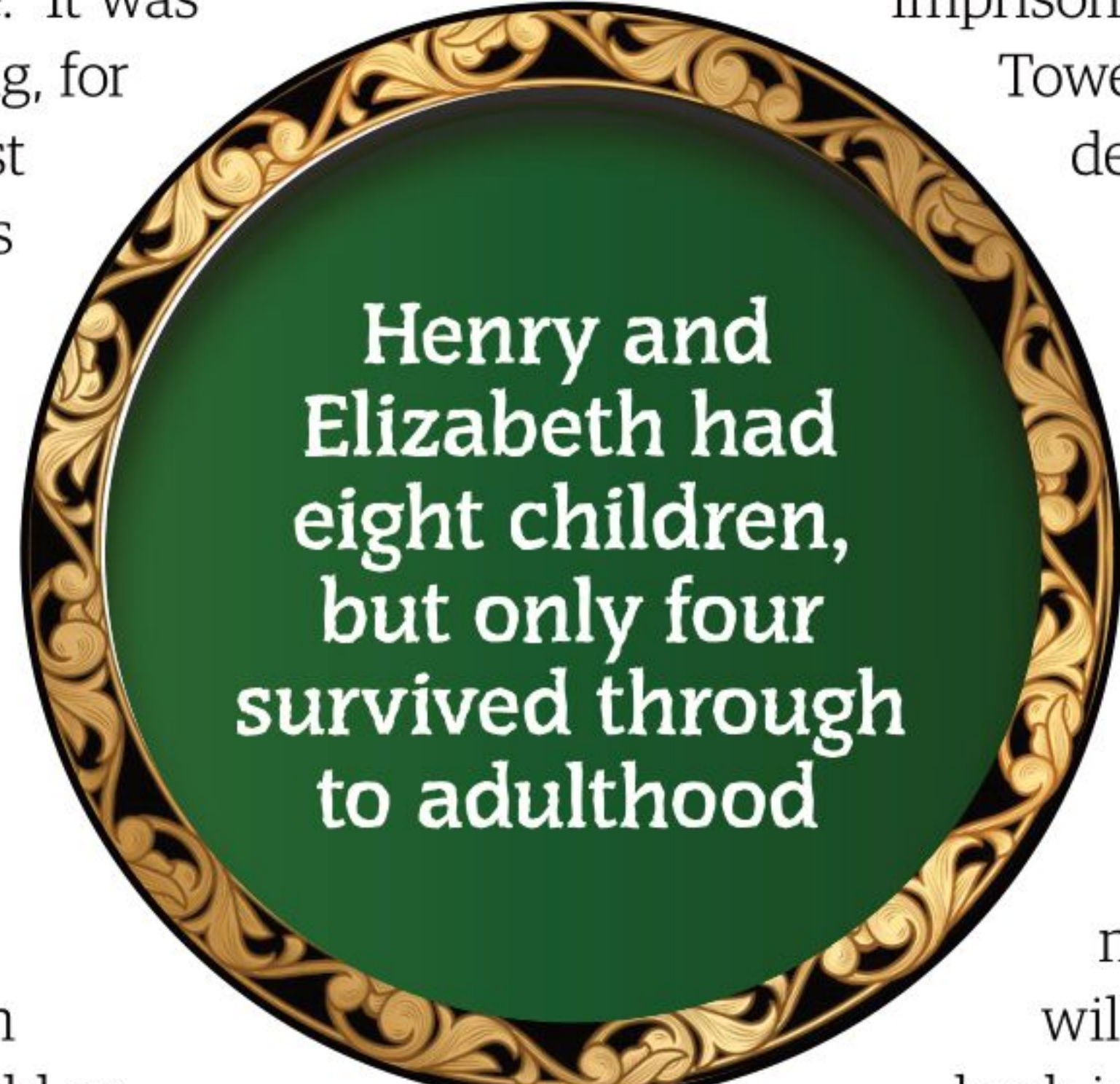
In Brittany, Henry was under the protection of Francis II, who resisted Edward's attempts to send Henry to England and in the process probably saved his life. It was Edward himself who died unexpectedly in 1483 and Richard of Gloucester, who would become Richard III, took over and

imprisoned Edward's two sons in the Tower of London. To this day, debate still rages about what exactly happened to them, but there was no doubt that Richard was now in control.

Richard was now king, but many were unhappy that Edward's sons wouldn't get the chance to succeed their father. This increasing political division in England meant that, after years in the wilderness, Henry was thrust back into the spotlight with many believing he should assert his royal claim.

This situation was managed with what would become typical political cunning by Henry, who announced that if he did return and become king then he would marry Elizabeth of York and thus unite the two warring Houses.

When he learned that Richard was exerting pressure on Francis to release his rival to him, Henry escaped to France dressed as a servant. It was in Paris that his supporters gathered around him and made their plans for an invasion of England and to put to an end to the Yorkist king

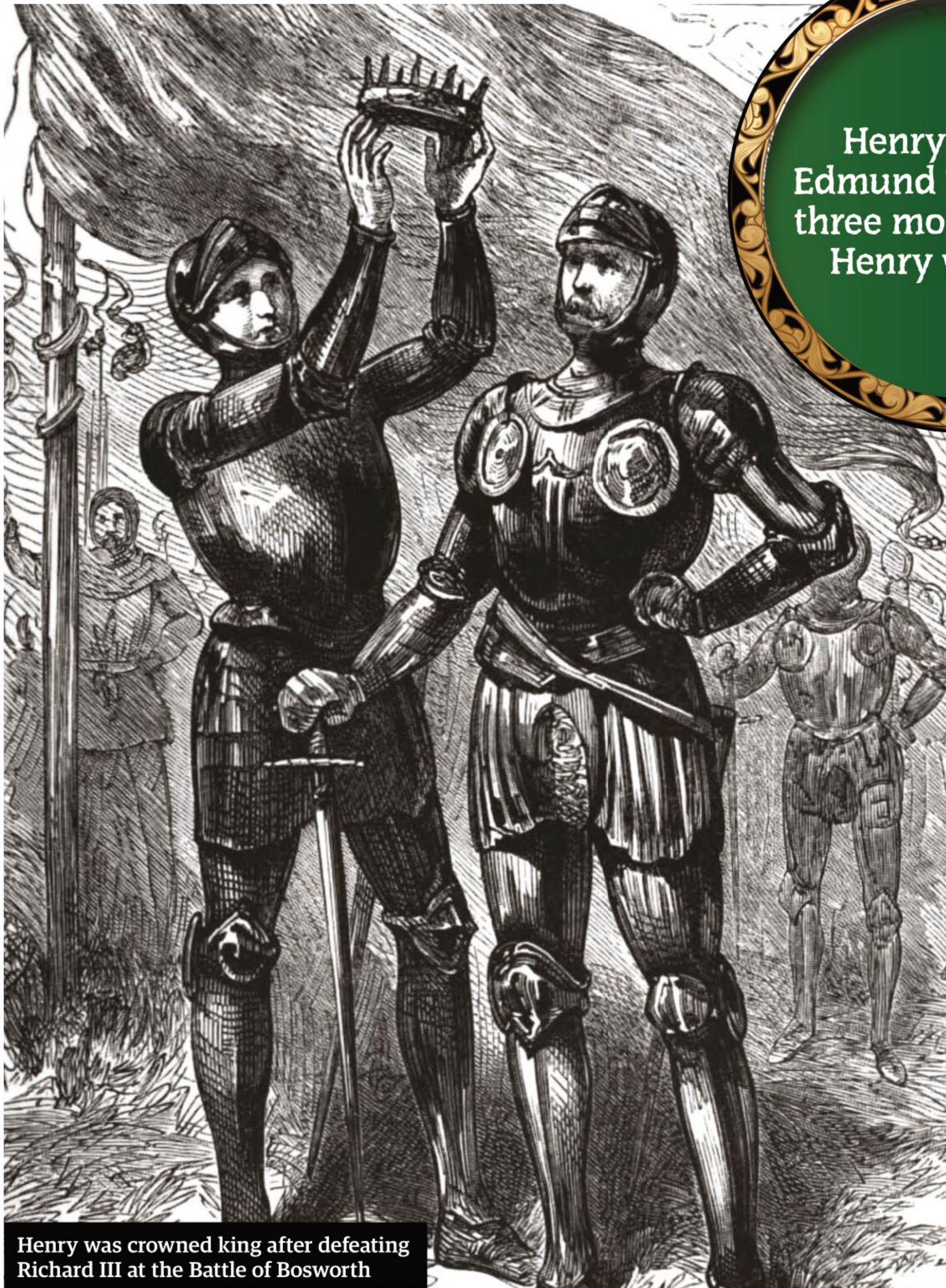


Henry and Elizabeth had eight children, but only four survived through to adulthood

A detailed portrait of Henry VII, King of England, wearing a black cap and a fur-trimmed garment with a gold chain and a red and gold patterned sash. The background is a solid blue color.

Henry VII

Henry VII founded the Tudor dynasty after the turbulent Wars of the Roses



Henry was crowned king after defeating Richard III at the Battle of Bosworth

Henry's father, Edmund Tudor, died three months before Henry was born



“The king of England was cut down, murdered by common men, battered to death and then stripped naked and taken to Leicester”

who had only been sitting on the throne for two years. On 7 August 1485 Henry landed at Milton Haven Waterway in Wales and said his prayer while kneeling on the beach.

Henry's invasion force didn't stay secret for long and soon Richard's larger army had managed to intercept it south of Market Bosworth in Leicestershire. On 22 August, what would turn out to be the last confrontation of the Wars of the Roses took place as the two rivals met each other on the battlefield. Henry's forces were in danger of being overwhelmed when William Stanley, who had been watching from the sidelines, threw his men into battle and instructed them to attack the king. The king of England was cut down, murdered by common men, battered to death and then stripped naked and taken to Leicester, where his dead body was exposed to the public. Against all odds, the man who had been living in exile for

most of his life had won. The crown was his, but Henry knew that if he had won it in battle then he could also lose it in battle. The struggle to keep hold of the throne had only just begun.

All the years that Henry had spent in exile had robbed him of an intimate knowledge of the workings of a royal court, but had made him a sharp observer and his keen mind immediately grasped how important appearances were; it was not enough to just be king - he had to look, act and sound like a king.

It is often said that history is written by the victors and following his coronation, that is exactly what Henry did. He used his first parliament to change the date that he became king to a day before the Battle of Bosworth, thereby making Richard the attempted usurper and ensuring that everyone who had opposed Henry could in the future be tried with treason. His marriage to

Elizabeth of York united the warring Houses of York and Lancaster and led to the creation of a powerful symbol: the Tudor rose, which incorporated the Houses' two colours. He also commissioned the first ever pound coin, a gold sovereign with an image of himself sitting on a throne in all his splendour on the obverse and a Tudor double rose on the reverse.

While these symbols were powerful propaganda tools, they were nothing compared to the importance of producing a male heir. So when, in 1486, Prince Arthur was born to Henry and Elizabeth, the new king could breathe a little easier. But while the nation rejoiced at the birth of the prince, who had been named after the mythical king of Camelot, there were still those who weren't buying into the legitimacy of the Tudors.

In 1487, a rebellion began in Ireland around a boy called Lambert Simnel, who claimed to be the Yorkist earl of Warwick, son of Edward IV's brother George, Duke of Clarence. The force invaded England but was no match for Henry's troops, who decimated the rival army at the Battle of Stoke. Simnel, who was merely a puppet in the plan, was pardoned by Henry. However, the fact that the



Bosworth remains as one of the most well-known battles in English history

monarch had been forced into battle to keep his crown was a further indication that his place on the throne was not secure.

Just four years later, history repeated itself and Henry had to deal with another rebellion; this time a young man called Perkin Warbeck claimed to be one of the princes in the Tower. This was a serious problem for the king as he knew that much of his support had only come because of the disappearance of the two princes - while Warbeck's claim was widely discredited, it would provide a good excuse for people to rise up against him. Henry responded by setting up an extensive surveillance network, with spies across the country and the continent keeping a close eye on anyone who seemed likely to cause trouble.

Henry had always been a suspicious, even paranoid king, and with Warbeck's claim this only

By the time of his death, Henry had amassed a fortune that would be worth approximately £950 million today

increased. The spying network was increasingly well funded and Henry's Privy Chamber, his personal space where he worked and slept, became harder to gain admittance to as the number of people he trusted decreased. He became obsessed with two things: money and security. His style of government became increasingly personal, with his signature required for all substantial financial transactions. After all, money meant control.

When Warbeck was captured in 1497 and executed two years later, it was a vindication of the king's refusal to loosen his grip on government. However, with Warbeck gone and the king having been on the throne for more than a decade, he could begin to focus more attention on matters outside of the island nation and look to further legitimise his dynasty. Marriage alliances were a formidable diplomatic tool and Henry had given customary care and attention to who Arthur would marry. He favoured

LANDMARKS OF HENRY'S LIFETIME

OLD ENEMIES

France and England had a long history of conflict before Henry became king, such as the Hundred Years' War of 1337-1453. As Henry was first and foremost interested in securing his throne, he mostly pursued a strategy of peace with France but did launch a small invasion in 1492 that led to the Treaty of Étaples, the terms of which helped to swell Henry's coffers.

POWER OF THE NOBLES

In England, many noble families were very powerful and possessed land and armies that could potentially challenge the king. Henry used two main tools to limit their power: taxation and the Court of the Star Chamber. The court operated unusually quickly for the time and would act against those so powerful that ordinary courts wouldn't convict them. However, as its actions were carried out in secret, it could be used tyrannically by rulers.

THE NEW WORLD

In 1492, Genoan explorer Christopher Columbus (backed by Spanish money) landed in the New World, an action that would change the world forever. The discovery of a path from Europe to this new area would lead to many of the major European nations trying to colonise it and saw a raft of gold and exotic goods flood into the continent.

MONEY, MONEY, MONEY

Years of war with France had led to England being in severe debt and Henry worked hard to build up his own personal finances and that of the nation. He was personally involved in this aspect of government and his trade agreements and policies were designed to boost finances. By the end of his reign, tax revenues were significantly higher and Henry VIII inherited a far richer monarchy than many who had gone before him.

A NEW WORLD POWER

The marriage of Ferdinand of Aragon and Isabella of Castile in 1469 began the process of uniting Spain as one country - although Aragon and Castile remained independent from each other in some ways - and increased its power. Spain would emerge as a powerful player on the world and international stage and a country that England had to be increasingly wary of.

The Tudor spy network

John Morton was someone whose political support was fluid, to say the least; originally a Lancastrian, he changed sides to the Yorkists before allying himself with Henry after his victory at the Battle of Bosworth.

While Morton's loyalty could be called into question, his skills and talent could not. Henry needed capable men and appointed him archbishop of Canterbury. Morton was then effectively given carte blanche to set up a spy and surveillance network that would report directly to the king.

Henry had spies throughout the British Isles and Europe, and these agents were instructed to keep a close eye on those who might pose a threat. This spy network was especially helpful to the first Tudor monarch in the case of Perkin Warbeck, as it meant that Henry knew of the pretender's whereabouts and who his supporters were, and so could act accordingly.

Indeed, it was through this network that he learned that William Stanley – whose army had effectively won him the crown at Bosworth – was plotting with traitors and so he was executed and his vast estates went to the king. Henry's spy network played a key role in enabling him to stay on the throne.

Lord Stanley brings the crown of Richard to Richmond, from *Cassell's Illustrated History of England*



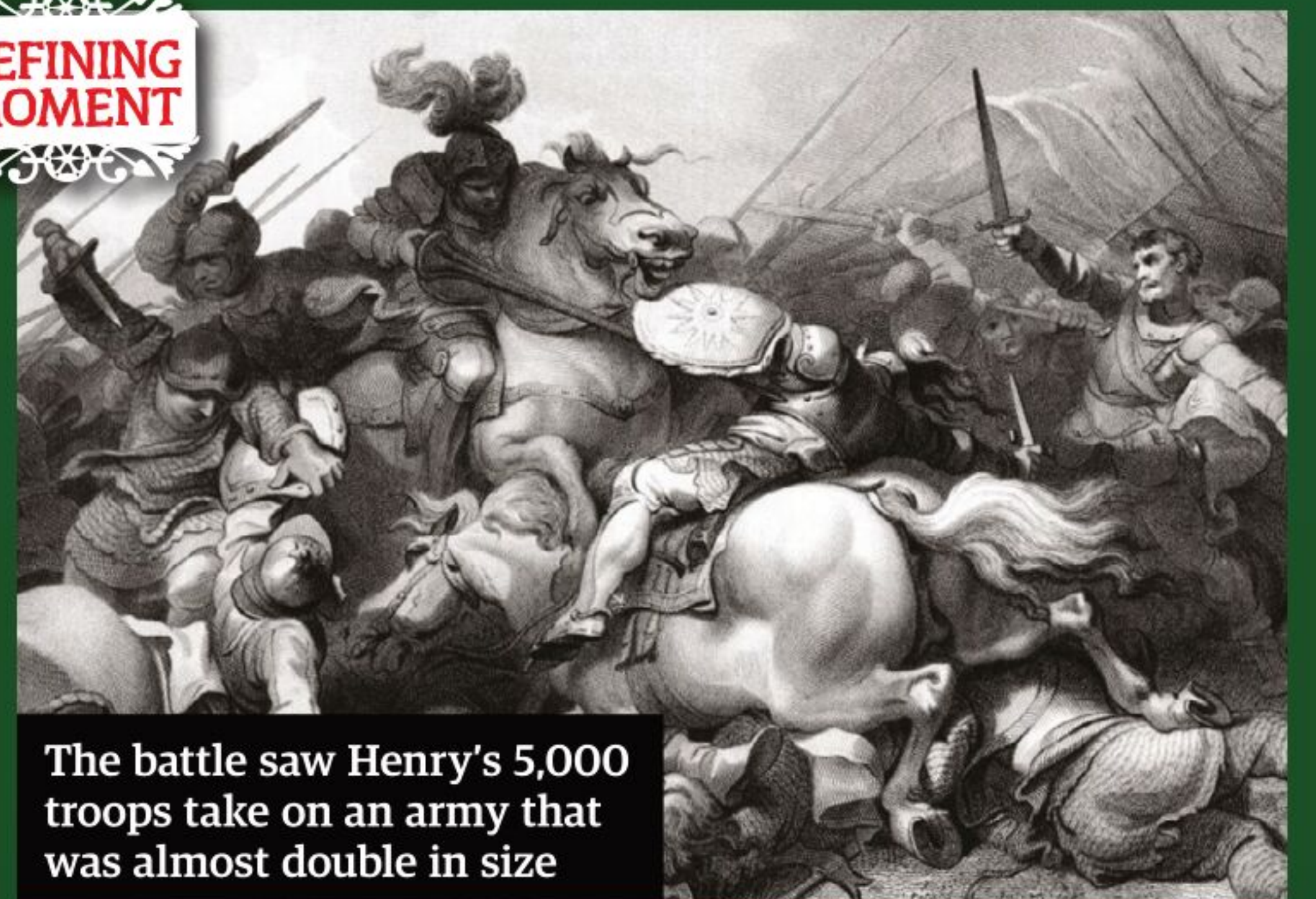
A coin produced during Henry's reign – the king had a well-known love of money

INVASION OF ENGLAND

Henry and a small invasion force, made up mostly of foreign mercenaries and exiled Englishmen, land in Wales and try to muster support. Henry's army numbers around 5,000, but Richard III soon learns of its presence and Henry is forced to fight at Bosworth on 22 August. Richard's army begins to grind down the opposition but when nobleman William Stanley instructs his forces to attack Richard, the tide turns. Henry is crowned king on the bloody battlefield and makes his way from Bosworth to the capital and his new throne.

1485

DEFINING MOMENT



Timeline

The life and times of Henry VII

1457

Henry is born

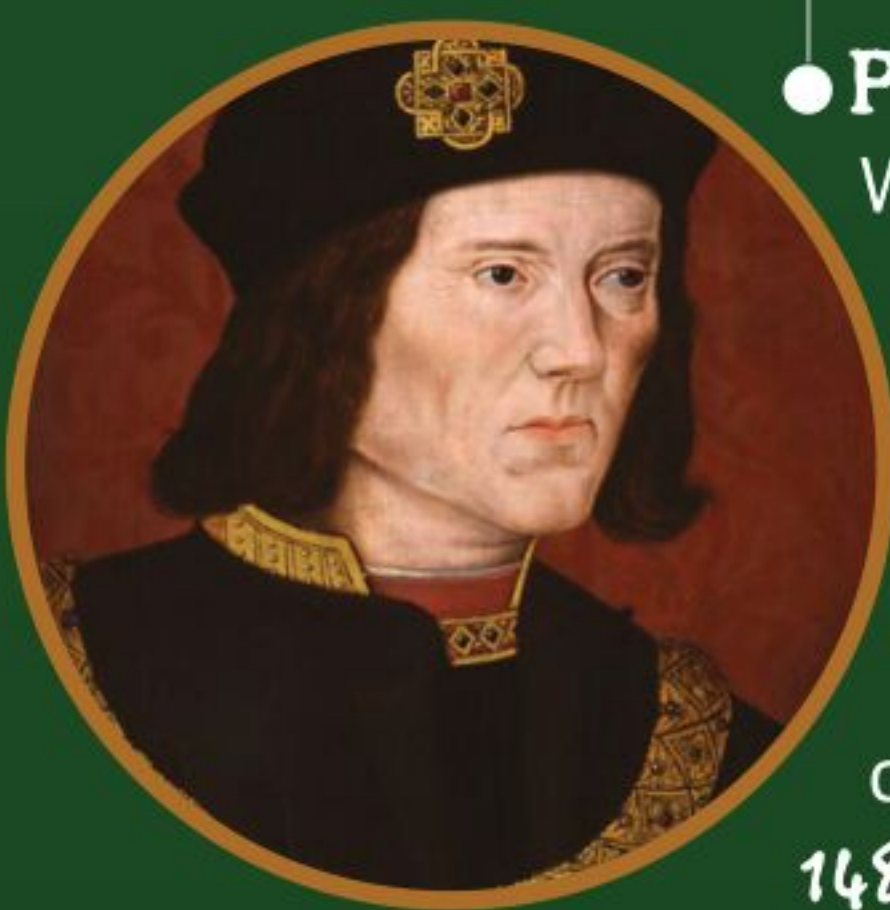
The future king is born in Pembroke Castle to Edmund Tudor and Margaret Beaufort. The only drops of royal blood in his veins are through his mother's side.

1457

Edward IV becomes king

When the Yorkist Edward regains the throne, Henry flees to Brittany, where he will stay for the best part of 14 years.

1471



Princes in the Tower

When Edward dies, Richard places his two sons in the Tower – they are never seen again. Richard is crowned king but his actions mean that many don't support him.

1483

Uniting two houses

Henry marries Elizabeth of York on 18 January 1486. This action unites the two warring houses of York and Lancaster.

1486



Revolt

A group of Yorkists crown Lambert Simnel as Edward VI and land in England. Henry's army defeats them in battle in Stoke and so he keeps his crown.

1487

a union with a Spanish princess, thereby uniting two enemies of France, and as far back as 1489, the Treaty of Medina del Campo had betrothed him to Catherine, the daughter of Ferdinand and Isabella of Spain. By the time of Warbeck's death, Arthur was nearing marrying age and so preparations for the lavish wedding could begin.

On 14 November 1501, the two were married by the archbishop of Canterbury in Saint Paul's Cathedral. It was a momentous occasion for Henry - the wedding legitimised his rule, as it meant a foreign power such as Spain saw him as the true king and ensured that his dynasty would continue long after his death. The lavish two-week wedding celebrations turned London into a party city and all commented on how beautiful Catherine looked. Henry's joy would be short-lived, though, as mere months later, Arthur contracted an illness and died. Worse would come for Henry in 1503 when Elizabeth died nine days after childbirth, with the baby also not surviving. Many had supported Henry out of loyalty to Elizabeth and with her joining Arthur in the grave it seemed that the king's crown, which he had worked tirelessly to secure, was slipping through his fingers like grains of sand.

Henry, who normally had a strong poker face, could not contain his grief and shut himself away for six weeks. He was mentally and physically exhausted, but when he returned to normal government life he was even more ruthless than

“Henry, who normally had a strong poker face, could not contain his grief and shut himself away for six weeks. He was mentally and physically exhausted”

before. He saw conspiracy theories everywhere and decided that if his subjects would not love him, then they would fear him. He used a series of large financial bonds on leading citizens and merchants to ensure their good behaviour - for many the cost of betraying the king became financially impossible - as well as the Council Learned in the Law, possibly the most notorious expression of his rule.

This council had unprecedented powers and was answerable only to the monarch. It could overrule normal legal proceedings to look at any cases it wished and was not above extorting money, either as a punishment or simply to swell the king's coffers. From 1503, it was run efficiently and ruthlessly by Edmund Dudley, who later wrote that the king wanted “many persons in danger at his pleasure... bound to his grace for great sums of money”.

Genuine fear and unease swept the country at this repressive regime, but Henry's dynasty was further secured thanks to a stroke of outrageous

good fortune: in 1506, a boat carrying Philip the Fair of Burgundy was shipwrecked in England. Henry ensured Philip had everything he wanted, but it was clear that Philip was a prisoner until he agreed to release to Henry's care the duke of Suffolk, who had been stirring up anti-Tudor sentiments on the continent. Philip agreed and when Suffolk arrived, he was promptly escorted to the Tower of London.

In his last few years, Henry became increasingly ill and withdrew from public life. All eyes turned to his second son and heir Henry, who seemed to be very different from his father - where the king was cold and calculating, the young prince was interested in honour and chivalry. After Henry VII's paranoid regime, the people were looking forward to a more traditional monarch, but if it hadn't been for Henry VII's shrewd actions, there would have been no crown to pass down.

In 1509, the light in Henry was fading fast, but he could reflect on a job well done: he had spent much of his early life on the run but had won the throne and managed to hold onto it. His people may have celebrated the passing of the penny-pinching monarch, but the fact that there was no opposition towards his son becoming king was probably his greatest achievement and one that was won through cunning, hard work and ambition.

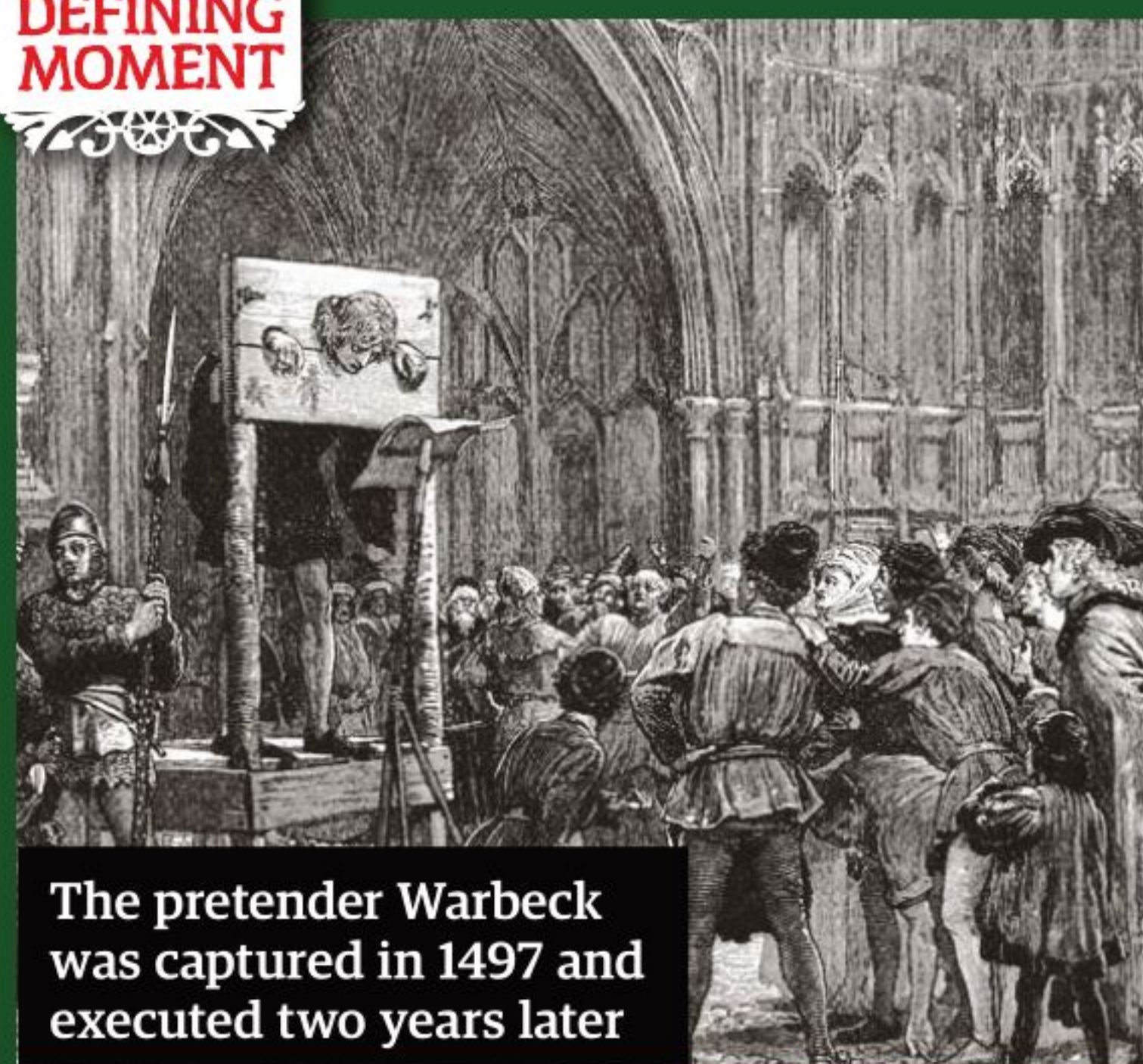
The marriage of Margaret and James IV of Scotland meant their descendants would have a claim to both thrones

DEFEAT OF WARBECK

Perkin Warbeck claims to be one of the Princes in the Tower. He first stakes his claim in 1490 in Burgundy and gains support from those who oppose Henry's rule. In 1491 he and a small force land in Ireland but they receive little support and return to Europe. In 1495 he lands in Kent, but is soon forced to flee to Scotland. He is welcomed by James IV, but the attempted English invasion of 1496 soon fails. Captured after landing in Cornwall in 1497, Warbeck is eventually executed in 1499.

1497

DEFINING MOMENT



The pretender Warbeck was captured in 1497 and executed two years later

THE KING IS DEAD, LONG LIVE THE KING

On 21 April, Henry, who has been suffering from an unidentified illness (now thought to be tuberculosis), dies at Richmond Palace and is buried in Westminster Abbey next to his wife, Elizabeth. He leaves behind a prosperous country with money in the coffers and a number of successful peace and trade agreements. It is believed that on one of the last nights of his life, he calls his son Henry to him and instructs him to keep the alliance with Spain strong by marrying Catherine of Aragon, the widow of Prince Arthur. The mere fact that his son Henry enjoys such a peaceful accession to the throne, with no hint of rebellion or other candidates, illustrates what a good job his father has done to establish the Tudors as kings and queens of England.

1509

DEFINING MOMENT

● Henry born

Elizabeth gives birth to their second son on 28 June. He will go on to become Henry VIII, one of the most famous British monarchs of all time.

1491

● Intercursus Magnus

This trade treaty with the Netherlands, a key market for British wool, is seen as one of Henry's most important achievements.

1496

● Death of a prince

Arthur, Henry's first-born, dies just six months after his marriage to Catherine of Aragon. He is just 16 years old.

1501



● Scottish union

Henry marries his daughter Margaret off to the Scottish king James IV. This is an attempt to end the fighting between the two nations and the marriage is part of The Treaty of Perpetual Peace.

1503



1509



1486–1502

Prince Arthur

The tragic story of Henry Tudor's first-born son, the boy who would have been king

The first-born son of Henry VII and Elizabeth of York, Arthur was next in line to become king of England. His father was Lancastrian and his mother from the House of York, meaning the royal baby united the opposing factions in the Wars of the Roses. The prince was born just over a year after the Battle of Bosworth in Winchester, and baptised in the cathedral there.

Henry was obsessed with the tale of King Arthur and prior to the birth, he assigned genealogists to trace his origins to the ancient Welsh king Cadwallader, and he believed Winchester was built on the ruins of Camelot. As a result, Arthur's name was chosen to evoke memories of the legendary king whose round table was located in the city, once the capital of the kingdom of Wessex. Henry also valued strong ties with Wales and made Arthur the head of the supervisory jurisdiction over the region that was advised and primarily run by Jasper Tudor, Earl of Bedford.

Although now the undisputed ruler of the country, Henry Tudor was burdened with rebellions against the crown, so he desired a strong line of potential heirs. The young Arthur was assigned the earls of Oxford and Derby as his godfathers and the latter's wife presented baby Arthur with a rose that had a grafting of white and red upon it, symbolising the joining of the Houses of York and Lancaster. Arthur would go on to have eight younger siblings, including a certain younger brother called Henry.

At the age of three, Arthur was appointed Prince of Wales and also the earl of Chester. Two years later he would become a Knight of the Garter, in addition to his title as a Knight of the Bath. As he grew up, the young prince was taught by a selection of personal tutors such as John Rede, the blind poet Bernard André and Thomas Linacre. The teachings of André in particular helped Arthur learn both Greek and Latin and he was introduced to all the classic authors from antiquity.

Despite his later problems, Arthur is reported as having no significant health issues in his early life. An intelligent prince, he was quiet and somewhat frail, so was nowhere near the athlete that his younger brother Henry was, although he did show some skill in archery. Arthur's father was a big influence in his sons' educations and ensured that their teachings included music and poetry as well as classics and languages.

Eager to improve relations with Spain, the Treaty of Medina del Campo was signed in 1489. Both nations were concerned by the power of France, so an alliance was sought to combat the potential threat. This was not the first time the Spanish monarchy had tried to forge favourable alliances with other nations, and their eagerness to seal a deal with England was partially motivated by their involvement in the Italian Wars.

One of the clauses in the treaty was for Arthur to marry Catalina de Aragon, or Catherine of Aragon, the daughter of the Spanish monarchs Ferdinand

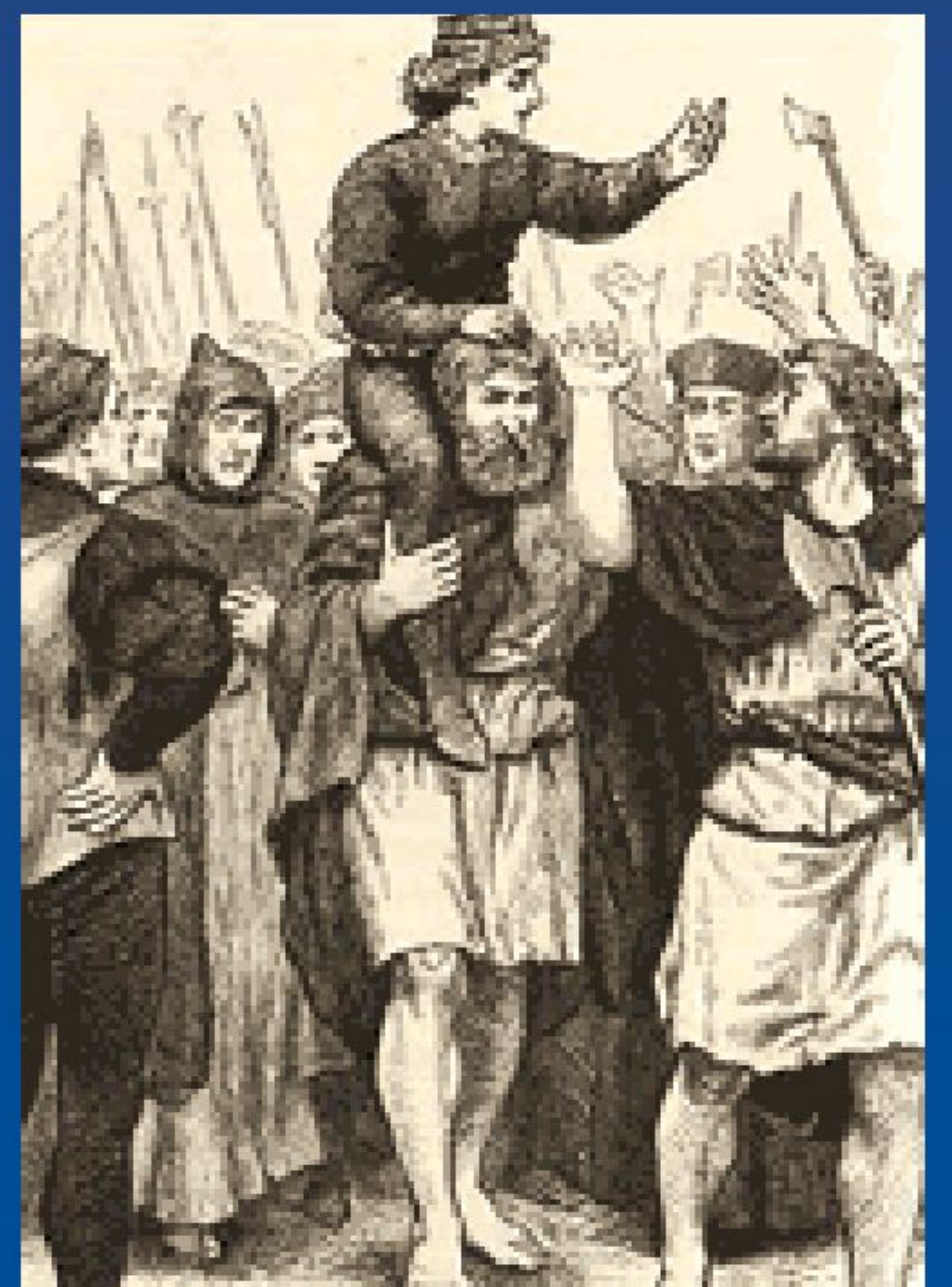
The prince's lost grave was located using a ground-probing radar system that found evidence of previously in-filled soil

TUDOR REBELLIONS

Although the Wars of the Roses had ground to a halt at the Battle of Bosworth, disdain for the new monarchy was still rife. One uprising against Tudor rule was the Simnel rebellion – an unusual revolt that involved a ten-year-old boy called Lambert Simnel who was believed to resemble the son of Edward IV. This sparked a Yorkist rebellion led by the earl of Lincoln that was eventually put down by Henry VII's army at Stoke Field at a battle that is sometimes referred to as the final skirmish of the Wars of the Roses.

There were some further uprisings across the nation, predominantly in York and Cornwall, but perhaps the largest was the Warbeck rebellion of 1491. A young Frenchman by the name of Perkin Warbeck claimed that he was the duke of York and therefore an heir to the throne. Much like the earlier Simnel revolt, this revelation caused uproar in Scotland, Ireland and some parts of England, as Henry's fragile early reign was threatened once again.

After many false dawns, Warbeck landed in Cornwall hoping to ignite more anti-monarchy sentiment after the earlier Cornish rebellion. 6,000 men advanced northeast to Taunton but were defeated when they reached Hampshire. Warbeck's subsequent execution proved to the Spanish that the Tudor monarchy was strong enough to sanction the marriage of Catherine of Aragon to Prince Arthur.



Lambert Simnel claimed to be the last surviving male of the House of York

and Isabella. This wasn't the first time this sort of clause had been inserted in a treaty; under Edward IV's reign in the 15th century, Spain had tried (unsuccessfully) to marry the future Edward V to Infanta Isabel, Princess of Asturias. The marriage of Arthur and Catherine was delayed for a few years after the Spaniards became anxious that Henry's reign was not as sturdy as they once thought, with a series of uprisings. These concerns were quickly put to bed when the Warbeck rebellion was crushed.

15-year-old Catherine arrived in England in October 1501 after terms were finally agreed at a meeting in Calais. Prior to her coming to English shores, Arthur used the Latin he had been taught to send the princess letters. More polite than they were romantic, Catherine still found the time to write back as the prince and princess got to know each other.

On the day of the wedding, a lavish ceremony was put on by the famously frugal Henry VII at St Paul's Cathedral in London. Stands were put up in the nave for the most prestigious guests, a fanfare of trumpeters played, and a red baize platform was erected for the bride and groom to say their

vows. After the wedding, the newlyweds relocated to Ludlow Castle to begin married life, safe in the knowledge that their marriage was a diplomatic dream for both England and Spain.

Ludlow was specially chosen so that the Prince of Wales could strengthen ties in the region he ruled over. While in the castle, Arthur learned the ideas of kingship to prepare him for when his father passed away and he took the throne. Having never seen Catherine in person before their marriage, Arthur is said to have been smitten with the princess and to have written to his parents saying that he would be "a true and loving husband". The English monarchy was initially uncomfortable with the idea of the 15-year-old Arthur cohabitating with Catherine, but this was allowed after coercion from Spain.

Tragically, Arthur fell ill in March 1502 and died less than a month later. His condition was believed to have been tuberculosis, although other theories claim that he died from plague, or the so-called 'sweating sickness' that was rife in Europe at the time (which may have been a form of hantavirus). It is argued by some that his disease was genetic and would later affect his nephew Edward VI's health. His father did not

Henry VIII's divorce from Catherine was complicated by uncertainty about Arthur's intimate relationship with the queen



Catherine of Aragon arrived in England in 1501. She would go on to marry Henry VIII after Arthur's death

attend the funeral, with some accounts suggesting that it was down to the distance to travel, while others believe that he was simply too upset to be there. An account from the time states: "When his Grace [Henry VII] understood that sorrowful heavy tydings, he sent for the Queene [Elizabeth of York], saying that he and his Queene would take the

Timeline

The life and times of Arthur



1486

Royal baby

Henry VII's first-born son, Arthur, is the first child of the Tudor dynasty. It is hoped that the young prince will grow to become a strong king of England.

19 September 1486

Prince of Wales

At the tender age of three, Arthur becomes Prince of Wales as well as the earl of Chester. He has already been the duke of Cornwall from birth.

November 1489

Medina del Campo

To combat the threat of France, England and Spain make an alliance. Known as the Treaty of Medina del Campo, part of the deal is a royal wedding.

March 1489

DEFINING MOMENT

KNIGHT OF THE REALM

At the age of four, Prince Arthur is made a Knight of the Garter at St George's Chapel in Windsor. This is in addition to his earlier honour as a Knight of the Bath.

May 1491

Education and tutoring

Being the heir to the throne, Arthur has the best tutors in the land. His education helps him to learn the necessary skills required to be a king in Tudor England.

1491

Catherine arrives in England

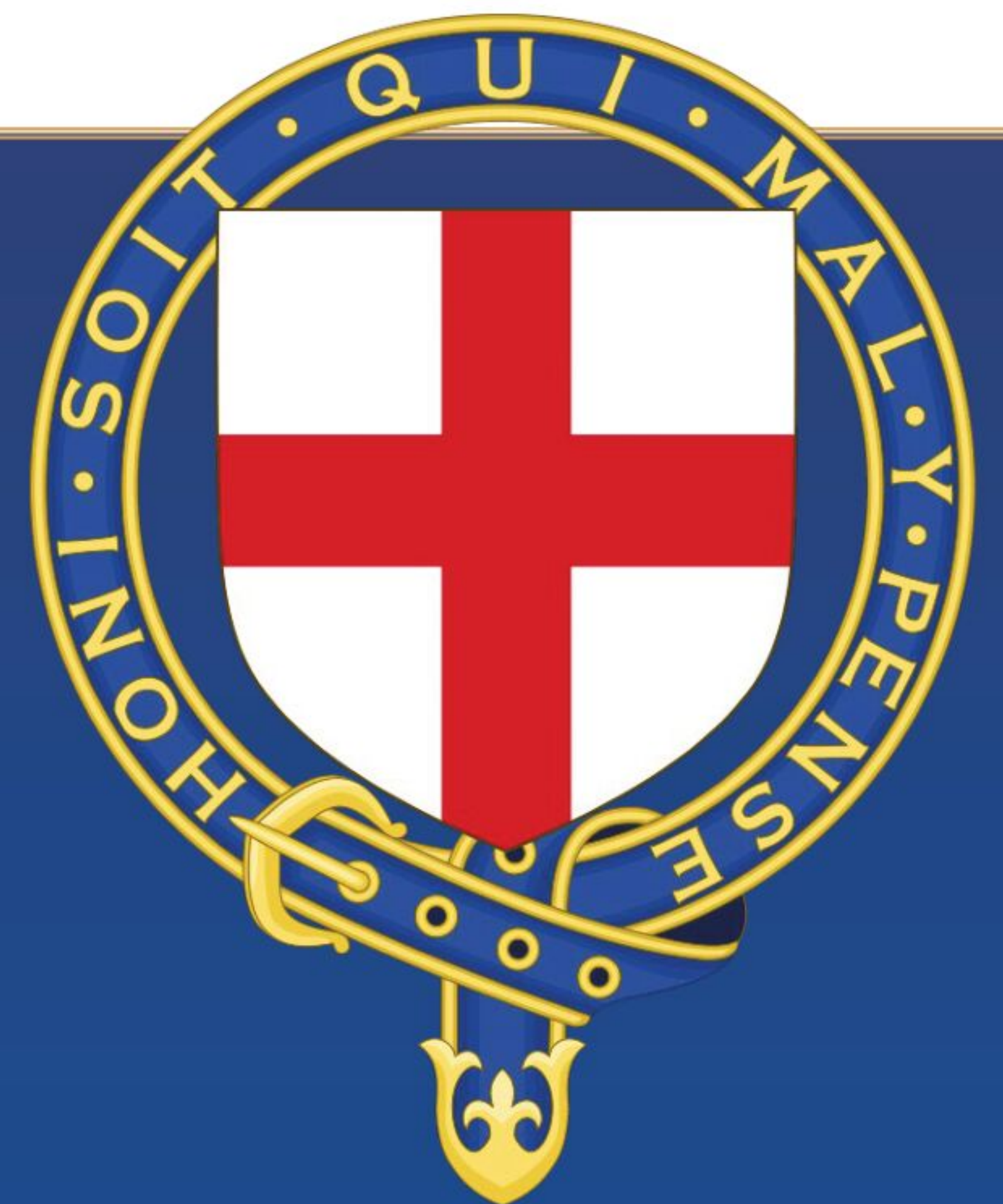
The princess of Aragon leaves the port of Corunna to make her journey to England. The voyage is frequently delayed due to unfavourable winds and storms at sea.

October 1501

A Tudor wedding

Making her journey from Plymouth to London, young Catherine is taken to St Paul's Cathedral to marry 15-year-old Arthur in a grand ceremony.

14 November 1501

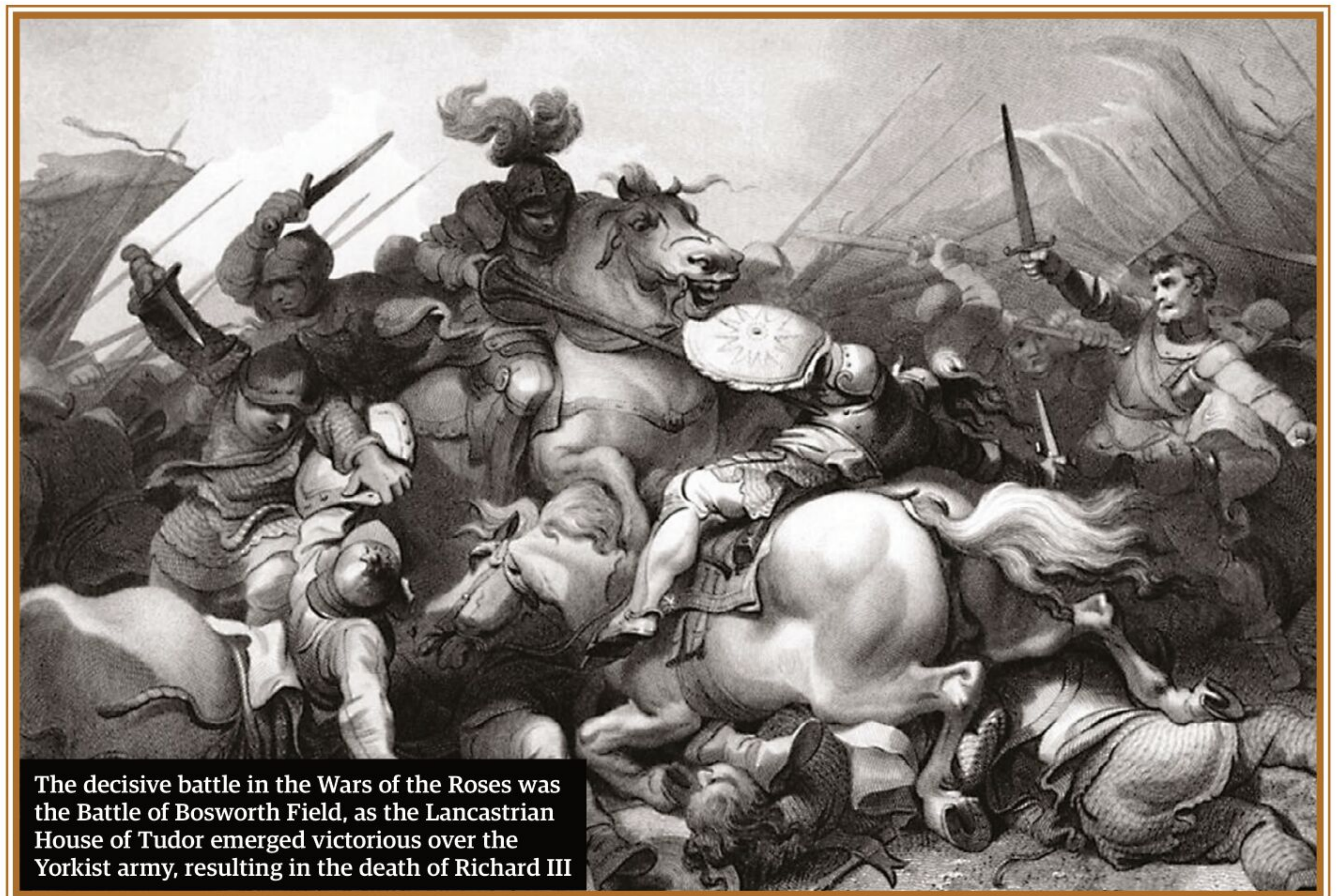


“There are theories that Henry VII wanted his second-born son, Henry, to be his heir”

painful sorrows together.” A procession was held in London six days later and on St George’s Day, Arthur’s body made the journey from Ludlow to Worcester Cathedral, where he would be buried.

There are theories that Henry VII wanted his second-born son, Henry, to be his heir instead of Arthur. Henry was both physically and mentally stronger, and it was believed that he would have the best chance of continuing the Tudor line. Some believe that Ludlow Castle, with its remote location, far from the best medicine in London, was an ideal way to kill Arthur off. This theory, however, is in the minority and many see Arthur’s occupation of Ludlow as a way to extend Tudor rule over England and Wales, rather than a place for him to die.

Rumours persist over Henry’s treatment of Arthur’s funeral; it is believed the king spent a lot more time, money and effort on the funerals of the earl of Northumberland in 1489 and Elizabeth of York in 1503. It is not known whether this was down to his apparent dislike of his son or whether he was simply too grief-stricken to put on a lavish funeral for him.



The decisive battle in the Wars of the Roses was the Battle of Bosworth Field, as the Lancastrian House of Tudor emerged victorious over the Yorkist army, resulting in the death of Richard III

Passing away at the age of 15, Arthur was buried in Worcester Cathedral. Catherine was now a widow, but it wouldn’t be long until she married again, this time to Arthur’s brother, who would become King Henry VIII in May 1509. Had Arthur ruled, it is questionable whether he would have had

as much success and vigour as his brother. Henry, a tall, strong, athletic man, had an aura about him that prevented any successful uprisings to his reign. However, it is possible that England may not have split from the Catholic Church at the time it did, such as Henry VIII’s desire to produce a male heir.

DEFINING MOMENT

LUDLOW CASTLE OCCUPATION

The newlyweds travel to Ludlow Castle in the Marches, which will become their royal residence. There is still controversy about whether the two young royals consummated their marriage or not.

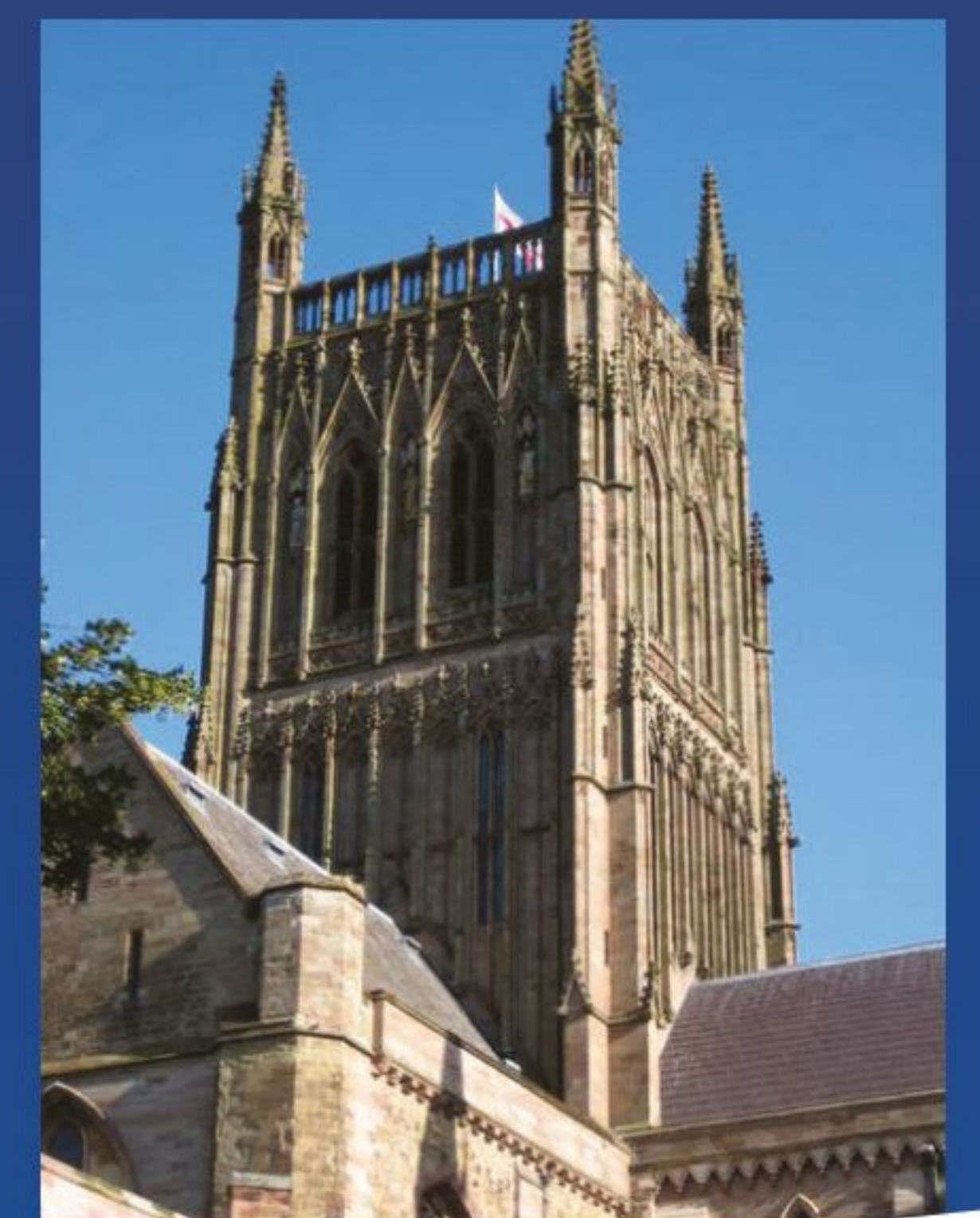
January 1502



BURIAL IN WORCESTER

At the end of the month, Arthur’s body is taken to Worcester to be buried in the cathedral in the city. A chantry chapel is created specially to house the prince in. While the funeral is lavish, it is not as ostentatious as some.

25 April 1502



2002

● Worsening sickness

Both Arthur and Catherine are struck down with an illness, with Arthur eventually passing away on 2 April 1502. Catherine survives but takes months to recover completely.

March 1502

● News reaches London

Upon hearing of their son’s death, both Henry and Elizabeth are distraught. There are theories that Henry preferred his younger son, Henry, to be king anyway, but there is minimal evidence to prove this.

4 April 1502

● Funeral in London

A procession is carried out in London in memory of Prince Arthur. Songs are sung in every church in the city as the Tudor dynasty has lost the next in line to be king.

8 April 1502

● A new marriage

After the death of his son, Henry VII moves swiftly to satisfy the Spanish. The result is Catherine marrying Arthur’s younger brother Henry, who will later become King Henry VIII.

1502

● Arthur’s tomb located

Centuries after his death, the Tudor prince’s lost grave is found by archaeologists using ground-penetrating radar. The body is found a few feet below the tomb that was built for Arthur after his death.

2002



1491-1547

Henry VIII

In pursuing dreams of victory in France, Henry threw England into decades of war and the chaos of a Europe in conflict

Henry VIII was born dreaming of war. When he took the throne in April 1509 with his bride Catherine of Aragon at his side, he knew exactly what kind of king he wanted to be. His would be a glorious reign that would restore England to the magnificence it deserved. His father had become unpopular by levying punishing taxes to restore the country's finances, but the new king had no intention of focusing on matters as petty as the treasury. He would be a conqueror.

By the end of his life, Henry was a bloated and frustrated mockery of the athletic youth that he had once been. He had grown up jousting, riding and hunting, and would often participate in chivalry tournaments in disguise. He had grown up hearing the stories of the great Henry V - the hero of Agincourt - and had dreamed of the battles that years of peace had deprived him of. He was determined that he would repeat his ancestor's triumphs in France and expand England's territory beyond Calais - perhaps even as far as Paris. He wholly believed that France belonged to him and - fortunately for the English monarch - he did not have to wait long to stake his claim.

Henry had grown up in years of stultifying peace thanks to his father's treaties with France and Aragon in Spain. Meanwhile, just across the Channel, Europe was in the throes of war. The

powers on the Continent were clashing over the possession of Naples, essentially turning Italy into one big battleground. A quarrel over the region of Romagna had set Venice against the Vatican, and so Pope Julius II rallied France, the Holy Roman Empire and Spain (under Ferdinand II) in the final weeks of 1508, planning to split the Venetian territories among them.

Venice fell, but Julius feared French occupation of Italy. He mounted an impulsive attack on his allies, which backfired when the French stormed south in retaliation. A terrified pope formed the Holy League, and Spain and the Holy Roman Empire sided with it in 1511.

Henry VIII had now been on the throne for two years with his queen Catherine of Aragon (Ferdinand's daughter) at his side. A strong royal family was vital to his dream of a glorious England, and Catherine was fiercely loyal and determined to meet her king's expectations. She became pregnant almost immediately but

their child was stillborn. It was a matter of weeks until she was with child again, and she gave birth to a son, Henry, on New Year's Day, 1511. Sadly, Henry would survive for just seven weeks.

At this point, Henry was a young king just beginning his reign. He was the head of a proud royal family and he had shown his subjects that he was not the penny-pinching tyrant that his father

While an accomplished athlete, Henry also had a love for music and spoke several languages including Latin







The Field of the Cloth of Gold saw Henry and Francis try to ally, but nothing was really achieved



The field armour of Henry VIII, made in Italy around 1544

“Even as Henry celebrated his victories in France, trouble at home soon threatened to bring everything to a halt”

had been. The Holy League would enable him to serve his God and show France the power of England's might. The full force of that might would be delivered by Henry's expanding Royal Navy, which would boast the world's largest and most advanced warships.

It is important not to underestimate the importance of the pope's blessing - Henry was still a devout Catholic and would go on to condemn the Protestant Martin Luther so harshly that the pontiff would give him the title 'Defender of the Faith'. His religion also included the concept of divine right; France was his God-given property. The Holy League should have been undefeatable.

However, the first attack ended in disaster. An English force sailed to Gascony in June 1512, due to meet up with Ferdinand's army and claim the region of Aquitaine for Henry. Unfortunately, Ferdinand decided that he was more interested in claiming Navarre for himself and directed his troops there. Ill-equipped and ravaged by dysentery, the English were forced to retreat. Henry was furious but resolute.

Less than a year later, a second invasion was underway, with much of the organisation left in the hands of the invaluable Cardinal Thomas Wolsey. Wolsey was the perfect right-hand man for a king like Henry, able to counterbalance the monarch's violent rages with his own skilled diplomacy while sharing a similarly rabid ambition. Wolsey was a

fixer; he made sure that whatever Henry wanted, Henry got. What Henry wanted was France, and so, in April 1513, an army was raised and an attack was made on Brest.

This incursion proved even more disastrous than the attempt on Aquitaine, but the king would not be dissuaded and personally accompanied the English landing at Calais in June. With his feet on French soil and standing at the head of an English army, Henry was exhilarated. He made straight for the town of Thérouanne and promptly laid siege to it. The Holy Roman emperor and fellow Holy League leader, Maximilian, joined him soon afterwards, helping to assure Henry that he was on the side of the angels.

Finally, Henry tasted glory on 16 August 1513 when the French attacked in the Battle of the Spurs. The light French cavalry was unable to withstand the force of the invaders and fled. Henry claimed the day as a great victory, which was consolidated when Thérouanne surrendered on 22 August. The subsequent capture of Tournai was just as important, and Henry gave Thérouanne to Maximilian as a gesture of good will.

What had Henry actually achieved? He'd taken two towns from the French, but Paris was a long way away. Nothing he'd done would tip the scales in either direction, but this was just the beginning. He was in his element - he was finally re-enacting the glories of Henry V.



Holy Roman Emperor Charles V was the nephew of Catherine of Aragon, Henry's first wife

But even as Henry celebrated his victories in France, trouble at home soon threatened to bring everything to a halt. All too aware of the English forces currently on their soil, the French reached out to King James IV of Scotland and suggested that this might be the perfect opportunity to mount an attack of their own. James marched south to Flodden Ridge with his armies to await the English.

While England may have seemed weak, Queen Catherine, acting as regent, had no intention of giving the Scots their way. An army was raised and met the Scots on 9 September. The English victory was brutally decisive and King James was killed. The gleeful queen sent the fallen monarch's bloody cloak to her husband in France, with the message: "In this your Grace shall see how I keep

my promise, sending you for your banners a king's coat." Henry was conquering his enemies abroad, while his queen was defending his home.

Sadly for the warrior king, peace was just around the corner, whether he wanted it or not. He had been acting as a war chest to his allies and England's coffers were so depleted that there was simply no way that he could carry. He would have to make peace.

The next few years presented Henry with a new potential ally, and a new enemy. The ambitious Francis I took the French crown, while the Austrian King Charles V was elected Holy Roman emperor. Wolsey, aware of the financial sinkhole that the wars had been, worked hard to keep the peace. He managed to put quills to paper with the Treaty of London in 1518, while friendship would be forged at the Field of the Cloth of Gold on 7 June 1520. The plan was that Henry and Francis would spend a week enjoying the festivities and settling their differences, while Wolsey met with Charles V. It did not go according to plan.

For all of Wolsey's good intentions, this attempt at friendship was doomed from the start. Henry had never wanted peace to start with, and Francis had no intention of bowing down to his English counterpart. Ambitious, stubborn and proud, the two men were too similar for friendship to work. After the first meeting, the two kings engaged in a week of competition. It was a week dedicated to flaunting power and status; the 'cloth of gold' referred to the ludicrously lavish tents. Henry was determined to prove his athleticism and joined the competitions, but Francis had a similar idea. Henry had to suffer the humiliation of losing to the French king in a wrestling match, and it is hardly surprising that the only result of the meeting was a greater sense of hatred.

Instead, Henry turned his diplomatic attentions to Charles V. Henry's alliance with the Habsburgs had continued throughout the years of peace and crucially, Charles and Henry shared a mutual loathing of Martin Luther and King Francis. War was inevitable and Henry eagerly awaited the perfect opportunity to mount another attack. When hostilities resumed in 1521, Henry declared that England was now allied with the Holy Roman Empire and signed the Treaty of Windsor in 1522 to make 'The Great Enterprise' official. However, at this point, Henry could not afford a full-scale invasion and an attack on Picardy failed due to a lack of communication and, perhaps more importantly, trust.

Henry's ambition to conquer France and claim the throne for himself was hamstrung by the fact that he couldn't afford it. He had previously helped to bankroll Ferdinand and Maximilian, and he had seen them make peace without him. Henry was scared that Charles might repeat his father's trick and, for his part, Charles had no particular interest in seeing Henry on the French throne. Their mutual distrust would only grow.

Trust wasn't the only problem. In an echo of 1513, Henry was distracted by the constant threat from the north. Whenever he began a campaign in France, the Scots would threaten attack, forcing him to wage a war on two fronts. Henry was enraged and infuriated but he would not give up. He mounted another attack in 1523 to support the rebelling duke of Bourbon, but Charles sent no help and the English were forced to retreat.

The line was finally crossed when Charles captured Francis at the Battle of Pavia in 1525 and showed no interest in sharing his spoils with the English king. Henry decided that the time had come for a full-scale invasion. With nowhere near



The Scottish army outnumbered the English by about 15,000 at Flodden, but some clever tactics won out

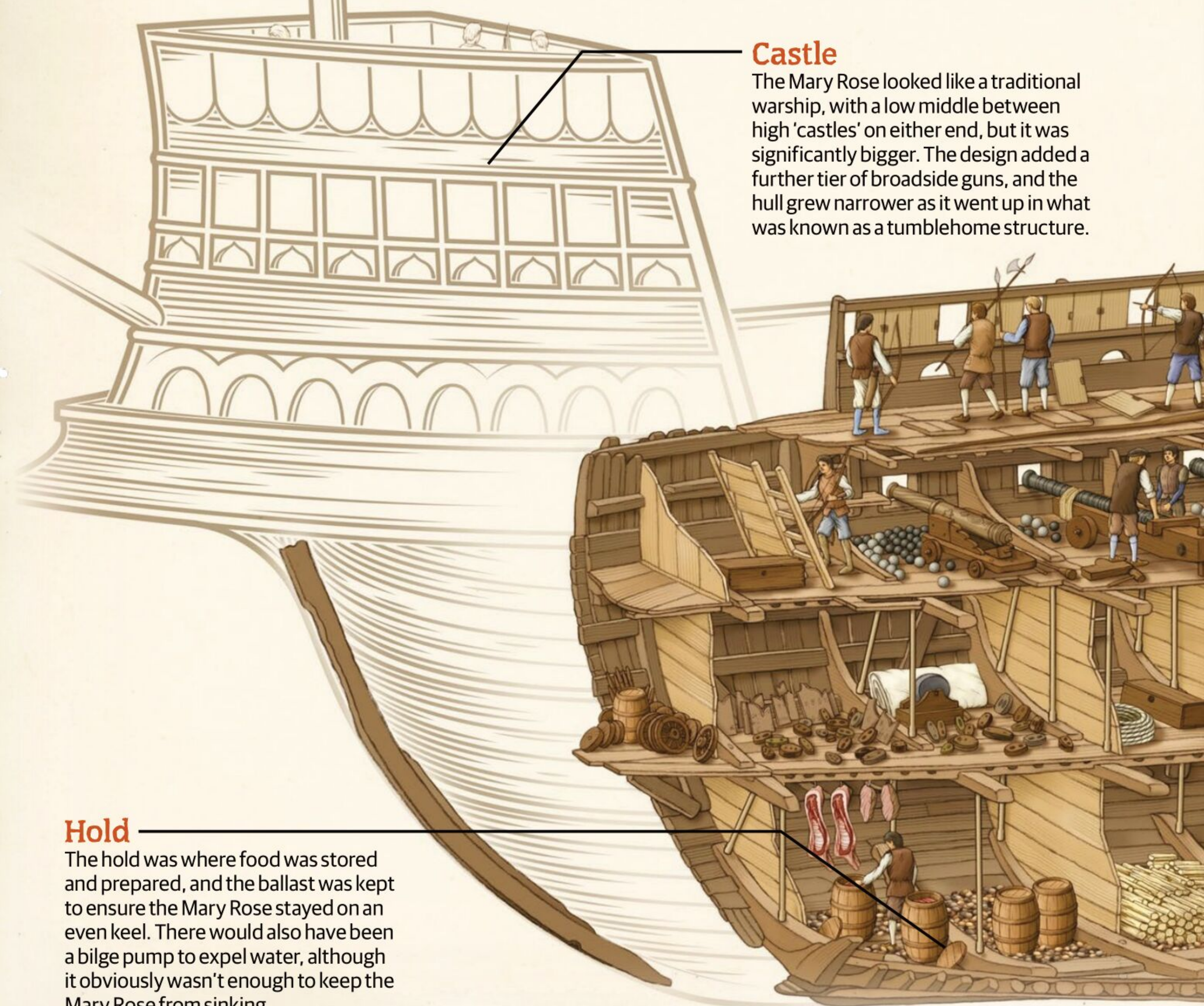
FATHER OF THE ROYAL NAVY

Henry might be known as the founder of the Royal Navy, but its creation had begun during the reign of Henry VII. Five royal warships had been built by the time Henry VIII took the throne, but the young king wanted more from his military might.

Henry knew that Scotland had invested in its own navy and that he was potentially facing a two-pronged attack by sea. He ordered the construction of two great warships: the infamous Mary Rose (which embarrassingly and mysteriously sank while leading the defence against the French at the Solent) and the Peter Pomegranate. Henry's ambition knew no limits and the English Navy would be the biggest, the most advanced and the most fearsome. He equipped his ships with the latest guns and the heaviest cannons, while employing new innovations like hinged gun ports. By the end of Henry's reign, his fleet numbered 58.

Enormous gunships aside, perhaps the most important innovations Henry made to the navy were on land. He created the first naval dock in Portsmouth, he gave the Grant of the Royal Charter to Trinity House (which developed beacons, buoys and lighthouses), and he created the Navy Board and the Office of Admiralty. Henry is known as the father of the Royal Navy because he didn't just bulk up its muscle, he created its backbone.

Inside the Mary Rose



Castle

The Mary Rose looked like a traditional warship, with a low middle between high 'castles' on either end, but it was significantly bigger. The design added a further tier of broadside guns, and the hull grew narrower as it went up in what was known as a tumblehome structure.

Hold

The hold was where food was stored and prepared, and the ballast was kept to ensure the Mary Rose stayed on an even keel. There would also have been a bilge pump to expel water, although it obviously wasn't enough to keep the Mary Rose from sinking.

enough money, he and Wolsey tried to create the Amicable Grant tax to pay for the attack, but opposition proved so fierce that Henry was forced to scrap his plans and publicly blame Wolsey. The humiliation helped Henry to realise that he was not going to get what he wanted. He signed the Treaty of the More with Francis' mother and turned his attention towards his family.

Not surprisingly, Charles' rejection rankled Henry. Charles' increased presence in Italy once again caused the panicking Pope Clement VII to create the League of Cognac, which united Venice, Florence and France against Charles. While not a member, Henry did offer to help bankroll the group, even signing the Treaty of Westminster with Francis in 1527. However, his mind was elsewhere.

Henry was desperate to separate from Catherine of Aragon and marry the young Anne Boleyn. He had no interest in a divorce and instead wanted to prove that it had been illegal to marry his brother's widow, but it set him against Charles V, who was Catherine's nephew.

However, circumstances were not in Henry's favour; Charles had attacked Rome in retaliation for the League's advances and Pope Clement VII was now his prisoner. Clement gained his freedom

in December, but the emperor had no interest in peace talks with the League. Once again, Charles had frustrated Henry's plans and he declared war with the Holy Roman emperor in January. However, England lacked the finances to do any more than declare itself at war; it's unlikely that this worried Charles too much.

The situation in Europe finally resolved itself in 1529 with the Treaty of Cambrai. However, Henry's determination to end his marriage had made enemies out of his old allies. Francis offered to plead his case to the new pontiff, but he was more concerned with cementing his own alliance with the Holy See.

Anne Boleyn's pregnancy pushed Henry into taking decisive action and his marriage to Catherine was annulled in 1533. His marriage to Anne was now legal. Finally, Henry was recognised as head of the Church and abolished the right of Appeal to Rome. England was no longer Catholic and the pope had no more influence over the king.

Although he was overjoyed at finally having the queen he lusted after, Henry realised that a Europe united against him was dangerous. He tried to take advantage of the frequent arguments

between Charles and Francis, but Henry was finally excommunicated in 1538 and the pope declared that the Vatican would support anyone who deposed the English king; his death was something God would turn a blind eye to. Luckily Charles was busy with the Ottoman Empire and if Francis planned to attack England, he had no intention of doing so alone. Henry knew that the differences between Francis and Charles would prevent them from ever remaining allies for long - he just had to be patient.

Finally, in 1542, they declared war and Henry could return to the battlefield. By this point he was obese, sickly and prone to violent rages. The war gave him a sense of purpose and Charles

Henry's ambition to conquer France was hamstrung by the fact that he couldn't afford it

Gun ports

It's believed that the Mary Rose sank when water came in through the open gun ports, possibly due to a sudden gust of wind. The number and weight of the guns on the ship meant that the ports were lower down and it's possible they were not kept shut.



© Courtesy of the Mary Rose Trust

Big crew

Despite its size, conditions on the Mary Rose would have been cramped to say the least. When it was sent to war, 400 or so men would have shared the space, including up to 30 gunners, 200 sailors and 185 soldiers.

Guns

When the ship was rebuilt in 1536, Henry was determined to arm it to the teeth and equipped it with the latest weaponry. 24 wrought-iron guns, which were quick to reload, were joined by 15 bronze cannons that packed more of a punch. With 52 additional smaller guns, the Mary Rose was a serious threat.

was finally back on his side. For all their past differences, now there were no reasons why Henry and Charles could not resume their alliance - Catherine of Aragon had passed away and by executing Anne Boleyn, Henry had removed the insult to Charles' honour. But across the Channel, Francis wasn't sitting idly by and he knew how to keep Henry distracted.

Scotland had proved to be a continual thorn in Henry's side during his attempts to invade France, attacking every time his attention was elsewhere. Having hoped that James V would be a more amenable ally than his predecessor, Henry was livid when Scotland refused to follow him in separating from Rome. When James did not appear at the diplomatic talks at York in 1541, outright conflict followed. Following a minor Scottish victory at the Battle of Haddon Rig in 1542, the two armies met at Solway Moss. In a brutal echo of Flodden Field, the Scottish army suffered a humiliating defeat. James died of fever about two weeks later and Henry, once again buoyed by such a decisive victory, turned his attention back to France.

Henry was taking no half measures and invaded France on two fronts. Stretching his finances as far

“Henry was finally excommunicated in 1538 and the pope declared that the Vatican would support anyone who deposed the English king”

as they would go, he sent troops to Montreuil under the duke of Norfolk, while another force attacked Boulogne under the duke of Suffolk. While Norfolk failed, Suffolk succeeded. Henry himself arrived to take charge of the siege, which lasted from July until September when the city fell. He basked in the glory of a French city claimed, but his elation was short-lived when he was forced to turn his attention back to Scotland. A rebellion had sprung up, but his retaliation was so brutal that it became known as the 'Rough Wooing'.

The invasion of France fell apart when Charles signed another peace treaty that excluded England. Francis had no intention of making peace with Henry and mounted an invasion in the summer of 1545. It was a very real threat but, fortunately for England, the attack was a dismal failure and

Francis was forced to retreat. The Treaty of Camp brought an end to the years of war in Henry's reign, as England, France, Scotland and the Holy Roman Empire agreed to peace in 1546. Henry died a year later, sickly, angry and defeated.

So how was Henry VIII as a military leader? He was a man unable or unwilling to grow out of the romantic, heroic dreams of his youth. He was constantly fighting for the glory that he saw for himself and for England. In his mind, France was English property that no one before him had been able to claim - he saw himself as the king who would bring it under English rule, and it was a childhood dream that became an adult delusion. By joining with allies who had no interest in his dream, and reacting rashly to insults, Henry spent many years at war with little to show for it.

The Six Wives of Henry VIII

The tales of love, ambition and tragedy of the women whose lives changed forever when they became the subjects of Henry VIII's affections

When they came for Catherine Howard, what could have been a scene of quiet composure transformed into one of hysteria. The mask of queenly humility fell away and the desperate girl, just 21, was revealed. She struggled, screaming and begging for mercy as Henry's men forced her on the barge. She knew what it meant. She had been but 15 when her own cousin Anne Boleyn was executed, and now it would be her fate. As the boat travelled under London Bridge she saw the heads of the men she had once loved impaled upon spikes and realised the bitter truth; there was nothing she could do. She was going to die.

The black velvet gown they made her wear was ill suited to the woman who had, for so long, been the essence of carefree youth. As she attempted to climb the scaffold on the cold February morning she staggered. Her body could not mask her terror, not in her pale skin or shaking hands. She uttered a few words in honour of the king, asked for mercy for her soul, then lay her head on the block. In a moment it was done. Her reign had been short - just 18 months. Her life was over before it had even begun.

Catherine Howard was Henry VIII's fifth wife, and the second to be executed. When Henry heard of her sexual deviances he, at first, refused to believe it. When he was given proof he flew into a rage so ferocious he likely would have struck her down had she been before him. This reaction was not that of a cunning, calculated man, but one who loved, and loved intensely. The king was known for having a wandering eye, but his marriages had been for love. Henry was passion and fire, but loss and betrayal had turned him bitter.

Henry VIII is known today as the king who killed and divorced his way through six women to claim an heir. But Henry was also a younger son, thrust into the spotlight by tragedy, who wished to prove his rightful place and solidify his line. Many of the women who became his wives were used as pawns by ambitious older men. Some of them were royalty in their own right, others the last hope of a dying family name, and almost all of them had no say in the matter. Their respective fates have now been reduced to a childhood rhyme, but these were real women, with real hopes and dreams, whose lives were forever changed when their paths crossed with England's most infamous monarch.

Henry's first wife, Catherine of Aragon, had actually been married to his brother, Prince Arthur, first





THE UNCONFIRMED MISTRESSES

JANE POPINCOURT

Popincourt was a French maid of honour who had worked for Catherine of Aragon at the English royal court. It is believed that she began a brief affair with Henry VIII in 1514, but then left for the French courts shortly after, holding a parting gift of £100 from the king.

CATHERINE WILLOUGHBY

An English noblewoman, Willoughby was known for her sharp tongue and passionate demeanour. When her husband died it was rumoured that Henry considered making her his seventh wife, despite the fact that she was close friends with Catherine Parr.



ANNE HASTINGS

The daughter of Henry Stafford, Duke of Buckingham, Hastings allegedly caught Henry's attention in 1510 during his marriage to Catherine of Aragon. While she served the queen, Henry bestowed her with lavish gifts, leading rumours of their alleged relationship to surface.

ANNE BASSETT

Bassett's mother was desperate to secure a place for her daughter in court during the reign of Anne Boleyn, but it was Jane Seymour who relented and allowed Bassett to serve her. It is alleged that Bassett attracted Henry between 1538 and 1539, and it was rumoured that she would become his fourth wife.

ELIZABETH AMADAS

The wife of a wealthy goldsmith, in 1532 Amadas was arrested for treason for calling Anne Boleyn a harlot and for criticising Henry's treatment of Catherine of Aragon. She also claimed that the king made repeated advances towards her, though never confirmed if she gave in to them.



DIVORCED

Catherine of Aragon

The eternal queen who was stripped of everything but her dignity

Born on 16 December 1485, Catherine was the youngest surviving daughter of Queen Isabella of Castile and King Ferdinand of Aragon. Not long after her birth, the Spanish and English rulers were keen to make a political alliance, and so Catherine was betrothed to Prince Arthur of England, Henry's older brother. It seemed the young princess' path in life was already set out, and aged 16 she made the perilous journey to wed her betrothed.

The young couple's marriage did not last long - less than six months later, Arthur was dead. Catherine, far too young to remain a childless widow, was then betrothed to Arthur's brother, Henry. They were finally wed after Henry ascended the throne. Capable and bred to rule, Catherine was an intelligent and gifted queen, even serving as regent while her husband was in France. The people quickly became fond of her poise, grace and gentle charms. She was also highly regarded for her beauty - with a fair complexion, bright blue eyes and auburn hair, in her prime she was upheld as "the most beautiful creature in the world".

The couple seemed happy, and Catherine found herself pregnant soon after the marriage began. However, in early 1510 she gave birth to a stillborn daughter. As the daughter of a king, she knew that it was essential for her to give her husband an heir, especially considering the perilous political climate in England - a male heir would solidify her position, as well as the power of the monarchy in the country. However, their marriage was plagued by misfortune. The following year she gave birth to a son who died after 52 days. The next child, another son, was also stillborn, and yet another son died after only a few hours. The only child

to survive was a daughter, Mary, but this simply would not do.

Henry was frustrated by the lack of a male heir, but it was not until he became besotted with Anne Boleyn that the thought of leaving Catherine became a feasible reality. Anne was young, ambitious and seemingly fertile, while Catherine was ageing and, at 42, no longer able to conceive children. Secretly Henry began to seek a divorce from his Spanish wife, claiming that because she had been married to his brother, the marriage was cursed and a sin.

When Catherine found out Henry's plans, she was devastated but defiant. She was adamant that her first marriage had never been consummated, and when it was suggested she retire quietly to a nunnery, she uttered, "God never called me to a nunnery. I am the king's true and legitimate wife."

Catherine pled her case not only to Henry, but to the pope himself. At that time he was a prisoner to Catherine's nephew, Emperor Charles V, but not even this could save Catherine's marriage and honour.

When Henry married Anne, Catherine was separated from her daughter and thrown out of court. She lived the next three years in dank, dark manors and absorbed herself in prayer. Henry, perhaps feeling a degree of pity, offered her the chance to see her daughter if both would acknowledge Anne as England's queen, but Mary had inherited her mother's proud streak and both women refused. Although she was ordered to renounce her title, until her dying day on 7 January 1536 Catherine referred to herself as queen.

There was a five-year age gap between Henry and his first wife, Catherine of Aragon

HEIRS	★★
LENGTH OF REIGN	★★★★★
DESIRABILITY	★★★★
POLITICAL GAINS	★★★★★
POPULARITY	★★★★★



“As the daughter of a king, she knew that it was essential for her to give her husband an heir, especially considering the perilous political climate in England”



After Anne Boleyn was crowned, none of Henry's other queens would receive a coronation

BEHEADED

Anne Boleyn

HEIRS	★★★★
LENGTH OF REIGN	★★★★
DESIRABILITY	★★★★★
POLITICAL GAINS	★★
POPULARITY	★

She gave birth to one of England's greatest rulers, but her own reign was one of heartbreak and tragedy

Her name is almost as synonymous with romantic tragedy as Romeo and Juliet, but before she entered Henry's life, little is known of Anne Boleyn. The young Anne served an array of ladies, archduchesses and queens. From very early on her life unfolded in the royal courts, and it was there that she was in her element. Although not a conventional beauty, she was skilled, refined and determined, and when she entered Catherine of Aragon's service, Henry found her irresistible.

Henry was keen to make Anne his mistress, but she demanded that it was to be queen or nothing. Completely besotted, Henry tore the Catholic

Church from England to make it so. Although the legal debates of the divorce raged on, Anne made herself comfortable as queen, but the people didn't like her quite as much as Henry did.

By the time Henry and Anne were finally married, Anne was pregnant. The child was Elizabeth, a future queen, but the lack of a male heir would cost Anne dearly. After repeated miscarriages her enemies at court began to plot her downfall. She was arrested in 1536 and charged with adultery, incest and treason. Although the evidence against her was scarce, Anne was deemed guilty and sentenced to death by beheading.



The other Boleyn girl

Mary Boleyn, Anne's older sister, spent most of her childhood in England until she accompanied Henry's sister Mary to Paris. While in France, there were unconfirmed rumours that she engaged in several affairs, including with King Francis himself, and as such she was referred to as 'The English Mare'.

While serving as maid of honour to Catherine of Aragon in 1520 she married William Carey, and Henry attended the wedding. However, at some time around this point, they began an affair and as a result, the paternity of two of Mary's children was questioned. Mary's husband died in 1528, but now Anne had favour with the king she was able to provide support for her sister's children.

In 1534, Mary secretly married a poor soldier. The marriage was viewed a disgrace and Mary was disowned. Penniless and desperate, she begged Thomas Cromwell, the king's advisor, for help but no avail. Mary never found her way back into court and the Boleyn name was dragged through the mud by Anne. Mary died of an unknown illness on 19 June 1543.





DIED

Jane Seymour

HEIRS	★★★★★
LENGTH OF REIGN	★★
DESIRABILITY	★★
POLITICAL GAINS	★
POPULARITY	★★★★

Henry's beloved wife, who sacrificed everything to give him the son he desired



In many ways, Jane's background and rise to power was similar to her predecessor's. She came from a respectable family full of ambitious men who were eager to use her as a pawn for their own gains. Thanks to the cunning of her father, Sir John Seymour, she was secured a position at court as lady in waiting to Catherine of Aragon in the late 1520s. There is no doubt that she would have been witness to Anne's controversial rise, and when she became queen, Jane attended her.

Jane differed from Anne in crucial ways. While Anne was ambitious, shrewd and outspoken, Jane was quiet, soothing and gentle. She was known for her peacemaking at court and she was fair, with long golden hair and pale skin. It is no wonder that when Henry began to tire of his fiery, outspoken wife, he wanted one who would serve him, and Jane was perfect.

Although it is not certain when their affair began, by 1536 Henry was interested in Jane. Their liaisons were conducted in secrecy, although he couldn't resist lavishing her with expensive gifts. The public's reaction to his affair with Anne had taught him that discretion was important. This suited Jane just fine; she wasn't ambitious like Anne, and she was perfectly happy to remain his unknown lover. However, this wasn't to be so.

Just one day after Anne's execution, Jane and Henry were betrothed. Ten days later, they were married. Although she was believed to not be as

clever or skilled as his previous wives, Jane's known sympathy for the treatment of the nation's beloved Catherine of Aragon ensured that she became a popular figure. Unlike Anne, she was not coronated, and the reason was said to be because of plague in London, but it is also likely that Henry was hesitant to crown another queen before she had proved her worth by giving him a son.

The pressures upon Jane at this point were unimaginable. Henry FitzRoy, Henry's illegitimate son and possible successor to the throne, had died and he was left with two illegitimate daughters. Jane had to produce a

son or likely find herself upon the chopping block. In early 1537 Jane fell pregnant and it was perhaps the most watched and anticipated pregnancy in the history of the country. After a long and difficult birth lasting two nights and three days, Jane gave birth to a son. After 29 years, Henry finally had his heir.

Things weren't so great for Jane, though. The length and complications of the birth had left her weak and exhausted. On 24 October, 12 days after the birth of her son, Edward, Jane died, aged just 29. She was the only one of Henry's wives to receive a queen's funeral, and he wore black in mourning for three months. He also seemed to change as a person; he waited years before marrying again and began to put on the weight he is now remembered for. When he died in 1547, the king was buried beside her - the mother of the son he tore England asunder to get.

Part of Jane's epitaph reads: "Here lies Jane, a phoenix who died in giving another phoenix birth"

DIVORCED

Anne of Cleves

The mild daughter of Cleves who became the subject of one of the most infamous portraits of all time

Although it is true that Henry did not marry for several years after Jane's death, marriage negotiations likely began soon after. With the split between England and Rome leaving the country isolated, it was decided that a political match, rather than a love one, would be best. Henry had agents in multiple countries, scoping out potential alliances and, most importantly, reporting back regarding the women's appearances.

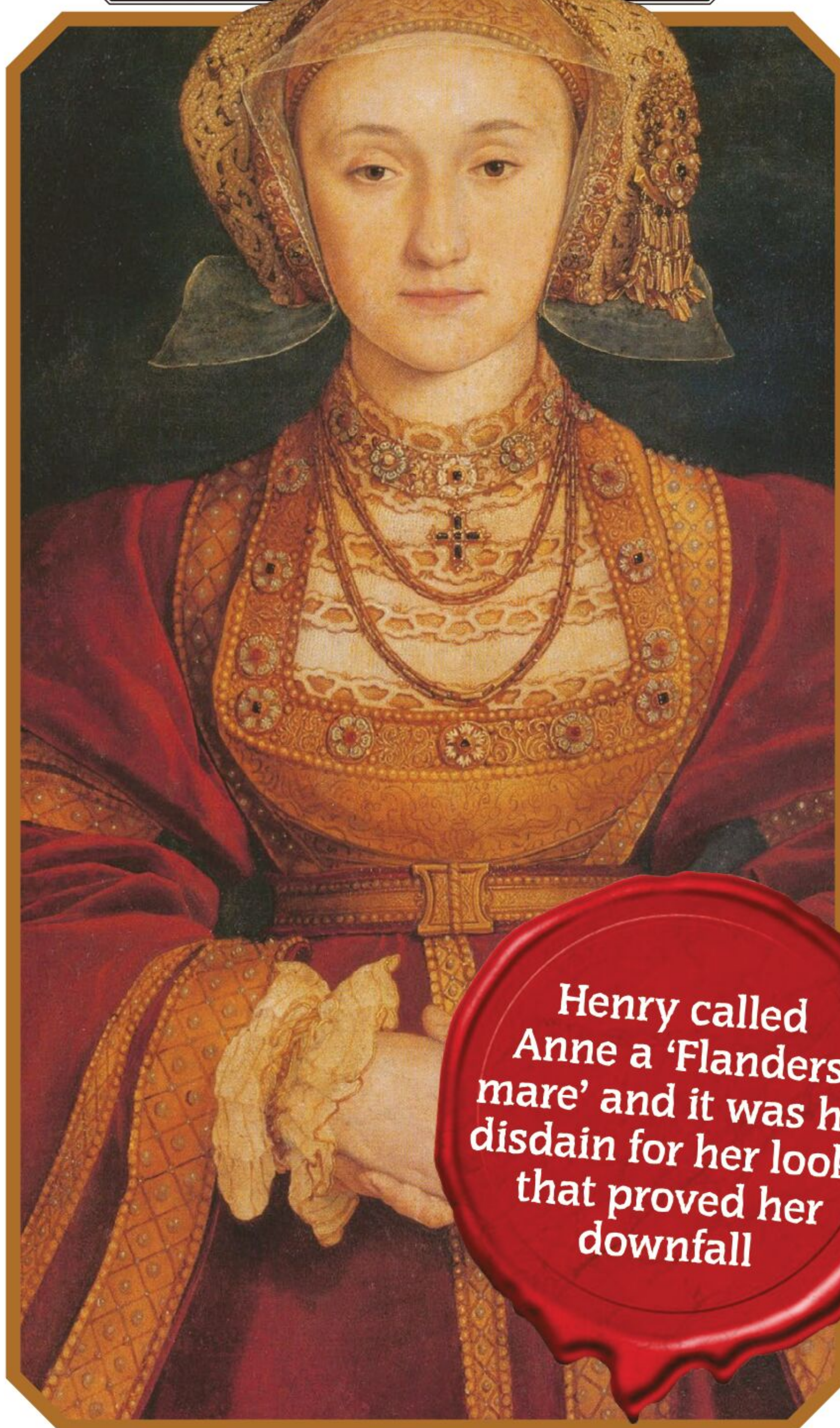
Cleves was viewed as an ally and Thomas Cromwell especially was eager for a match with Anne, the sister of the duke of Cleves. Keen to acquire a desirable bride regardless of political gains, Henry had Hans Holbein the Younger paint a portrait of Anne and Henry found it acceptable enough to begin marriage preparations.

Anne did not fit in well in the English courts; she was gentle and virtuous, but did not boast any of the sophistication or intelligence that Henry was drawn to. She had lived a rather sheltered life and had more interest in needlework than books. On New Year's Day 1540, Henry disguised himself and entered the room where Anne was staying, then suddenly embraced and kissed her. Most likely unaware that this was her future husband, Anne paid him little attention.

The king was even less pleased with her looks. Anne had been described as a beautiful, fair-haired woman with a lovely face, but Henry's misgivings occurred almost immediately, though the marriage went ahead as planned on 6 January 1540. Henry's inability to consummate on the wedding night led him to say, "I liked her before not well, but now I like her much worse." He claimed that he had been misled by the portrait and everyone who had complimented her.

On 24 June, Anne was ordered to leave the court. When she was offered an annulment she accepted, confirming that the marriage had not been consummated, and she was rewarded for her obedience with a valuable settlement as well as a new title of 'the king's beloved sister'. She remained on good terms with Henry and lived quietly in the countryside. Although the marriage had been brief, she had escaped it with her life and honour intact, outliving all of Henry's other wives.

HEIRS	
LENGTH OF REIGN	★
DESIRABILITY	★
POLITICAL GAINS	★★★★
POPULARITY	★★★★



Henry called Anne a 'Flanders mare' and it was his disdain for her looks that proved her downfall

Elizabeth Blount

From childhood, Elizabeth, better known as Bessie, had been known for her beauty. Thanks to her father's position as loyal servant to Henry VIII, she was granted a place at court as maid of honour to Catherine of Aragon. Seven years his younger, the pretty young girl caught the king's eye and they danced together at the New Year celebrations in 1514. She became his mistress shortly after.

Unlike many of his other romantic liaisons, it is believed that Henry's affair with Bessie lasted for years. In July 1519, she bore him the son he so longed for. Henry acknowledged him, perhaps in an effort to prove that he could indeed father boys, but the monarch moved on to Mary Boleyn soon after the birth.

However, Henry did ensure that Bessie was looked after. She found herself married to a courtier, Gilbert Tailboys, in 1522 and she was given property worth £200 per annum for life while the king still showered her with gifts. She had two more sons and a daughter, and she went on to serve as lady-in-waiting to Anne of Cleves.

Due to ill health, Bessie was forced to leave the royal court at the same time that the royal marriage was being dissolved. She died in 1540 at the age of 42 from what is generally believed to be consumption.



Bessie's greatest claim to fame was being the mother of the only illegitimate child to be acknowledged by Henry

BEHEADED

Catherine Howard

The fun-loving, effervescent girl whose past loves sent her to the gallows

Catherine Howard was the young and spirited daughter of Lord Edmund, brother to Elizabeth Howard, Anne Boleyn's mother - making her first cousin to the ill-fated queen. Although aristocratic blood flowed in her veins, her father was a younger son and not particularly wealthy. Catherine was sent to live with the dowager duchess of Norfolk, but she received little guidance or attention - instead she spent her time with the other girls, secretly letting men into their sleeping quarters.

Catherine was vivacious and spirited with a kind nature, but she had a wandering mind and found it hard to concentrate on one thing for any amount of time. She embarked on a sexual relationship with the secretary of the household, Francis Dereham, which bloomed. They even began addressing each other as husband and wife, leading many to believe they had a precontract to marry. However, when the Dowager found out, the relationship ended.

Aged 19, Catherine entered the royal court, serving Anne of Cleves. Henry, who had little interest in his German wife, soon took a liking to the young lady-in-waiting. Catherine was known for her sexual allure and Henry, now aged 49, couldn't resist chasing after such an exciting young woman. Just 16 days after his annulment with Anne, Henry married Catherine. She was exactly what the king needed in order to lift his recently low spirits - Catherine injected the king with frivolity and a newfound zest for life, and he bestowed gift after gift upon her, dubbing her his "rose without a thorn".

For Catherine's family, the relationship was a blessing and a curse. The ambitious Howards hoped that Catherine's new position would help to regain the influence they had held in the reign of Anne Boleyn, while also helping to restore Catholicism. But Catherine, unlike Anne, had not been raised in royal courts. She was not cunning or even wary, and she found it difficult to shake off her old flirtatious ways. Her past began to catch

up with her. Those who knew of her previous indiscretions demanded positions at court to pay for their silence, and soon Catherine found herself surrounded with enemies who knew all of her secrets.

Married to an ageing and ailing king, it is no surprise that the flirtatious girl sought comfort elsewhere. It was not long until her carelessness caught up with her, and by November 1541 there was enough evidence against the queen to inform the king. Henry, still besotted with his new bride, at first refused to believe the claims, but when Dereham and another alleged lover, Thomas Culpepper, were tortured, they admitted their affairs and were executed.

Although she had repeatedly denied any precontract to Dereham, Catherine's fate was sealed - she was found guilty of treason and was beheaded on 13 February 1542. Unlike Anne, it is likely the charges against her were true; however, she believed that if the king was happy, which he was, they wouldn't matter. Catherine was a naïve and carefree woman, unsuited for the intricacies of the royal court, and she paid for it with her life.



HEIRS

LENGTH OF REIGN ★★

DESIRABILITY ★★★★★

POLITICAL GAINS ★

POPULARITY ★★



Margaret Shelton

There is some confusion over whether Henry's third mistress was Mary or Margaret Shelton, or if they were the same person. What we do know is that they were cousins of Anne Boleyn and served her as ladies-in-waiting. It seems that after arriving at court, one of them began an affair with Henry, as told by Eustace Chapuys, a foreign diplomat: "The young lady who was lately in the King's favour is so no longer. There has succeeded to her place a cousin of the concubine."

There were rumours that the Shelton mistress was in the running to become Henry's fourth wife, but the affair was short and many believe that it was manufactured by Anne to distract her husband from Jane Seymour. After the relationship ended, Mary did not press the king for money or lands. However, when her father died the family's financial troubles forced her into a convent. She eventually married her cousin and had five children.

SURVIVED

Catherine Parr

HEIRS

LENGTH OF REIGN ★★★★★

DESIRABILITY ★★★★★

POLITICAL GAINS ★★

POPULARITY ★★★★★

The learned and talented widow who did her duty, then followed her heart

After the disastrous end of Henry's marriage with Catherine Howard, Henry's strict new laws made the position of queen a very dangerous one indeed. A new clause in the act of attainder read that if anyone knew anything 'incontinent' about his new queen and didn't declare it, they would be condemned for treason. Simply put, those in the know had to speak up before the marriage or be killed. Ambitious courtiers were extremely wary and the mood in court was tense.

When Henry's affections turned towards a 31-year-old widow, the feeling was one of relief. Known as Lady Latimer at the time, Catherine was the daughter of Maud Green, who had served as a lady-in-waiting to Catherine of Aragon. She had a passion for learning, and she could speak French, Italian and Latin fluently.

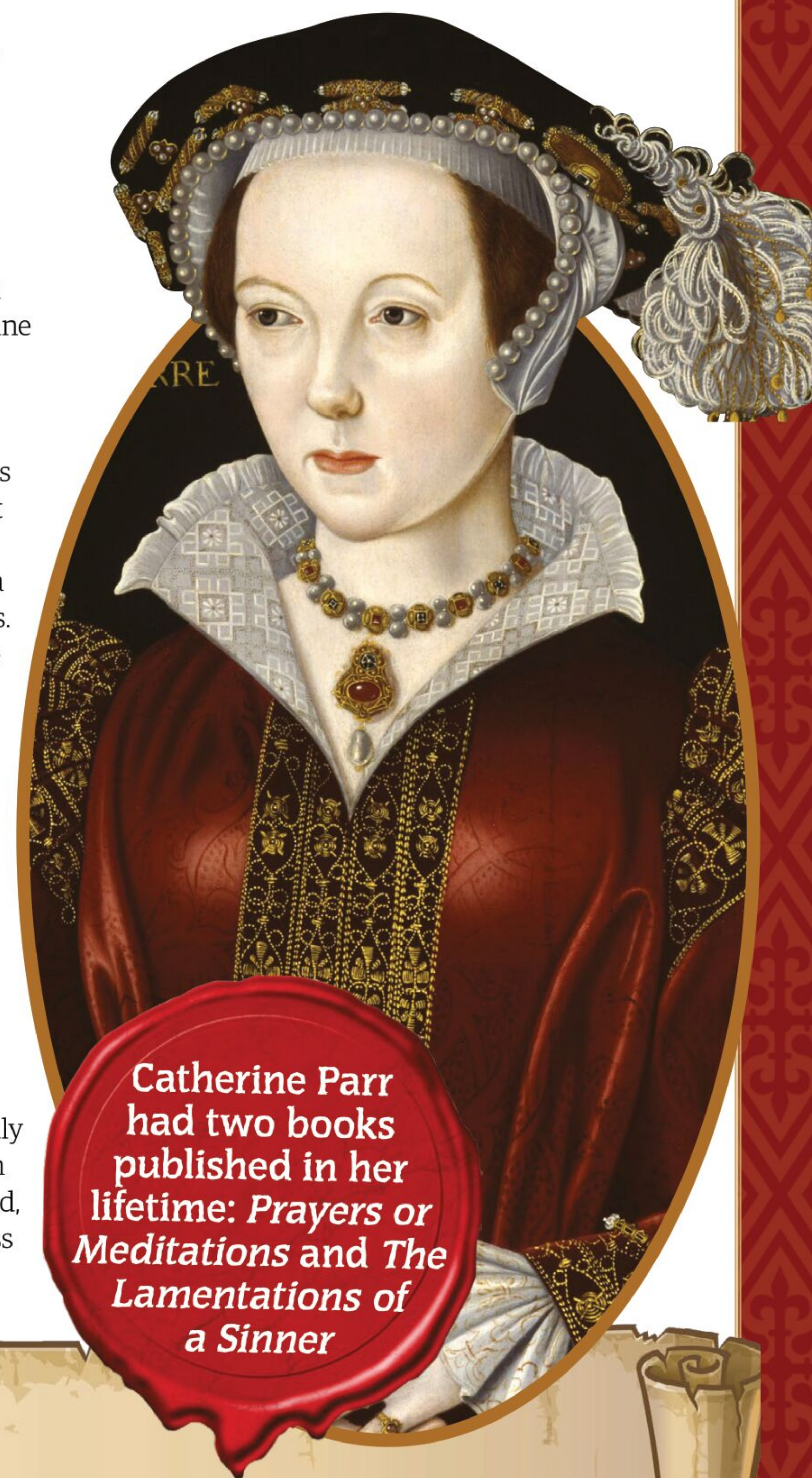
Catherine's first marriage occurred when she was 17, but just four years later her husband died and she was widowed for the first time. Her next husband was 40. This union made Catherine a stepmother, and she was a doting and caring wife for her ailing husband. He died in 1543 and aged 31, Catherine found herself widowed again.

It was around this time that the king's eye began to be drawn to Catherine. Henry was drawn to Catherine's qualities as a loving stepmother and dedicated scholar. Although she was still some 20 years younger than the king, she had a sensible, grounded nature and he began to send her lavish gifts. However, Catherine had eyes for another.

Thomas Seymour, brother of the late Queen Jane, had captured Catherine's heart. She had served two husbands dutifully and most likely wished to marry the final time for love. But with the king involved, this was not to be so - Catherine was aware that her duty to her king outweighed her own heart's wishes. Yet again she entered into a marriage with an older husband with ailing health on 12 July 1543. The new queen was immediately popular, not only with the king, but with his children. She took an active role in the education of Elizabeth and Edward, and played a part in reconciling Henry with his two daughters.

Catherine was a respected queen. She was the first woman to publish a book under her own name in English, and when Henry went away to France she served as regent. Her capability, however, did not stop multiple courtiers plotting her downfall.

Shortly before Henry died, he ruled that Catherine should be treated as a queen of England, despite her now being a dowager. Catherine, it seemed, had had her fill of royal life. Just six months after Henry's death she secretly married her long-time love, Thomas Seymour. When it was discovered, the union caused a scandal. In 1548, Catherine unexpectedly fell pregnant at the age of 35, but soon after birth the child fell ill and died. Catherine soon followed, dying on 5 September 1548 from the same illness that had claimed Jane Seymour.



Catherine Parr had two books published in her lifetime: *Prayers or Meditations and The Lamentations of a Sinner*

HENRY'S ILLEGITIMATE CHILDREN

HENRY FITZROY

Born to Elizabeth Blount, Henry was the only acknowledged illegitimate child. Henry was a firm favourite of the king and was treated like a prince. He was bestowed with titles and made lord lieutenant of Ireland. Had he not died, he probably would have been proclaimed Henry's heir.

CATHERINE CAREY

Daughter of Mary Boleyn, Henry never acknowledged Catherine, but Mary was a well-known mistress of the sovereign. Anne served as maid of honour to Anne of Cleves and Catherine Howard as well as being chief lady of the bedchamber to her half-cousin Queen Elizabeth I.

HENRY CAREY

Another child of Mary Boleyn, Henry had an excellent education thanks to the patronage of his aunt, Anne. After Elizabeth's ascension he enjoyed a valuable estate and was appointed as her bodyguard. As lieutenant general of the queen's forces, he helped crush the Northern Rebellion.

JOHN PERROT

Perrot resembled Henry in appearance and personality, but there is some dispute over whether he truly was Henry's son. Perrot served as lord deputy to Queen Elizabeth during the conquest of Ireland, but was accused of treason and imprisoned, where he died.

It was suggested that FitzRoy marry his own half-sister, Mary



Henry VIII's Tower of Terror

The turbulent reign of Henry VIII saw many men, women and children imprisoned at his majesty's pleasure - and not all escaped with their lives

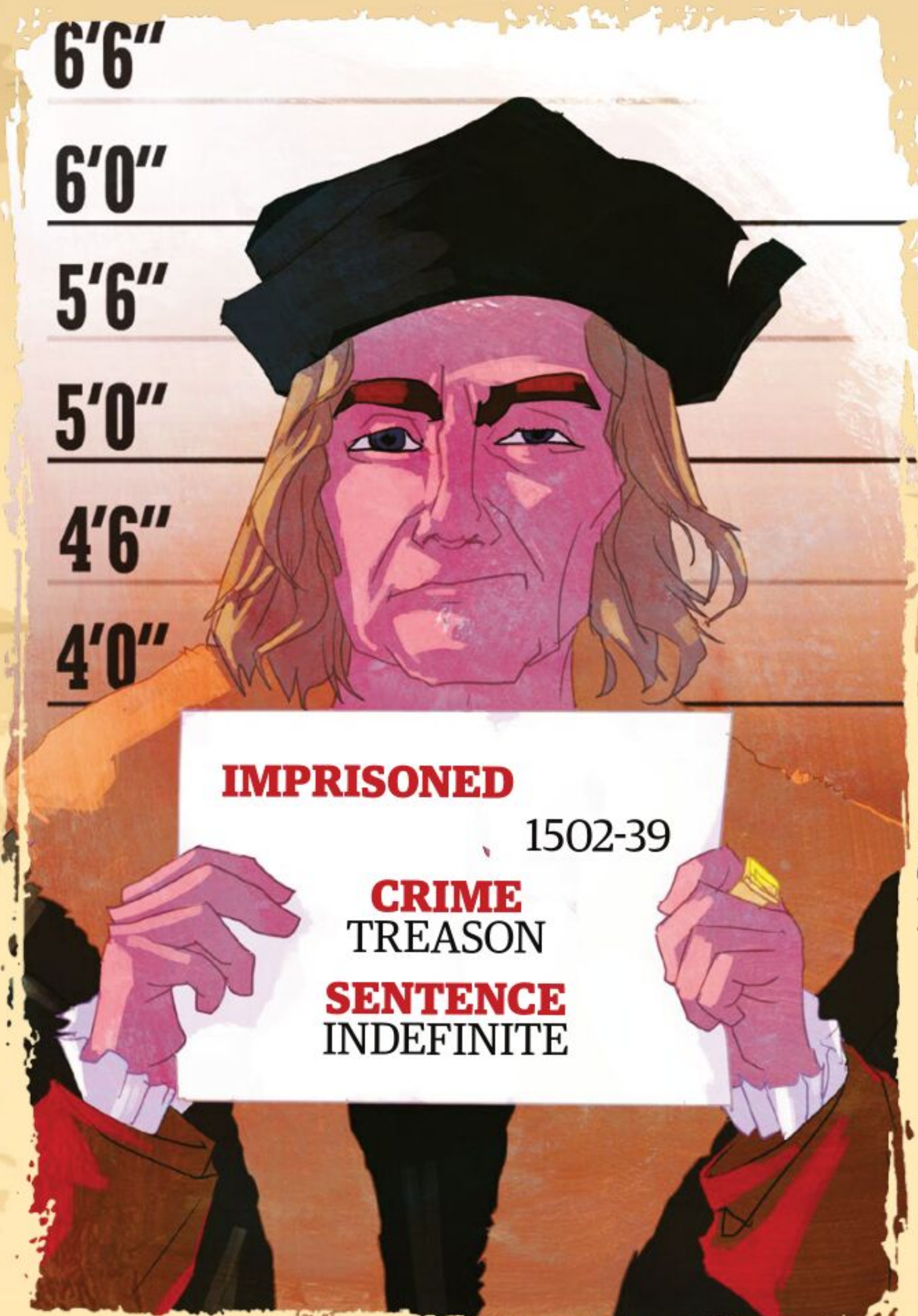
The Tower of London has a dark legend attached to it - a grim tale of imprisonment, execution and torture. Its forbidding reputation was born in the reign of Henry VIII, a period of unrivalled religious upheaval, bloodshed and rebellion when more than 100 of the king's subjects found themselves incarcerated within its walls.

No end date was set for imprisonment in this time - prisoners were held as long as the king wished to keep them. Their departure from imprisonment might be heralded by word of royal pardon, or simply

by a gruff exhortation to prepare themselves for imminent execution.

Many of Henry's prisoners are familiar to us. Most have heard of Thomas More, Anne Boleyn and Catherine Howard. But what of the others who found themselves locked away in this foreboding fortress? As Henry's reign progressed, prisoner numbers rose to an almost unmanageable level. Treason, heresy and political discord meant noble and commoner alike found themselves incarcerated here, facing a very uncertain future. These are the forgotten prisoners of Henry VIII.

WILLIAM DE LA POLE: *Threat to the throne*



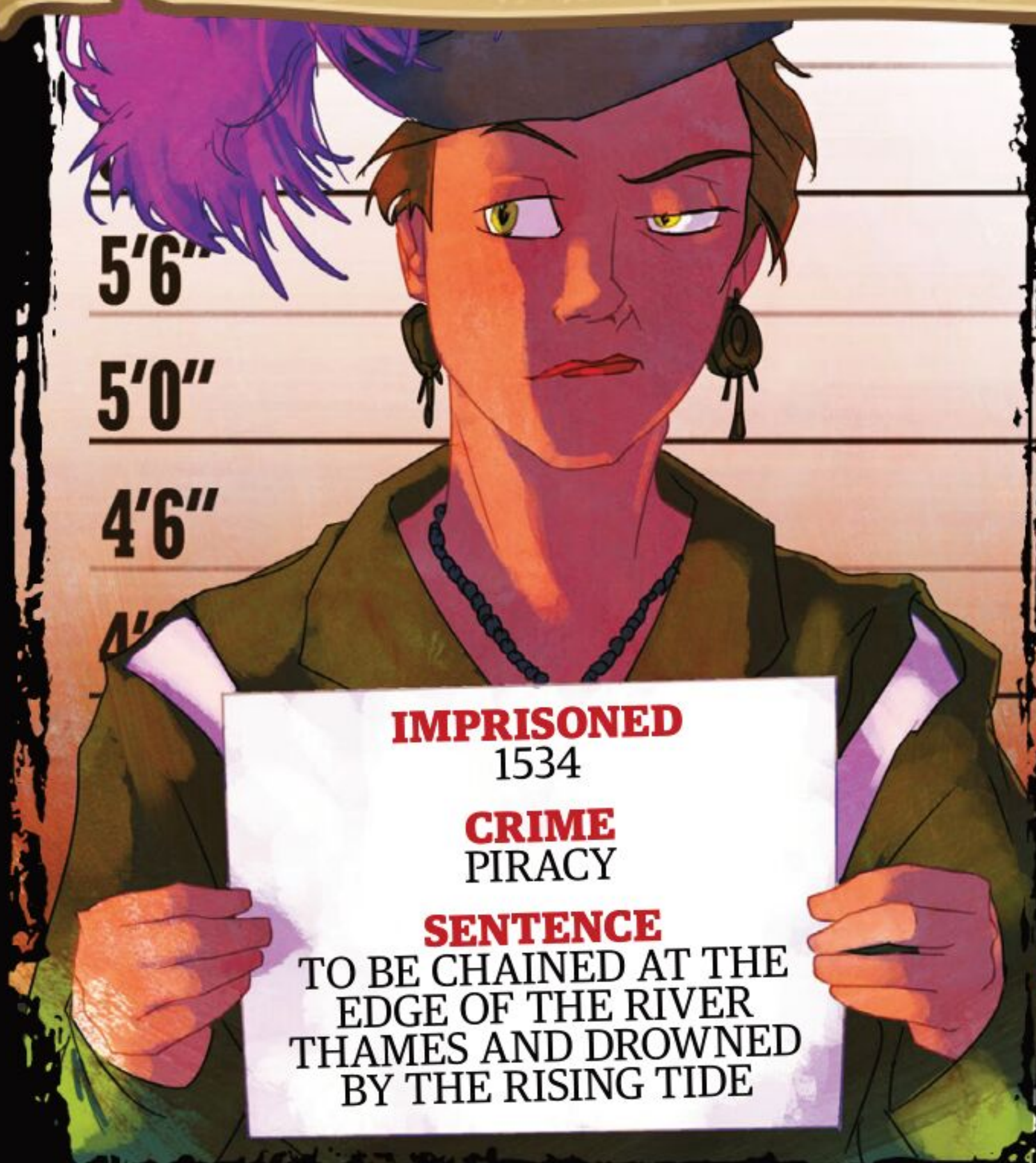
William has the unhappy distinction of being the longest serving prisoner in the Tower's history. Jailed by Henry VIII's father, he remained in the Tower for the majority of Henry's reign. His crime? Yorkist blood.

When Henry VII emerged victorious in the Wars of the Roses, he had not ended the Yorkist threat. He faced two serious invasions led by pretenders, and even at the end of his reign there were still many potential rivals for the throne. William de la Pole was one of them. As Henry's wife's cousin, he shared her royal blood. But while William's brothers directly threatened the Tudor crown, William was not much of a troublemaker.

He was arrested in 1502 as part of a round up of de la Pole supporters and condemned as a traitor by parliament in 1504. Even after his brothers were all dead, he remained incarcerated because he was a Yorkist figurehead and he died still a prisoner of the Tower, after almost 38 years.



ALICE WOLF: The escape artist



IMPRISONED
1534

CRIME
PIRACY

SENTENCE
TO BE CHAINED AT THE
EDGE OF THE RIVER
THAMES AND DROWNED
BY THE RISING TIDE

We associate the Tower of London with powerful political prisoners, but Alice Wolf was different. In July 1533, she and her husband John lured two foreign merchants into a boat on the Thames, where they robbed and murdered them. When the bodies were discovered, Alice and John were quickly carted off to the Tower. As the Wolfs had committed their crimes on a boat, they were convicted of piracy, the penalty for which was a drawn-out death by drowning.

She was kept within the Inner Ward, the most difficult part of the Tower to reach, but by remarkable good fortune, Alice's jailer was John Bawde, a long-term associate of the Wolfs. He agreed to help Alice escape, and on 24 March 1534, everything was in place. Alice had appealed to the daughter of the lieutenant to free her from her shackles. With her hands and feet unfettered,

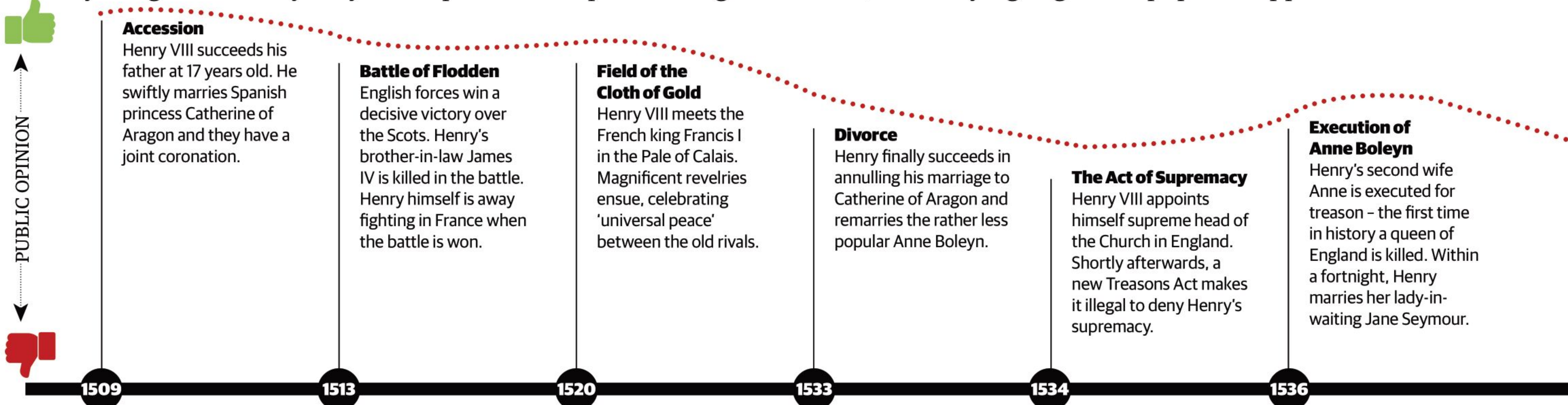
she shook the door to her cell open - it was only hasped with an old bit of bone. The outer door was opened with a key provided by Bawde. Then, disguised in men's clothing, Alice crept to the roof of St Thomas's Tower on the outer limits of the walls, where Bawde was waiting.

They slid down a rope to the wharf below. From there, they boarded a little boat and rowed around to some steps outside the Tower boundaries. Freedom was in their grasp. But as they walked up the hill from the river, they were spotted by two watchmen. Alice's disguise did not fool them and both prisoner and jailer were dragged back to the Tower. The unfortunate Bawde was tortured for his betrayal and then hanged. Alice and her husband were drowned in the Thames. Alice remains the only woman to have escaped the Tower of London, if only for a short while.

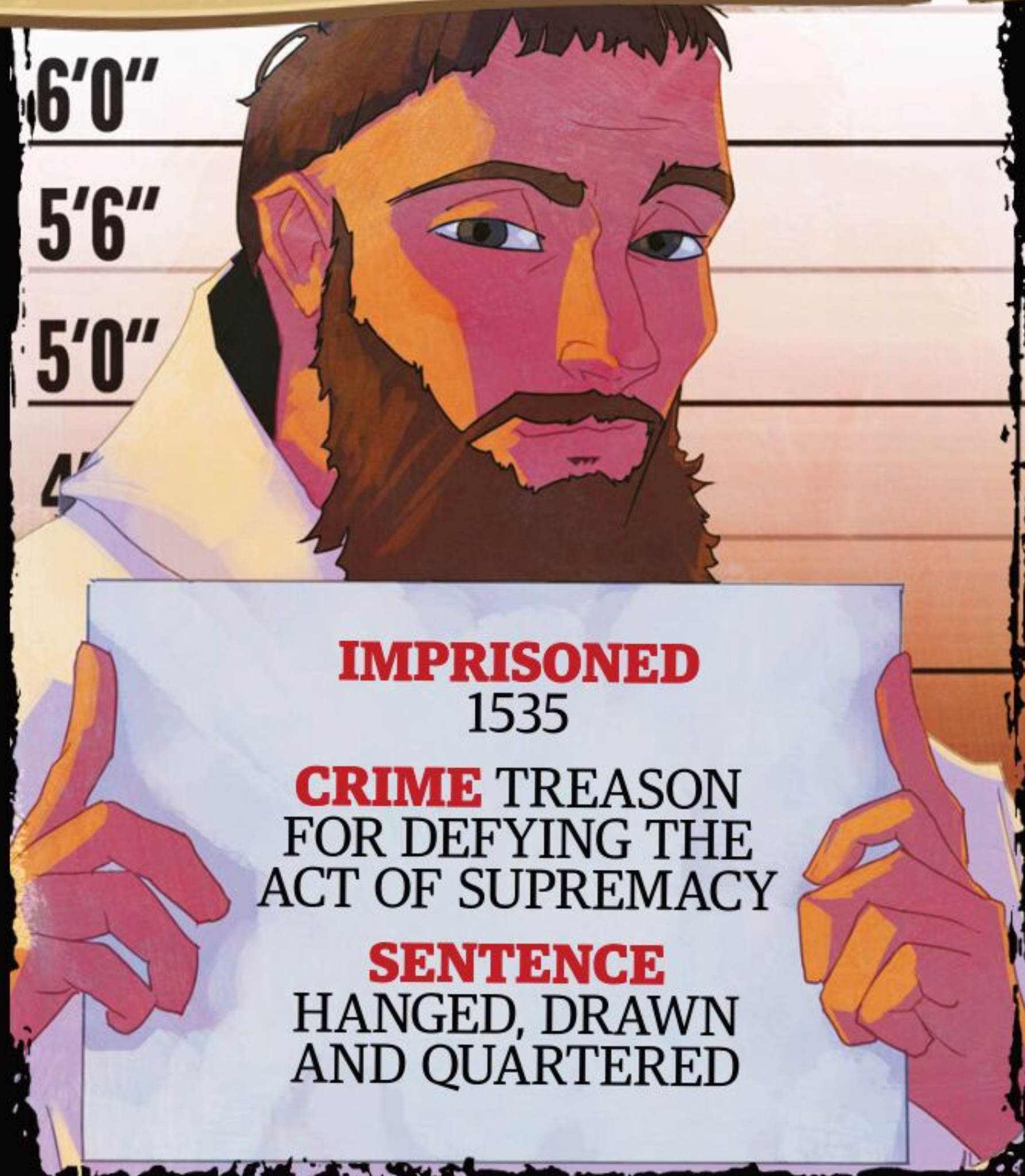


Henry's turbulent reign

Henry's reign saw nearly 40 years of political and personal highs and lows, with varying degrees of popular support



SEBASTIAN NEWDIGATE: *The meddling monk*



Sebastian grew up at court, where he enjoyed Henry VIII's favour and was helped to a good marriage. After his wife's death, Sebastian turned to religion and entered the London Charterhouse. As a monk of the Charterhouse (a 'Carthusian'), he was at the forefront of a propaganda war against the rising tide of Protestantism in England, seizing books and exposing radical sects of heretics.

When Henry VIII insisted on being acknowledged as supreme head of the Church of England, he inevitably met fierce opposition from Sebastian and his brothers. The Carthusians begrudgingly accepted Henry's divorce from his wife, but they would not deny the supremacy of the pope. Henry's attempts to force the Carthusians to accept his leadership were brutal. The prior of the London order was executed in his habit, and his arms fixed over the entrance to the Charterhouse as a warning. Still the monks

held out. Sebastian was among three Carthusians imprisoned in the Tower of London in an attempt to force their submission: for two weeks they were chained to pillars, standing in their own excrement. Allegedly the king himself visited to appeal for Newdigate to accept his supremacy, but he and his brothers would not give in.

Sebastian eventually met the same fate as his prior, one of 18 Carthusian monks who were killed by King Henry VIII. On 19 June 1535, he was dragged on a hurdle to Tyburn and there he was hanged, drawn and brutally quartered.



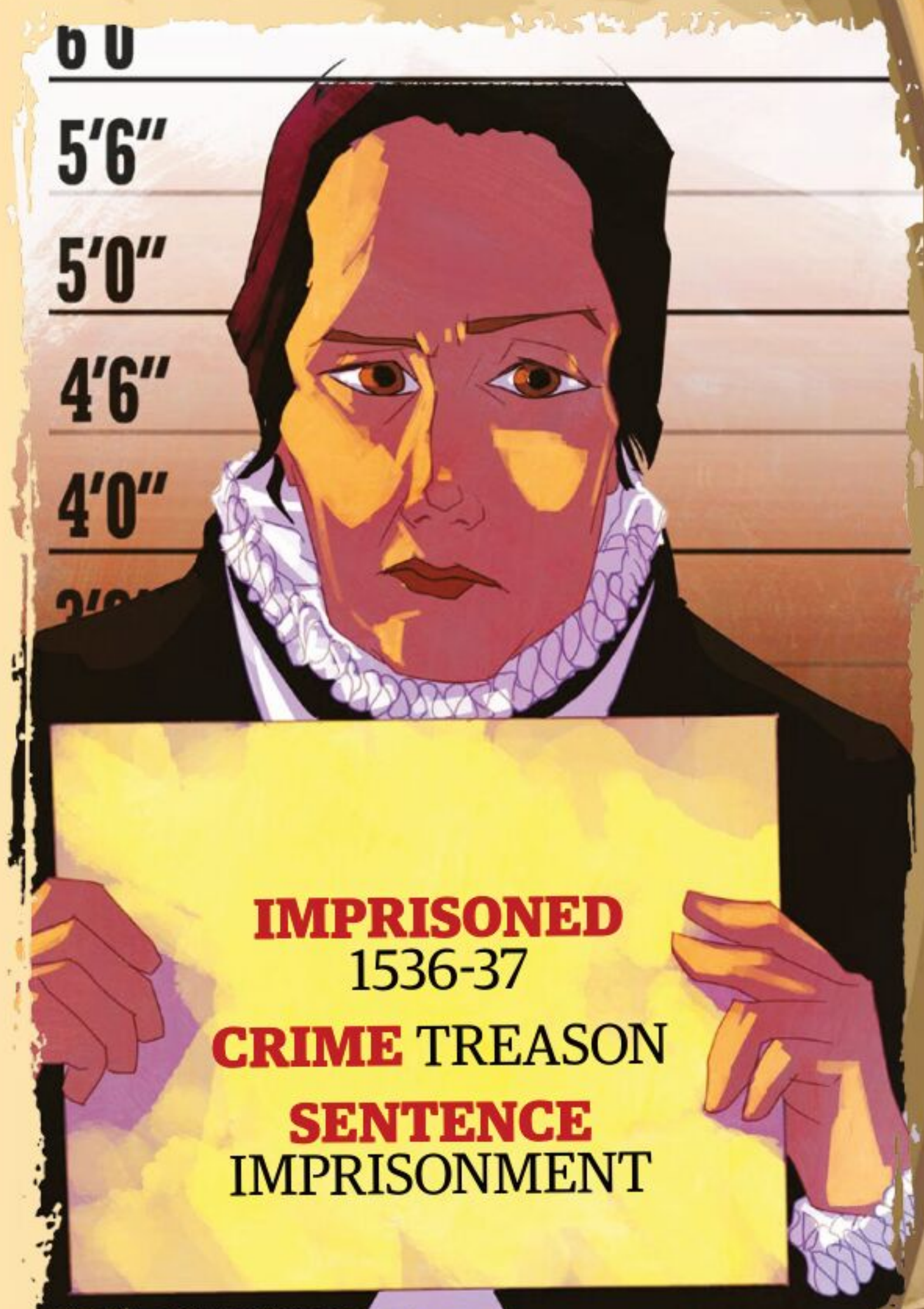
MARGARET DOUGLAS: *Unlucky in love*

Margaret's mother was Henry VIII's elder sister, the one-time queen of Scotland, but her royal blood was to prove a mixed blessing. Margaret grew up in comfort at the English court, becoming a leading light of the literary clique surrounding Anne Boleyn. She exchanged poetry with other courtiers, notably with Anne's uncle, Thomas Howard. Their relationship developed into a serious affair with the couple meeting clandestinely in friends' chambers to exchange tokens of their love.

By Easter 1536, they were secretly betrothed. For members of the blood royal to get engaged without the king's permission was a misstep under any circumstances,

but Margaret and Thomas's timing was catastrophic. The fall of Anne Boleyn in May 1536 left Henry with a sickly bastard son and two daughters he had declared illegitimate. Margaret was suddenly next in line to the throne. Her romantic entanglement now took on the dimension of a political coup.

Henry VIII amended the law so that marrying into the blood royal without permission was treason and Margaret and Thomas were sent to the Tower. There they exchanged miserable poetry about their star-crossed love. Although Margaret was restored to favour, Thomas died of sickness contracted in prison. It was a harsh punishment for falling in love.



The Pilgrimage of Grace begins
Rebellion breaks out in the north in opposition to Henry's religious and economic changes. The revolt is known as the Pilgrimage of Grace.

Birth of Prince Edward
A son is finally born to Henry and his wife Jane Seymour, joining Henry's children Mary and Elizabeth from his previous marriages. Jane dies 12 days later.

Excommunication
Henry VIII is officially excommunicated by papal bull for his assumption of the supremacy, for dissolving England's monasteries and for attacking religious shrines in England.

Wife number six
After two more failed marriages - one ending in divorce, one in execution - Henry marries the intelligent and experienced Catherine Parr. She reunites the family and acts as regent when he goes to war.

War with France
With the economy struggling and coinage debased, Henry sets off to win back France. He takes Boulogne but bankrupts the country.

Death
Henry VIII dies, leaving his nine-year-old son to inherit the throne as King Edward VI.

POSITIVE



PUBLIC OPINION



NEGATIVE

1536

1537

1538

1543

1544

1547

HOW TO GET BY IN PRISON

Tudor prisons provided very little for their inmates. Here are some tips to help make your stay as pleasant as possible



BE RICH

Unless you like sleeping on beds of straw and eating bread rolls every day, it pays to be rich in prison. Everything from fresh clothes and furniture to servants and pets can be brought into the Tower - for the right price.



BE NICE TO YOUR GUARD

Although he keeps you locked up, a guard is also your link to the outside world. From messages to food, it all comes through him. If you get on well, he might even be willing to help you escape.



BRING SOME HOME COMFORTS

The wealthy and important are allowed to bring their servants to the Tower - and even their families, should they wish. These comforts of home can make a stay much more enjoyable.



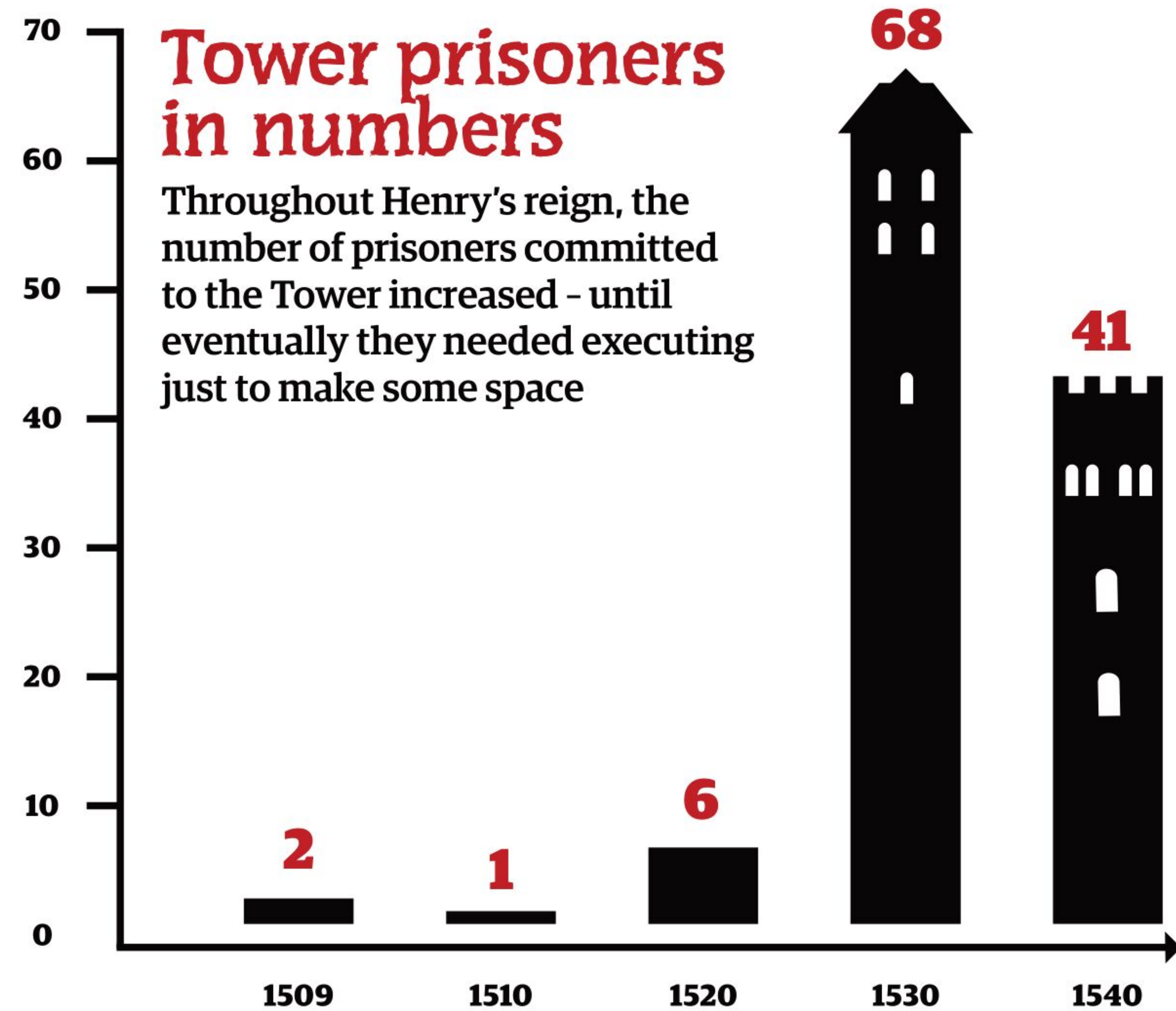
HAVE FRIENDS IN HIGH PLACES

Your chances of release are much better if you have an ally who is close to the king and has a bit of influence over him. That is, as long as they don't end up joining you as a prisoner in the Tower of London.



CONSIDER ESCAPE

A surprising number of Tower prisoners successfully escaped - and if you get out, you can flee into exile or take sanctuary at a local church. Of course, if you are caught, it'll likely be the death penalty for you.



Tower prisoners in numbers

Throughout Henry's reign, the number of prisoners committed to the Tower increased - until eventually they needed executing just to make some space



The TOWER'S five most infamous inmates

Some of the most powerful and intriguing figures in history have been imprisoned in the Tower of London



Anne Boleyn

Imprisoned: 1536

The first queen of England ever to be executed, Anne was accused of treason against her husband Henry VIII. She was beheaded on Tower Green.

The Princes in the Tower

Imprisoned: 1483

12-year-old Edward V and his brother were brought to the Tower by their uncle. Just days later, Uncle Richard was declared king and it is widely believed he had the boys put to death.



Sir Walter Raleigh

Imprisoned: 1592-93, 1603-16, 1618

Walter lived in the Bloody Tower with his entire family and spent his time there growing tobacco and writing a history of the world.



Lady Jane Grey

Imprisoned: 1553-54

Protestant Jane inherited the throne from her cousin Edward VI but lost it to her Catholic rival Mary I. A year later, Jane was beheaded within the Tower.



Rudolf Hess

Imprisoned: 1941

Hitler's deputy parachuted into Britain in 1941, hoping to end the war. He was imprisoned at the Tower for a few days, the last state prisoner kept there.





MARGARET BULMER: *The relentless rebel*

Margaret was one among tens of thousands who became embroiled in the most serious rebellion of Henry VIII's reign: the Pilgrimage of Grace. Coming after years of upheaval that had seen Henry set himself up as the supreme head of the Church of England, the uprising spread from Lincolnshire to Yorkshire, Lancashire and Cumbria. A rebel army of churchmen, commoners and gentry called for the reversal of the dissolution of the monasteries, and an end to enclosure and unpopular new taxes.

As the illegitimate daughter of the duke of Buckingham, Margaret Bulmer may have had a personal axe to grind with Henry's government. Her husband Sir John later claimed they had been forced to support the pilgrimage when their home

was threatened, but by early 1537, he and Margaret had been drawn deep into the rebellion. By then, rebel leaders were being rounded up and arrested. The Bulmers had three options: flee into exile, risk answering a royal summons, or raise rebellion once more. Margaret argued for the latter, saying that to be separated from her husband would be worse than death. Sir John agreed, but their plot was swiftly betrayed and both Bulmers were arrested and sent to the Tower. They pleaded guilty together, were condemned together and were executed for treason on the same day.

Sir John was given the relative mercy of hanging and beheading but Margaret suffered the full penalty of a female traitor and was burned to death at Smithfield.

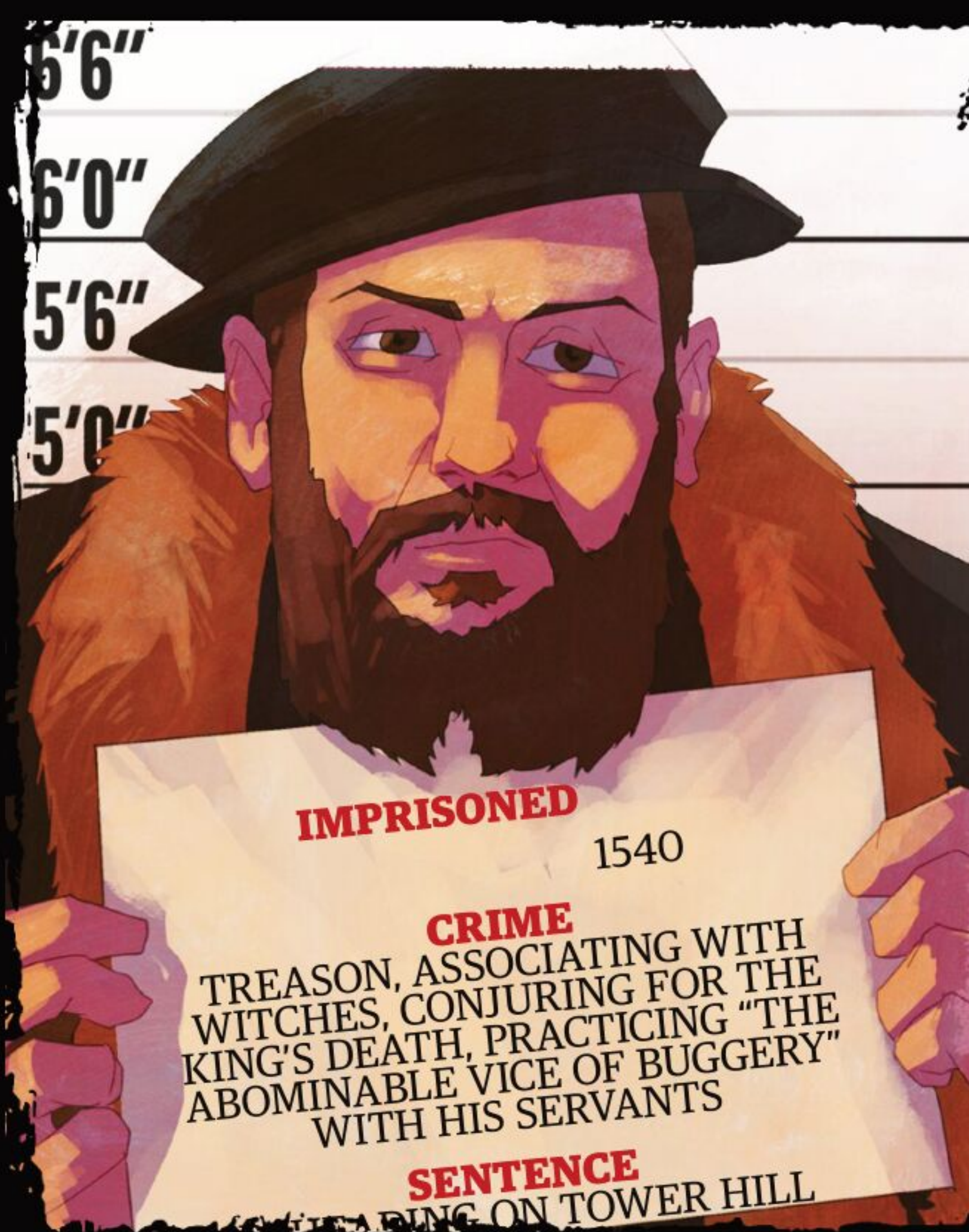
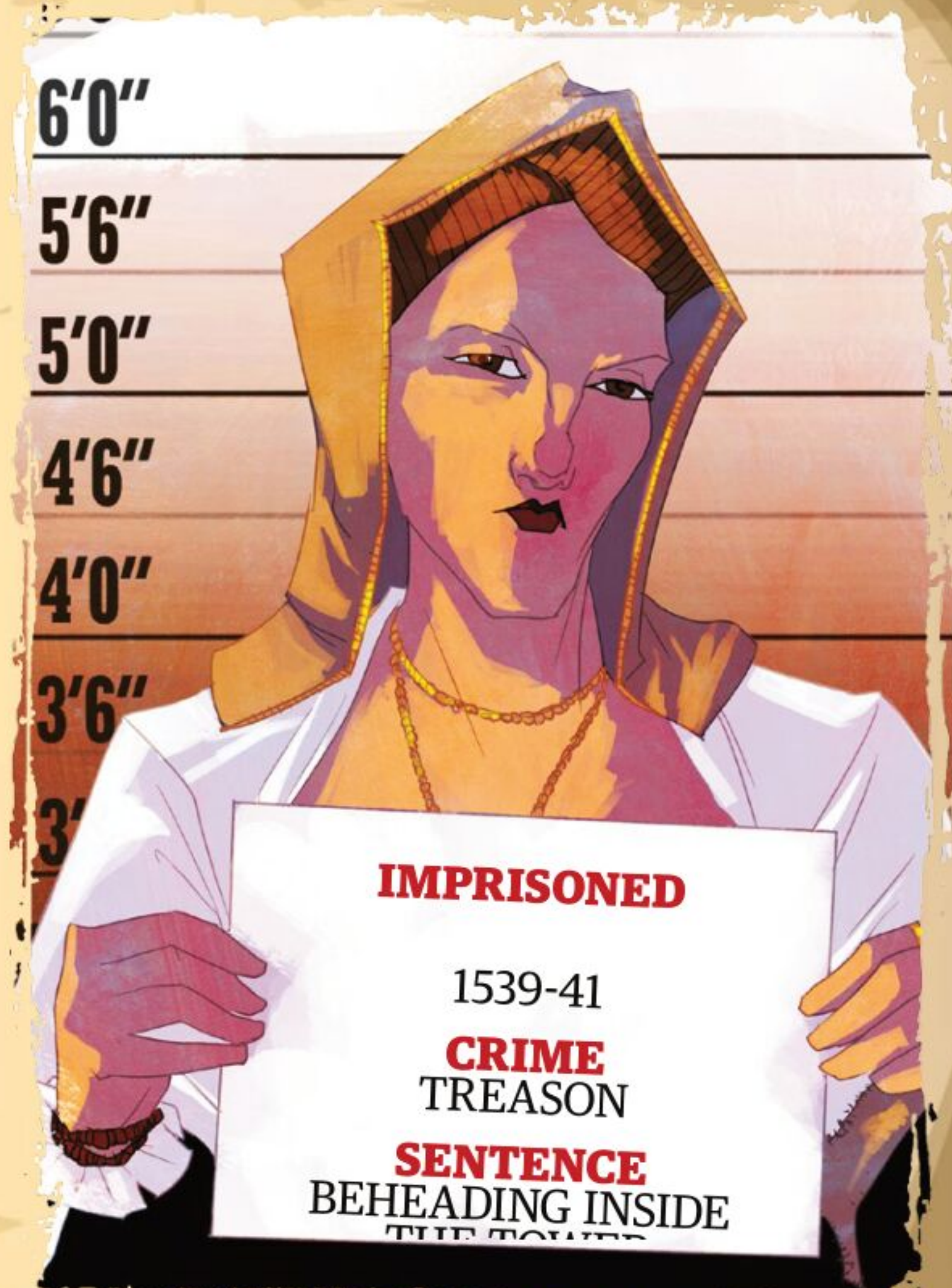
MARGARET POLE, COUNTESS OF SALISBURY: *The mother paying for the sins of her son*

Margaret had a long history with the Tower: her father George, Duke of Clarence, had been drowned in a butt of malmsey wine there when she was a child. The royal blood she inherited from Clarence made her a threat to the throne throughout Henry VIII's reign, but it was her son Reginald's actions that doomed her.

In 1536, Reginald was a cardinal in Rome, and his condemnation of Henry VIII's religious changes exacerbated already tense relations between the king and the Pole family. Margaret had been a close friend of Catherine of Aragon and her daughter. She was probably unhappy

with Henry's religious changes, but astute enough not to admit it.

When it was discovered that her family was in contact with Reginald, Margaret was seized and arrested in 1539. She was condemned as a traitor and imprisoned in the Tower. During her incarceration, the 67-year-old Margaret was provided servants, clothing and food. Suddenly, in May 1541, it was announced she would be executed. There wasn't time to bring the executioner to London so "a wretched and blundering youth... hacked her head and shoulders to pieces in the most pitiful manner."



WALTER, LORD HUNGERFORD: *Faithful servant*

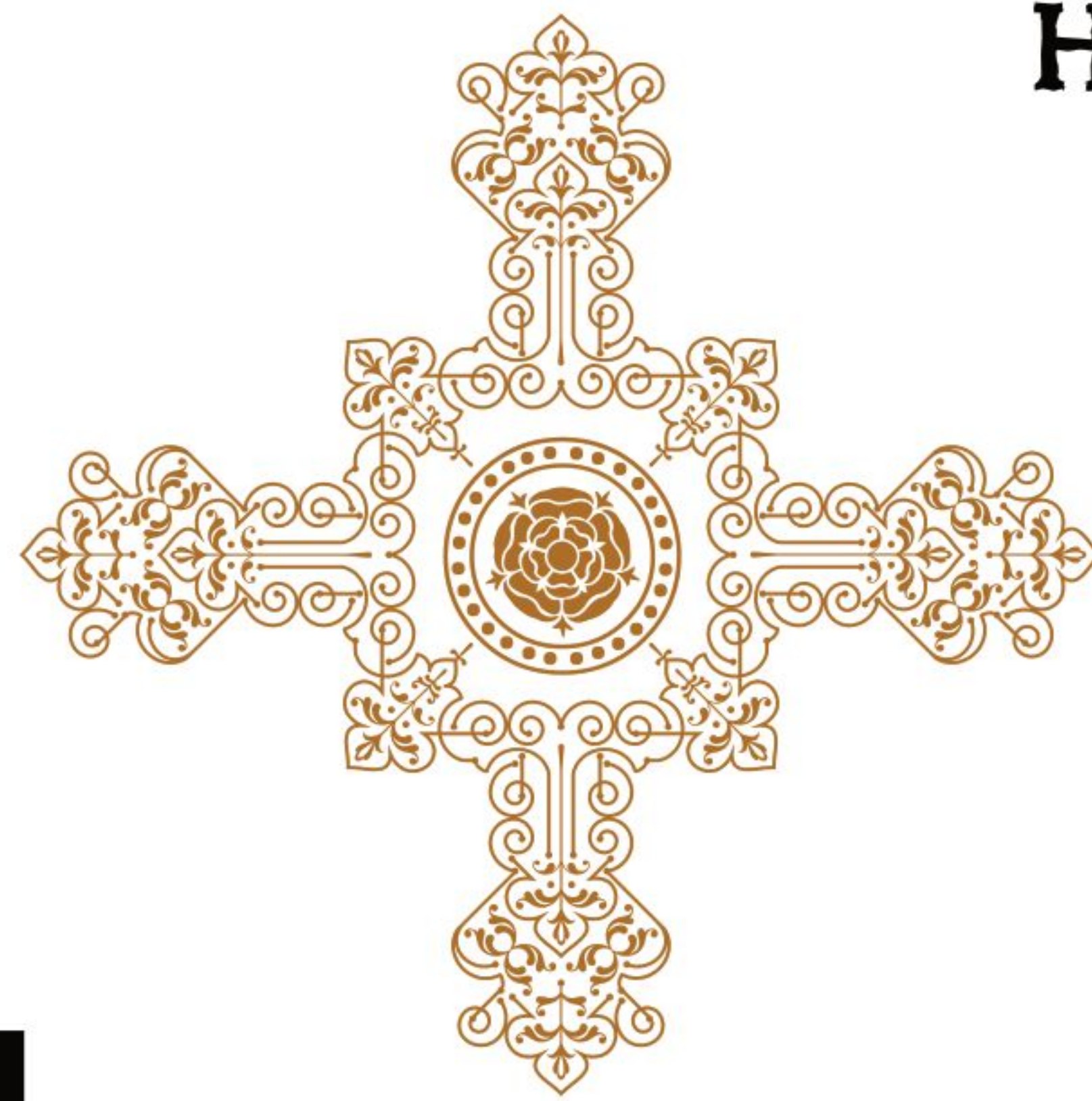
Walter Hungerford's rise and fall were closely connected with that of his patron, Thomas Cromwell. While Cromwell was Henry VIII's chief minister, Hungerford's star was very much in the ascendant: he became a sheriff and a baron. But it all came crashing down when Henry divorced Anne and blamed Cromwell for the disastrous marriage. Hungerford's fall was swift to follow. Accusations of "certain grave misdemeanours" spiralled into bizarre accusations about the activities within his home. His wife claimed to have been "continually locked up in one of the towers of his castle" for three or four years, with keepers who had repeatedly attempted to poison

her. Lady Hungerford accused her husband of wanting her dead because it was cheaper than getting a divorce. She also noticed "many strange things about her husband's demeanour": he had consulted sorcerers and a witch to learn "how long the king should live".

He had aided and abetted a traitor who sympathised with the Pilgrimage of Grace, and he had been having sexual relations with his male servants, which was a felony. It added up to a compelling blend of heresy, sexual misconduct and treason. After a brief imprisonment in the Tower of London, Hungerford joined his old master Cromwell on the scaffold at Tower Hill on 28 July 1540.



Henry VIII with Cardinal Wolsey,
before he fell from grace



Henry vs the Church

Motivated by greed, love and a thirst for power, King Henry VIII changed the face of religion in England forever



An infamous womaniser and formidable warmonger, Henry VIII was a man accustomed to getting his way. Merciless with his affairs, he cut an imposing figure and was feared by many around him. Nothing would stand in the way of him preserving his father's legacy - not even, as history would come to find, the greatest religion in the world at the time.

The Reformation was one of the most revolutionary events ever to take place in English history. With a stroke, Henry VIII ended 1,000 years of papal control, displaced thousands of religious figures and eventually brought religion to the masses for the first time. But like many things in Henry's life, this didn't come easily, and matters of the heart, the royal purse and sovereignty meshed together to make the break with Rome a complicated process.

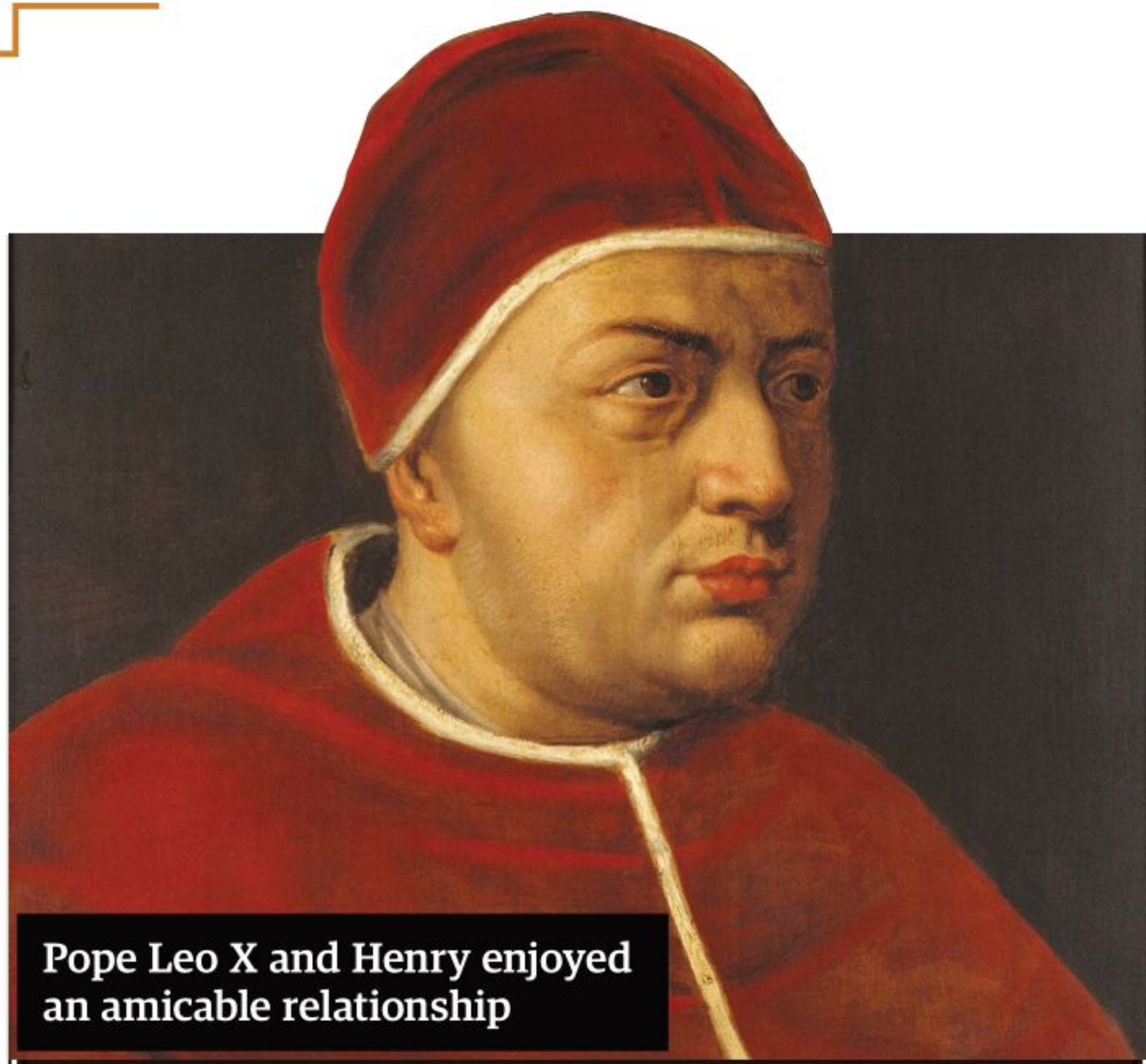
By the end of the 16th century, monasticism had almost entirely disappeared from other European states, with many adopting Lutheranism or other forms of Protestantism instead, and those maintaining Catholicism approaching the faith in greatly reduced numbers and in a radically

changed form. These changes were prompted by a dissatisfaction with the general state of religious life, regarded by many as too lavish and opulent. Indeed, religious houses in 16th-century England alone were in control of about two-fifths of parish benefices in the country, owned about one-quarter of the nation's landed wealth and had no issue with spending half of all ecclesiastical income - which added up to a significant sum.

Kings and princes throughout Europe faced severe financial difficulties because of rising expenditures - armies, ships and fortifications didn't come cheap, after all. Most would, sooner or later, plunder the monastic

"The real driving force behind the split was love"

wealth that was regarded by many as excessive and idle; Protestant kings would justify this by claiming divine authority while Catholic monarchs would persuade the papacy of their great need for revenue. Of course, Henry and his chief minister, Thomas Cromwell, were constantly seeking ways to redirect ecclesiastical income to the Crown's coffers, but England's break from Rome did not come about because of a lack of coinage. Many would argue that the real driving force behind the split was love.



Pope Leo X and Henry enjoyed an amicable relationship

The pope's influence

Henry VIII was a religious man who put a great deal of stock into his Catholic faith – it was, after all, a passage in the Book of Leviticus that convinced him his marriage to Catherine of Aragon was unholy. Up until this point, England's relationship with Rome and the pope had been largely peaceful. Indeed, religious scriptures referring to the pontiff as the voice of God were common in English churches, and clergymen would give sermons celebrating the relationship between the pope and the creator.

Pope Julius II was in command of the Church when Henry acceded to the throne in 1509. Four years later, he was followed by Pope Leo X. In 1521, Henry wrote the *Assertio Septem Sacramentorum (The Defence Of The Seven Sacraments)* – his answer to the attacks of Lutheranism on many aspects of the Catholic faith, which was seen as excessive and indulgent by many in Europe. In gratitude, Pope Leo X awarded Henry the title 'fidei defensor', or defender of the faith.

Henry and the pope would communicate regularly through letters or by sending representatives to visit one another. While there is evidence to suggest that Henry felt somewhat oppressed by Rome's constant presence in English religious matters, it wasn't until 1527, when Pope Clement VII was in charge and when Henry first sought a divorce, that the relationship became seriously strained.

“Even after Henry separated Catherine from Mary, her only child, she made it quite clear that she would resist any divorce”

Catherine of Aragon – Henry VIII's cursed first wife – was originally married to Henry's elder brother, Arthur. But after Arthur died of the sweating sickness in 1502, it was decided – apparently in a bid to avoid the repayment of her dowry – that she would marry Henry. Somewhat ironically, this union depended on the pope granting a special dispensation, because canon law forbade men to marry their brother's widow, but Catherine testified that her marriage to Arthur was never consummated, and therefore in the eyes of the Church was invalid. Henry and Catherine's wedding took place in June 1509, seven years after Prince Arthur's death and just days after Henry VIII had become king.

But by 1527, the couple had been married for 18 years and had only one surviving child to show for it: Mary. Five other children – three of them boys – had been born, each surviving only a matter of days. The gaps between each birth, often just over a year, show how desperately a son and heir was wanted, particularly as Henry had been involved in a riding accident that had nearly killed him. He needed to secure a successor and a daughter simply would not do. But at the age of 40, Catherine was past childbearing age.

Henry began to believe that his sonless marriage was a punishment from God for marrying his dead brother's wife. According to the Book of Leviticus, “If a man shall take his brother's wife, it is an unclean thing: they shall be childless.” While not technically childless, his only surviving daughter was of no interest to Henry.

By this point, Henry was already infatuated with Anne Boleyn, Catherine's maid of honour, but his advances had been refused. The 19-year-old had firmly told the king she would only surrender her virginity to the man she married. Henry – a man

used to getting his way – was of course stunned, but such was his obsession with her that he consulted his advisers about the possibility of a divorce from Catherine. With Anne as his wife, he reasoned, he would appease God and secure an heir to the Tudor dynasty while fulfilling his personal desires.

Divorce was virtually unheard of during this period, so Henry sent Cardinal Thomas Wolsey – his chief adviser – to speak to Pope Clement VII to secure an annulment of the marriage on the grounds that it was against the laws of the Church, and that the pope shouldn't have issued a dispensation for the union in the first place. But the dynamics of the meeting were complicated: the pope was, at the time,

a prisoner of Charles V, Catherine of Aragon's nephew, and Wolsey was keen to avoid undue tension as he had designs on becoming pope himself one day. Clement VII, not wishing to offend either monarch, played for time by sending a representative back to England to hold a trial to examine the evidence and find a solution. He hoped that during the delay the situation would change, that Henry might change his mind, or that Catherine might become pregnant, or even die.

The trial took two years, during which time Henry became ever more frustrated. He asked Catherine to co-operate, offering her a pick of houses to retire to until the matter was resolved and encouraging her to choose to move to a convent, which would leave him free to remarry. But even after Henry separated Catherine from Mary, her only child, she made it quite clear that she would resist any divorce.

Poor Catherine could never have known that her refusal to accept the annulment and her appeal to Rome for the pope's support would lead to England

After marrying Anne Boleyn in secret, Henry needed to move quickly to guarantee the legitimacy of their unborn child

Timeline

How Henry got his divorce

1527

Henry wants a divorce

Henry becomes obsessed with a passage in Leviticus that suggests the reason he does not have a son is because he had married his brother's wife. He decides that he has to divorce Catherine.

Spring 1527



Rome is involved

An ecclesiastical court meets several times to discuss the validity of Henry's marriage, but they're unable to reach any clear conclusion and refer the case to Rome. Pope Clement VII hesitates over his final decision.

May 1527



The pope makes his stance clear

The pope issues a brief that says Henry is not free to remarry and that if he did so without the permission of Rome, any children would be considered illegitimate.

January 1531

Act in Conditional Restraint of Annates

In a bid to put further pressure on the pope to grant his divorce, Henry personally oversees the Act in Conditional Restraint of Annates, which severely limits the amount of money English churches send to Rome.

March 1532

breaking with her beloved Church, and in the days before she died in 1536, she was consumed with worry that she was to blame for the scandals that England subsequently suffered from.

The trial eventually ended without an annulment. Henry was furious, blaming Wolsey for failing to get the result he wanted and summoning him to London to answer charges of treason. Wolsey died en route, before he had the chance to face the king's wrath.

Thomas Cromwell, lawyer and earl of Essex, was quick to take Wolsey's place. Arguably one of the strongest and most powerful advocates of Reformation, it was he who masterminded the events that would eventually lead to England's break with Rome. Meanwhile Thomas Cranmer, the archbishop of Canterbury, was the first to plant the idea of total power in Henry's mind: as king of the country and head of the Church of England, Henry would answer to no one.

The king sought advice from the universities of Europe. Of course, many within these institutions were opposed to the divorce, so it is no coincidence that the king's advisers were choosy about the scholars they picked to make a decision. It is also no accident that those siding with Henry's case were sent a significant sum of money. It paid off - both Cambridge and Oxford Universities declared that they were against

divine law for a man to marry his brother's widow. Cranmer then visited the pope to try again for an annulment but it was refused once more. In fact, the pope subsequently issued a brief that ordered Henry to separate from Anne, driving home the point that the king was not free to remarry, and if he did so without the express permission of Rome, any children that were born to the couple would be considered illegitimate.

Of course, this did nothing but inflame Henry's already-infamous temper, and in an act of fury, Henry issued the Act in Conditional Restraint of Annates, which limited payments by any English church to Rome to just five per cent of its net revenue. Henry personally oversaw the passing of the bill in the House of Commons, and in an



Pope Clement VII: Giulio di Giuliano de' Medici

Italian, 1478-1534

Born in Florence in April 1478, Giulio was made a knight of the Rhodes and grand prior of Capua after his cousin Giovanni de' Medici was elected to the pontificate as Leo X. He became a powerful figure in Rome, and after his cousin became Pope Giulio, he served as his principal minister and confidant. He became cardinal in 1513, and pope in 1523.

Pope Clement VII was caught between Henry VIII and Charles V, so he delayed a decision for as long as possible

unprecedented move asked all those who supported the bill to sit on one side of the House and those who opposed it on the other - an intimidating measure that saw the act passed without quarrel, and made Henry clearly aware of his opponents.

But again, this failed to have the desired effect on the pope, who had been told repeatedly by Charles V that he would be extremely angry if a divorce was granted. Things were becoming more pressing for Henry now, as by early 1533 Anne revealed that she was pregnant. Henry had to move

quickly to ensure the legitimacy of their child, and so the pair wed in a secret ceremony in the king's private chapel in Whitehall.

Sensing opposition to the union - after all, Catherine of Aragon was well liked by the English people - Henry exerted his influence further with the Act in Restraint of Appeals. This brought church courts under the control of Henry, and made it illegal for anyone to appeal to the pope. This meant that, as the newly appointed archbishop of Canterbury and under Henry's ruling, Thomas Cranmer could grant the much-needed divorce, and nobody could appeal to a higher power - Rome - in protest of the decision.

Act in Restraint of Appeals

This act makes it against the law for anyone to make an appeal of any sort to Rome. Spiritual and secular jurisdiction is to be the ultimate responsibility of the king, and the pope is now made essentially powerless throughout England.

April 1533



Henry gets his divorce

In a hearing at Lambeth Palace, Thomas Cranmer proclaims that Henry's marriage to Anne Boleyn - who is now pregnant - is legal. Later, the Act of Succession will ensure that Mary, Henry's daughter from his first marriage, is no longer heir to the throne.

May 1533



The Act of Supremacy

This historical act declares England to be a sovereign state with the king as head of both the country and the Church. Henry has more power than ever before, and the subsequent treason act means no one, on pain of death, can question it.

November 1534

1534

CROMWELL VS ROME

He played a pivotal role, but was he a political mastermind or a royal puppet?

Thomas Cromwell was a self-made man of humble beginnings, the son of a blacksmith and cloth merchant, but he quickly became a well-respected lawyer. By 1523, he'd obtained a seat in the House of Commons and by 1531 he had taken control of the king's legal and parliamentary affairs.

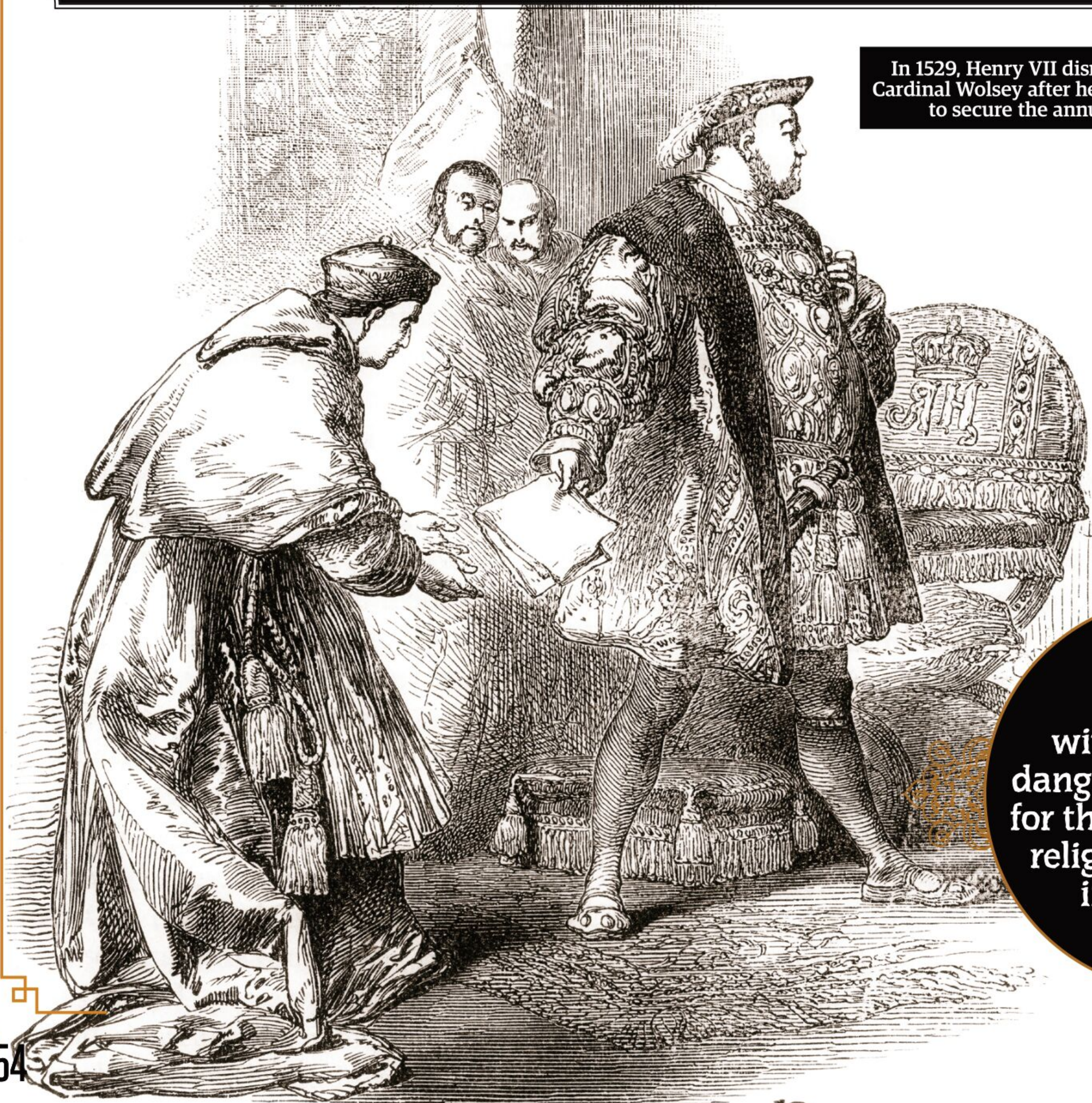
It's not clear whether Cromwell was driven by personal ambition or a deeply rooted belief in his cause, but he was all for the idea of total control for his king. He manipulated the Commons by resurrecting anti-clerical grievances expressed in earlier parliamentary sessions, which led to the Commons denouncing clerical abuses and the power of ecclesiastical courts, ultimately describing Henry as "the only head, sovereign lord, protector and defender" of the Church.

Cromwell went on to oversee the passing of the Act in Restraint of Appeals, and was authorised by Henry to discredit the papacy and the pope throughout the nation. Come 1534, he had risen to be principal secretary and chief minister, and had strengthened his own control over the Church, having been appointed royal vicegerent and vicar-general by the king.

There can be little question as to the importance of Cromwell's role in the break from Rome - it was largely thanks to his intellect and persuasiveness that legislative events unfolded the way they did. Whether it was he or Henry ultimately holding the reins, however, is unclear. Certainly, he was a trusted and well-rewarded servant of the king, but that wasn't enough to save him in 1540, when the king's marriage to Anne of Cleves - engineered by Cromwell - went awry, and he was arrested on various questionable counts of treason, and executed.



In 1529, Henry VII dismissed Cardinal Wolsey after he failed to secure the annulment



Historians debate whether Henry ever intended things to go this far; after all, if a divorce had been granted from the outset, there would be no need for these laws. But by now Henry had committed to a course of action, and the legacy of the Tudors depended on him seeing it through.

Unfortunately for Henry, though, Anne gave birth to a girl: Elizabeth. This was disappointing and embarrassing: Henry had all but moved heaven and Earth to protect the status of his unborn child, but another girl meant that the Tudor dynasty was no closer to protection. His relationship with Anne suffered, and once again Henry became transfixed on the idea that he was being punished by God.

Still, he was perhaps hopeful that he would get his much-wanted son and heir, and so the king pushed on. In December 1533, an order was issued that said the pope had no more authority in England than any other bishop;

The break with Rome set a dangerous precedent for the governance of religion in England in the future

from now on he'd simply be known as the bishop of Rome. To be sure that his subjects recognised royal supremacy over papal dominance, Henry ordered parish priests to erase all references to the pope from prayer books and to leave their parishioners



Henry VIII consults his advisers on his 'great matter'

“By now Henry had committed to a course of action, and the legacy of the Tudors depended on him seeing it through”

in no doubt that the king, and only the king, was head of the Church.

This was fortified by the Act of Succession, which declared Henry and Catherine's marriage illegal and supported Henry's marriage to Anne Boleyn. The act also restricted the succession to the children of this new marriage: Princess Mary Tudor was no longer heir to the throne.

The Act of Supremacy - the death knell for England's religious relationship with Rome - was passed in 1534. This effectively declared England a

sovereign state and the king head of both country and Church. The act gave Henry the power to visit, redress, reform, correct and amend all errors and perceived heresies previously dealt with by another spiritual authority - the pope.

All taxes that were formerly paid to Rome would now only be paid to the king, who could define the faith in parliament and appoint any men he wanted to the most important ecclesiastical posts. The passing of this act gave Henry more power than ever, and a Treason Act swiftly followed, which said



After dissolution, the ruins of Glastonbury Abbey were stripped of lead and stones

DISSOLVED MONASTERIES

GLASTONBURY ABBEY

One of the worst hit monasteries during the dissolution, in September 1539 Glastonbury Abbey was stripped of its valuables, including a large amount of silver and gold. Abbot Richard Whiting, who'd supported Henry's Act of Supremacy but resisted the dissolution, was hanged, drawn and quartered as a traitor on Glastonbury Tor.

ST JOHN'S ABBEY, COLCHESTER

Thanks to the intervention of Thomas Audley, lord chancellor at the time, St John's Abbey had survived initial dissolutions. But after being raided for valuables, it was dissolved in 1539. The abbey's last abbot, John Beche, refused to surrender the building to the king and was eventually found guilty of treason. He was then hanged.

LEICESTER ABBEY

The abbot of Leicester Abbey, John Bourchier, tried to protect his canons and abbey by sending Thomas Cromwell - the man overseeing the inspection of monasteries - lavish gifts, including £100, sheep and oxen. Unfortunately, his bribery didn't work, and the abbey was surrendered in 1538.

READING ABBEY

Reading Abbey was all but destroyed during the dissolution, with valuables taken from the building. After the last abbot, Hugh Cook Faringdon, was hanged, drawn and quartered for treason, the buildings of the abbey were extensively looted, with lead and glass stolen for use elsewhere.

SYON ABBEY

After one of its monks, Richard Reynolds, went to great lengths to deny Henry's supremacy over the English Church, Syon Abbey became the focus of particular vengeance for Henry. After the monastery finally surrendered to the king in 1539, the abbey was dissolved, and Richard Reynolds was hanged, drawn and quartered for treason.



King Henry VIII, the man responsible for changing the face of religion in England

The Reformation Parliament

The Reformation Parliament was so called because it was the English parliament that passed and enabled all the major pieces of legislation that led to the English Reformation under Henry VIII. It sat from 1529 to 1536 and was tasked with dealing with Henry's divorce from Catherine: his 'great matter'. But in a few short years, parliament made laws affecting all aspects of national life, and with the groundbreaking statutes of the 1530s, the Reformation Parliament became all-powerful. No area of governance was outside its authority - apart from Henry's will.

Parliament existed simply because Henry decided it could, but the king knew that the best way to exercise his will was with the backing of parliament in statute. As he himself told the Commons: "We be informed by our judges that we at no time stand so highly in our estate royal as in the time of parliament."

Parliament was integral to Henry's break with Rome, not only because it helped to pass important legislation, but because it was pivotal in identifying areas of criticism, such as the greed and vices of the Catholic Church, which helped to convince many people in power and on the streets that the split was needed.

Henry was no doubt somewhat manipulative of parliament in order to achieve his aims, but his successors each equally used the body to pass their own legislation, changing the landscape of politics and religion in England forever.



Henry declared himself head of the Church of England and threatened his opponents with death

that anyone who wrote or spoke any criticism of Henry in his dealings with the pope was guilty of treason and would be dealt with severely. Conveniently, Charles V was occupied by the French and was unable to intervene.

Of course, Henry couldn't simply have all of his naysayers killed, so he had to make the move from Rome look like an overall package of reform. Indeed, the entire process had happened so slowly that most common people had little issue with the change - King Henry had always been seen as top dog anyway. However, most did take umbrage with the idea of divorce and the way that Catherine and Mary had been treated. But

this was balanced against the popular opinion of the Church, which had been seen as excessively wealthy and greedy, and the pope a foreigner only interested in raising taxes. So at this stage, the majority sided with Henry, and willingly took the Oath of Supremacy that he subsequently demanded of all of his subjects. Those who didn't submit were arrested and publicly hanged, drawn and quartered, which evidently served to 'encourage' support from his political opponents.

At this point, despite the enormous changes to the governance of the Church, religion itself in England remained unchanged. However, the developments created a dangerous precedent for

Roman Catholics beheaded by order of Henry VIII included Thomas More, John Fisher and the countess of Salisbury



Henry VIII weds Anne Boleyn in a secret ceremony

England going forward. By 1536, Henry had lost interest in Anne, who had failed to provide him with a son and who was subsequently executed for treason and adultery.

Henry then married Jane Seymour and, thanks to the Act of Succession, he was able to effectively 'strike from the record' his previous marriages, giving his second daughter, Elizabeth, the same status as Mary: lady, not princess. But the general public had greater concerns. In a bid to boost the

king's coffers, Cromwell led the dissolution of the monasteries, which saw monastic land sold off and the buildings stripped bare of anything of value, including the lead off the roofs. The Act of Ten Articles in 1536 made the English Church more Protestant, with just three sacraments recognised - baptism, penance and the Eucharist. Other sacraments, including marriage and the last rites, were no longer regarded as holy, and pilgrimages and the display of relics were also banned. But

later, in 1539, the Act of Six Articles undid much of this Protestant focus and reintroduced many Catholic beliefs.

It was a tumultuous time for religion in England, with the church-going masses pulled from pillar to post in keeping abreast of the changes - failure to comply carried harsh penalties, after all. This evolution of religion carried on long after Henry's death, too, as Mary and Elizabeth later jostled for power, each with their own religious beliefs that they wanted to instil across the land.

Henry's motives for breaking with the Catholic Church in Rome were, initially, at least, far removed from religion, but the king, with his temper, impatience and lusty ways, set in motion a process that would change the face of religion - and indeed politics - in England forever.

“Henry couldn't simply have all of his naysayers killed, so he had to make the move from Rome look like an overall package of reform”



1485 – 1540

Thomas Cromwell

How a member of the poor working class became one of England's most important and ruthlessly political statesmen

Born in the wild west of 15th-century London into a humble working family from Putney, Thomas Cromwell's early life could not have been further removed from the splendid surroundings he would later come to enjoy. His childhood was surrounded by violence and poverty, and marked by an errant and erratic father - an alcoholic jack-of-all-trades called Walter, who ran an alehouse in town.

Cromwell senior was frequently in trouble. He was fined no less than 48 times for watering down his customers' ale and he found himself in court on charges of assault. This rubbed off on young Cromwell, who became a self-confessed 'ruffian', and given the strong hierarchy that existed in English society at the time, he was expected to rise no higher.

Hampered by a poor education and mixing in the wrong circles, nothing about Cromwell suggested that he could ever go down in history as one of England's most important statesmen. And yet that is what he did, undergoing an incredible transformation in his teenage years. His turning

point was a decision - the reason for which has never been truly established - to leave England and head for mainland Europe. The Continent would certainly prove to be his making.

Cromwell served time as a mercenary soldier and in a Venetian bank, where the powerful Francesco Frescobaldi encouraged him to dig deep into his skill set. He soaked up everything around him, picking up Italian, French, Latin and, some historians believe, Greek. When he returned to London, he was ready to be a lawyer and he also became a successful cloth merchant. Cromwell was a learned man with a glowing, growing reputation.

Life was treating him well. Married to Elizabeth Wyckes, whose father had been a gentleman usher for Henry VII,

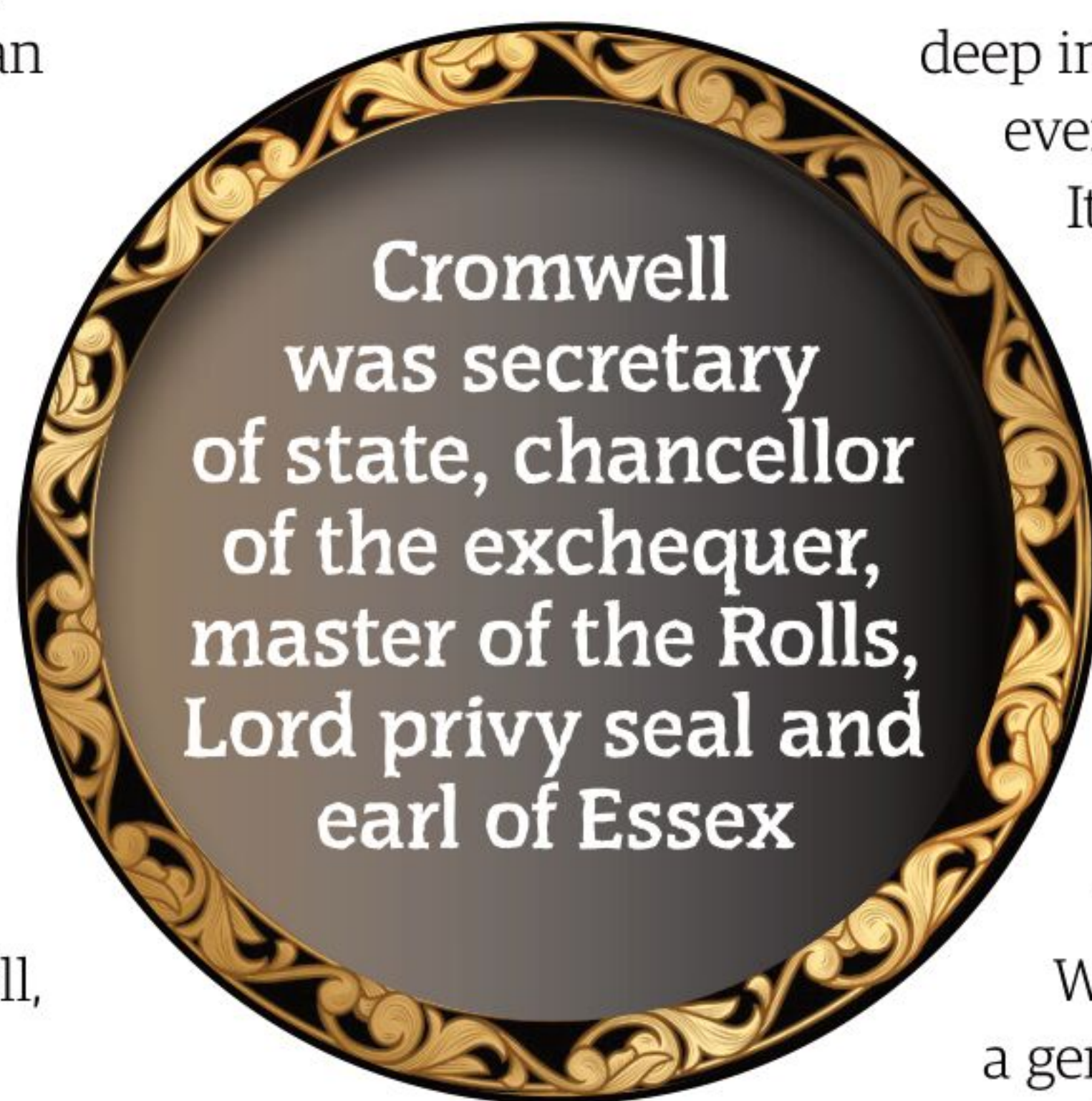
Cromwell took an active role in London's influential society, using his legal skills to draft government petitions, and his charm and wit to put prominent people in touch with each other. He led an embassy to Rome in 1517-18 to obtain a Papal Bull of Indulgence from Pope Leo X for the town of Boston in Lincolnshire. He worked his way into the royal court as a member of the household of Cardinal Thomas Wolsey, King Henry VIII's first

minister and the person tasked with carrying out most of the monarch's day-to-day duties. Wolsey, like Cromwell, had also come from more humble beginnings and, as the son of a Ipswich butcher, he had risen to become England's second most powerful person.

In 1523, Cromwell became a member of Parliament in the House of Commons. He grew ever closer to Wolsey, proving himself to be loyal and dependable. By constantly watching his master's moves, he was able to soak up the experience like a sponge and he helped Wolsey in his dissolution of around 30 monasteries, and it also highlighted exactly how much power was on offer to the circles in which he now operated. The monasteries enabled Wolsey to raise a great deal of money to be used in founding a college school in Ipswich as a feeder to his other project, Cardinal's College at the University of Oxford. This stuck firmly in Cromwell's mind.

During the late 1520s, Wolsey's power began to decrease. Henry VIII had wanted to annul his marriage to Catherine of Aragon, but it was proving difficult to persuade the pope. It had been assumed that Wolsey would be able to influence Rome and so pave the way for the king to marry his new love, Anne Boleyn. However, this proved not to be the case.

So, in the face of failure, Anne began chipping away at the king's confidence in Wolsey,



Cromwell was secretary of state, chancellor of the exchequer, master of the Rolls, Lord privy seal and earl of Essex

Thomas Cromwell

Cromwell operated a spy network that covered England, Scotland and Wales, and he would enjoy torturing his enemies

Cromwell was Henry VIII's chief minister from 1532 to 1540

Sweating sickness kills his family

Just as Cromwell was ascending to power, an immense tragedy hit his family – his wife, Elizabeth, died, aged 38 or 39 in 1528 due to a disease known as sweating sickness. It also claimed the lives of his two daughters, Grace and Anne, but did not affect his son, Gregory.

The illness, described by contemporary physician John Caius, had swept England first, emerging in 1485. Victims would suffer intense headaches, dizziness, aching limbs and shivers. They would go on to develop a fever and hot sweats, and their heart would palpitate. Leaving the victim exhausted and dehydrated, the disease would often kill within hours. It provoked terror among the Tudor elite since it affected the upper classes to a larger degree.

But despite the devastation it caused over five outbreaks that continued until 1551, there has been no consensus over its possible cause. One possibility was put forward in 1997 by Vanya Gant and Guy Thwaites, doctors at St Thomas' Hospital in London. They claimed that it was an early version of a disease called hantavirus pulmonary syndrome, since there are stark similarities with an illness that struck the Navajo people in New Mexico in 1993.



The exact sickness suffered by the family has not been confirmed

accusing the cardinal of deliberately holding up the proceedings. Fired up, Henry arrested Wolsey on suspicion of treason, taking away his government office and property in the process. This subsequently isolated Cromwell, too, especially since he refused to denounce his former master. But as time went on, Cromwell proved to be persuasive and hard-working and, by the end of December, the king appointed him to the privy council. Cromwell's time, it seemed, had come.

Cromwell's period in Europe continued to stand him in good stead. During his travels, he had come across the ideas behind the Protestant Reformation that had been sparked by the writings of Martin Luther in 1517. Cromwell was fully on board with the ideology, so when it became clear that the king's fury with the Roman Catholic Church looked set to continue for some time, he suggested a way to severely lessen the pope's stance and power over him. He put forward the unthinkable suggestion: that England break its religious ties with Rome. Having come to understand the ins and outs of the English parliament, Cromwell convinced the king that he would be able to successfully push this move through and thereby pave the way for the marriage annulment. He was correct.

He persuaded Parliament to allow the country's break with the pope and, with his assistant Thomas Audley, he drafted legislation that led to the Act in Restraint of Appeals in 1533, which began the

process of transferring the power of the Catholic Church to the king. In the meantime, Henry had secretly wed Anne Boleyn, who had quickly become pregnant. On 23 May 1533, the king's previous marriage was annulled and the new one was declared to be valid.

The situation further boosted Cromwell's standing in the country and by 1535 he had been given the title vicegerent in spirituals, making him second only to the king in matters of the Church. But matters of the heart – or at least Henry's – were never too far away. When Anne suffered a miscarriage in 1536 and lost her unborn baby boy, the king's search for the perfect wife continued.

Henry turned his attention to a new love, Jane Seymour, and Cromwell is said to have conspired against Anne on royal orders in order to allow Henry's new romance to blossom.

Five men – Sir Francis Weston, William Brereton, Mark Smeaton, Sir Henry Norris and Lord Rochford (Anne's own brother) – were arrested on suspicion of having affairs with the queen, who, in turn, was investigated over allegations of witchcraft and sexual misconduct. The 36-year-old

'adulteress' consort was imprisoned in the Tower in April 1536 and on 15 May that year, the duke of Norfolk sentenced her and all five men to death. Just four days later, Anne gave a speech in praise of the monarch and moments later, she was blindfolded and beheaded.

Lord Protector Oliver Cromwell's great-great-grandfather married Thomas Cromwell's sister, Katherine, in 1497



MEETS THE POPE IN ROME

Cromwell returns from Europe as a learned, respected and wealthy man, and his standing is strong enough for him to travel to Rome to obtain permission from Pope Leo X to sell lucrative Indulgences in Saint Botolph's Church in Boston, Lincolnshire. In order to persuade the pope to agree, he is said to have played on the pontiff's love of sweetmeats, laying on a feast that proved more than enough for Cromwell to be handed the paperwork he needed. This clever tactic serves to highlight the cunning and persuasive nature of Cromwell that would endear him well to the royal elite.

1517



Timeline

The life and times of Cromwell

1485

● Cromwell is born

Thomas Cromwell is born in Putney to Katherine and Walter Cromwell, possibly at the top of Putney Hill, close to a notorious patch preyed upon by highwaymen. The actual day is unknown.

● Embarks on his European travels

Leaving Putney, Cromwell spends up to 14 years travelling around mainland Europe, living in France, Italy and the Low Countries. He is said to have fought in the Battle of Garigliano in 1503.

1501

● Wedding bells ring

Elizabeth Wyckes is the daughter of Henry Wyckes, a respected clothier from Putney. Cromwell marries her on his return from Antwerp. They will go on to have three children together: Gregory, Anne and Grace.

● Becomes an MP

Cromwell became a member of Parliament in the House of Commons. However, he expresses disdain for Parliament in a letter to his merchant friend John Creke.

1523

● Under Wolsey's wing

Now working full-time for Cardinal Thomas Wolsey, the second most powerful man in England at the time, Cromwell helps his master in the money-generating dissolution of around 30 monasteries.

1524

“He put forward the unthinkable suggestion: that England break its religious ties with Rome”

By this point, Cromwell's influence was stark. Taking his cue from his time with Wolsey, he sought to bolster the king's coffers and with great energy and single-minded vision, he oversaw a mammoth programme of monastery dissolution by establishing a network of informers who spied on the establishments from within, gathering evidence that could be used to order a closure. Priors and abbots were confronted with the accusations and offered an easy way out. The vast majority of them complied; those that did not suffered in jails, were burned at the stake or publicly disembowelled. There was also a 'Black Book' containing the names of those believed to be promoting "manifest sin". No one wanted their name to be in it.

Cromwell ordered more than 800 monasteries to be seized from 1536 to 1540 and they were either demolished, turned into Anglican churches or sold. Every penny earned, together with any land and ownership of unsold property, fell into the hands of the king. This pleased Henry VIII immeasurably and placed Cromwell at the height of his power. But the king's marriage problems continued to be an ever-running theme, only this time it was about to undo Cromwell.

In 1537, Jane Seymour died just after giving birth to a son, Edward. Cromwell had secured the king a new partner, Anne of Cleves. The king had never met her, so in order to give him an idea of what she looked like, court artist Hans Holbein was sent

to paint her portrait. Henry loved the result and agreed to enter into a marriage treaty on 4 October 1539 - but when he finally came face to face with Anne, he wasn't impressed.

Henry ordered Cromwell to resolve the situation but, faced with destroying relations between the king and Anne's brother, the duke of Jülich-Cleves-Berg, Cromwell was unable to do anything and the wedding went ahead on 6 January 1540. So repulsed was the king that he couldn't bring himself to consummate the marriage and Cromwell bore the brunt of his anger. The only way for the union to be annulled was to admit to having not consummated - which he did, humiliatingly, in court. Cromwell's enemies were gleeful and sensed that his protection had waned. On 10 June 1540, a group led by the duke of Norfolk had him arrested. He was imprisoned in the Tower of London, charged with treason and corruption.

Despite not having a trial and despite having pleaded with the king by letter to save his life - "Most gracious Prince," he wrote, "I cry for mercy, mercy, mercy" - he was put to death. On 28 July 1540, the same day that the king married his fifth wife, Catherine Howard, Cromwell was beheaded on Tower Hill, his head spiked on London Bridge. As if to underline just how influential Cromwell was, though, Henry VIII mourned his death. He said Cromwell had been "the most faithful servant" he had ever had and regretted his execution.



The flattering portrait of Anne of Cleves seen by Henry VIII - and which prompted Cromwell's downfall

DEFINING MOMENT

CROMWELL SEIZES CONTROL

Finding himself within Henry VIII's inner circle even though he refused to denounce Wolsey, Cromwell begins to court favour with the king. A plan emerges to divorce England from Roman Catholic influence and establish royal supremacy over the Church, with Cromwell using his parliamentary experience to gain the required consent. This will allow the king to annul his marriage to Catherine of Aragon and marry Anne Boleyn. Henry VIII becomes head of the English Church and Cromwell rapidly rises to power as his most trusted servant. In 1534, he officially becomes the king's principal secretary and chief minister.

1531

DEFINING MOMENT

THE GREAT BIBLE

Cromwell is insistent that the Bible be printed in English so the text will be accessible to all and the king agrees. Work starts in 1536 and the volume is ready two years later. Large and with a title page that shows Henry on his throne handing copies to Cromwell and Thomas Cranmer, the archbishop of Canterbury, it starkly shows the displacement of the pope's authority over the Church in England. Every parish is forced to buy a copy and display it prominently. By 1541, more than 9,000 copies have been printed, spread over six editions.

1538

● Death of a family

Cromwell's wife and two daughters succumb to sweating sickness, leaving him only with his son, Gregory. There is evidence that he may have had an illegitimate daughter called Jane.

1528

● Wolsey loses his power

Unable to mastermind an annulment of Henry VIII's marriage to Catherine of Aragon, Wolsey is stripped of power and accused of treason. He dies of illness on 29 November 1530, aged 57.

1529

● Anne Boleyn beheaded

Despite giving birth to the future Queen Elizabeth I, Henry VIII is frustrated at Boleyn's 'inability' to give him a male heir. She is beheaded following accusations of high treason.

1536

● Dissolution of the monasteries

In a bid to strip the Catholic monasteries, priories, convents and friaries of power, and boost the king's coffers at the same time, 800 monasteries are dissolved over six years.

1536

● Anne of Cleves

Although Henry VIII is rather taken by a portrait of Anne of Cleves during Cromwell's attempt to engineer the pair into marriage, the king is physically repulsed by her in the flesh. He bitterly blames Cromwell.

1539

● Cromwell is executed

Still smarting over the hoops he had to go through to annul his marriage to Anne of Cleves, the king backs Cromwell's arrest on a charge of treason and corruption. Cromwell is executed.

1540

1540



The story of Henry VIII's only son, the child king who left his mark on his kingdom in the face of power-hungry nobles and religious turmoil

Edward VI's birth was a blessing. For years, Henry VIII had been desperate for a son to carry on his legacy. Catherine of Aragon had not been able to give him this; nor, despite her many charms, had Anne Boleyn. It would be Jane Seymour who would finally give Henry his male successor, but this triumph was tempered with tragedy. Two days after giving birth, the queen fell ill, and she passed away two weeks later.

Despite his pride in Edward, Henry would be absent for much of his son's childhood, who would remember being brought up "among the women". Much of the familial affection that Edward enjoyed came from his devoted half-sister Mary, daughter of Catherine of Aragon. Security around the boy was incredibly strict (no one ranked lower than a knight was allowed near him) while an attack of quartan fever in 1541 created a terrible panic. However,

Edward recovered, and by the age of six he had begun to spend more time with his father.

In 1544, Henry went to fight in France and Edward began his education at court. A prodigious student, Edward's abilities were impressive and he was encouraged by his stepmother Catherine Parr (whom Henry had left in charge of his household), but more serious duties loomed. As Henry's death approached, he created a council to assist his young son. It was led by a power-hungry Edward Seymour, Duke of Somerset, whose role as protector was approved by the council led by the canny Sir William Paget, ignoring the late king's will.

Acting more as ruler than advisor, Somerset's lust for power led to unrest at court and his own brother Thomas schemed against him by marrying Henry VIII's widow,

By his death he had amassed a fortune that in today's money would be worth approximately £950 million

Catherine Parr, attempting to seduce Princess Elizabeth, and literally bribing the young king to win his affection. Thomas' efforts to gain power grew ever more desperate when Catherine died after giving birth and he was caught trying to break into Edward's rooms. He was executed for treason 20 March 1549 - another strike against his brother that the already unpopular Somerset did not need.

The Protestant Reformation had not died with Henry, and it continued apace under archbishop of Canterbury Thomas Cranmer in the face of strong opposition. Cranmer's introduction of an English Book of Common Prayer and the First Act of Uniformity, banning Catholic Mass in 1549 led to rebellion in Devon and Cornwall. Revolt broke out in Norfolk over social injustices, and the blame was laid squarely at the feet of Somerset. Into this chaos stepped the earl of Warwick, John Dudley, who had been responsible for putting the Norfolk rebels to the sword. The council rallied to him and threw Somerset into the Tower while Dudley stepped in for his turn to guide the young king.

Dudley already had the support of Edward as they shared a commitment to the continued Reformation. He took the title of lord president of the council and made an effort to restore stability. For his part, Edward showed himself to be committed to removing any last trace of Catholicism from England, including Mass tables, idols and Latin services. After a brief but serious bout of illness in September 1550, his religious reform continued, creating conflict with his Catholic sister, Mary. Despite their mutual affection, their differences were becoming a serious problem, both personally and politically. He sent a letter scolding her for hearing Mass and for flagrantly ignoring his instructions; this shocked Mary, who believed that many of his actions had been dictated by his advisors.

Mary arrived at court to plead her case and Edward realised that action needed to be taken.

When Holy Roman Emperor Charles V threatened war if she was not given her rights as a Catholic, Edward refused to back down despite disagreement from his council. Edward understood the sorry state his country was in and studied hard to gain a better understanding of its needs.

In the summer of 1551, a terrible outbreak of sweating sickness occurred in London, leading to more concerns over the king's health. Arrangements began for Edward to marry the French king Henry II's daughter Elizabeth but got nowhere, while Somerset schemed for his daughter Jane to take her place. After years of bickering with Dudley, Somerset was finally arrested on conspiracy charges and executed on 22 January 1552. Although Edward held Dudley (now the duke of Northumberland) in high esteem, he took a more active interest in ruling after seeing his previous guardian so violently dispatched. In 1552, the second Book of Common Prayer was introduced.

However, Edward's reign was about to come to an abrupt end. In April 1552 he fell ill with what he described as measles and smallpox. The first signs of tuberculosis appeared at Christmas 1552 and by March 1553 it became clear that his condition would not improve. Lacking an heir, Edward began to work on his plan of succession, intending to disinherit his sisters, Mary and Elizabeth. Northumberland arranged a series of marriages that would see his own son marry Lady Jane Grey, who had been decided upon as the best possible candidate to succeed Edward.

Edward's condition was incredibly painful and his sickness was protracted, but when it looked as though the judges of the king's bench would not approve his succession plan, he summoned them and warned them of the trouble that Mary's accession could cause. After a final public appearance, he died on 6 July 1553. Despite the efforts of his chief advisor and himself, the work Edward had put into securing England's Protestant legacy would soon be undone.

Seymour was able to buy Edward's affections as he had little money and wanted to give gifts expected at a Tudor court

The king's sisters

Mary and Elizabeth doted on their young half-brother and their love for him was always clear, but it was a difficult time for both of them. Mary's position was perhaps most obviously dangerous, as she refused to relinquish her Catholic faith and was frequently used as the centrepiece of conspiracies, both real and imaginary. Elizabeth's life appeared quieter, but the amorous attentions of Thomas Seymour put her in very real danger when he was tried and executed for treason. However, despite their obvious differences, Edward never believed either sister to be capable of betraying him.



LANDMARKS OF EDWARD'S LIFETIME

THE REFORMATION CONTINUES

Following the death of Henry VIII, the nobility was split between the religious conservatives and those who wanted to advance the Protestant Reformation. Fortunately for the Protestants, led by Thomas Cranmer, Edward soon showed a keen interest in ridding the country of any last trace of Catholicism, leading to massive unrest as the new laws were brutally enforced.

THE ROUGH WOOLING

It wasn't long before Henry had marital plans for his son. In 1543 he had decided that Edward would wed Mary, Queen of Scots, and a treaty was signed on 1 July. However, by December the Scots had broken the accord and made an alliance with the French, leading to Henry's furious retaliation, known as the 'Rough Wooing'.

KETT'S REBELLION

When robber barons took the common land relied upon by the peasants of Wymondham, a group led by Robert Kett marched on Norwich in the summer of 1549. They gained plenty of attention and were soon numbered at 15,000 rebels. While Somerset dithered, it was finally the earl of Warwick who led an attack with 13,000 men, killing hundreds and arresting Kett, who would later be executed.

SAVING BRITAIN'S ECONOMY

When Northumberland took over as Edward's protector, he realised the terrifying shape the British economy was in. He debased the coinage, which bought him time, but his masterstroke was in employing William Cecil and Thomas Gresham, who convinced wealthy trading companies in London to help support the national debt, before travelling to the Netherlands to work the stock market. By 1552, the economy had been restored.

SWEATING SICKNESS

The sickness that swept across England and Europe caused widespread panic. It was first seen in 1485 before recurring several times before the end of the 15th century. 1528 saw the most serious outbreak in years and Henry VIII was evacuated from London as a result. Its causes were unknown and it wasted no time destroying its host body. Even if you survived it, there was no guarantee that you would not suffer from it again.



Lady Jane Grey's body was buried under the altar of the Tower's Chapel Royal of St Peter ad Vincula

1537–1554

Lady Jane Grey

An unfortunate case of right place, wrong time befell this short-lived queen, who served just nine brief days on the throne

Jane Grey's tumultuous encounter with the throne began when she was just nine years old. She had always inhabited a place at the edges of the court, but it was not until she was nine that she entered the court of Catherine Parr, Henry VIII's surviving wife, in spring 1547. Her father became duke of Suffolk and the influence of the Protestant, academic court moulded the already intelligent Jane into a devoted religious scholar.

This intense intelligence and fierce religious fervour made Jane seem mature beyond her years, but it did not mean that she was invulnerable to the Machiavellian figures who prowled the court pursuing their own agendas. Catherine's new husband, Thomas Seymour, one of Edward VI's maternal uncles, planned to marry Jane to the young king himself. However, when Seymour was beheaded for 33 counts of treason after an alleged

plot to kidnap Edward VI, the plan was foiled. Jane returned to her true love, her studies, at Bradgate house, her childhood home.

An advantageous marriage was still inevitable for the young Jane and, soon enough, another suitor appeared in the strapping form of Lord Guildford Dudley. The son of Edward VI's lord president the duke of Northumberland (who would consolidate his power by arranging a successful marriage), Guildford's high birth and position of influence weren't enough to sway Jane.

However, Jane was adamant that she didn't want to marry him, until her parents forcefully persuaded her. According to them, this was an opportunity too good to miss: despite Guildford's young, petulant and spoilt attitude, how could she spurn the chance to consolidate her claim to the throne, continuing the Protestant line that the dying Edward VI was so keen to preserve?

On 25 May 1553, Jane and Guildford were married at Durham House, London. Guildford was pleased that his attempt at the crown was in motion, and Jane went back to her parents' London home. The duchess of Northumberland was impatient, though, and convinced Jane that she should prepare herself to be crowned.

When Edward VI died on 6 July, Jane was recovering at the royal manor in Chelsea from an illness that she was convinced was a result of poisoning. It was a somewhat paranoid start to what would be a fateful fortnight for the prospective queen.

One of Northumberland's daughters informed Jane that she had been chosen by Edward VI as his successor, and she was reportedly so shocked by the news that she fell to the ground weeping, declaring her own "insufficiency", but praying that if the position was "rightfully and lawfully" hers, that she would be granted "grace to govern the realm to His [God's] glory and service".

Far from a distressed and fragile girl, Jane pressed on with resolve. She recovered from her illness and the very next day processed in state down the River Thames to the Tower of London, with Guildford happy to be seen by her side. No matter how much he insisted, Jane was adamant that she would not proclaim him king, reputedly quipping that "the crown is not a plaything for boys and girls".

Jane later wrote that this was the moment when she realised the extent to which her marriage had been a fraud. The persuasion from Northumberland, the bullying from her mother and father - it had all been in pursuit of the crown for Northumberland and his son. However, she held her position steadfastly in the face of the family argument that ensued and she refused to concede the crown to her husband.

Jane was proclaimed queen at the Cross in Cheapside, while Bishop Ridley of London supported her rightful claim to the throne in a sermon at Saint Paul's Cross. It should have been a jovial time, but the mood was unusually subdued. The accession was recorded and proclaimed across the kingdom, but there was no rejoicing. It was clear that trouble was brewing.

Residing at the Tower of London to prepare for her coronation, Jane was unaware that it would soon become her prison. By 12 July, news had arrived that Princess Mary was prepared to put up a fight for the throne. She had gathered support in East Anglia and the country's Catholics were readying themselves to stand with her. Jane's father, the duke of Suffolk, planned to suppress the rebellion, but Jane wouldn't let him leave her side and so Northumberland was sent instead.

Northumberland was at his lowest ebb, lacking supporters and being out of general favour. He failed in his mission and was brought back to the Tower as a prisoner. The tide had turned on Jane and the crown was now Mary's for the taking. Three days later, Mary was proclaimed queen throughout the country.

At first, Mary would not allow Jane to be executed, driven by her conscience to keep the girl alive. Jane spent a month in comfortable residence with the Tower's gentleman jailer, Partridge, who afforded her dignity and treated her with respect. All seemed well considering the tumultuous events before, and Jane was grateful to Mary for sparing her life. When Jane and Guildford were tried for treason on 19 November, they were condemned, but both their lives were spared.

In early 1554, however, came Thomas Wyatt's uprising. Jane's father foolishly decided to join the rebel ranks against the marriage of Queen Mary and Philip of Spain and, in the process, gave Mary and her supporters a reason to suspect his motives. The realisation that Jane was a real threat once again came to the fore.

With this act of rebellion, Suffolk sealed his daughter's fate. On 12 February 1554, Jane waited until she had seen the disembodied head of her husband pass in a cart to face her own execution. She was led to the yard on the arm of the Tower's lieutenant, steely faced and composed. Upon the erected scaffold, she spoke to the gathered crowd, imploring them to recognise her as a good Christian woman, and to pray for her while she was still alive. She was given a handkerchief to cover her eyes, and she fumbled to find the block in her panic. With one swift blow to the neck, Jane and her dalliance with the throne were finished.

LANDMARKS OF JANE'S LIFETIME

16TH-CENTURY EDUCATION

Education was not compulsory in the 16th century, but was an integral part of life for royalty and privileged members of society. Jane's education was particularly thorough, covering Latin, French, Greek and Italian, as well as needlework, music and philosophy. She was known to be studious and particularly pious, which was part of what made her an attractive claimant to the throne.

A LEGITIMATE CLAIM

Confusion was placed over the next in line to the throne, as both Mary and Elizabeth had been declared illegitimate by Parliament in 1536. When Mary did take the throne, she passed an act overturning the declaration, and so legitimised herself. Elizabeth, however, never did so.

WYATT'S REBELLION

Jane was considerably treated in the tower until her father sealed her fate by joining Wyatt's rebellion. The rebellion was led by nobles, including Wyatt, who was from Kent. The rebellion was in response to the marriage of Mary I to Philip of Spain, as the nobles feared that the Spanish influence would seep into Mary's rule, but without the support of the people, the rebellion failed.

AN OBSESSION WITH TIME

Jane Grey reportedly had a fondness for clocks and watches, as shown by the number of timepieces delivered to her while she was in the Tower. Many of these were incredibly ornate, including one described as being of "sable skin with a head of gold, containing in it a clock, with a collar of gold, enamelled black, set with four diamonds, and four rubies". Watches had been in use since around the 1520s, worn at the belt by wealthy women.

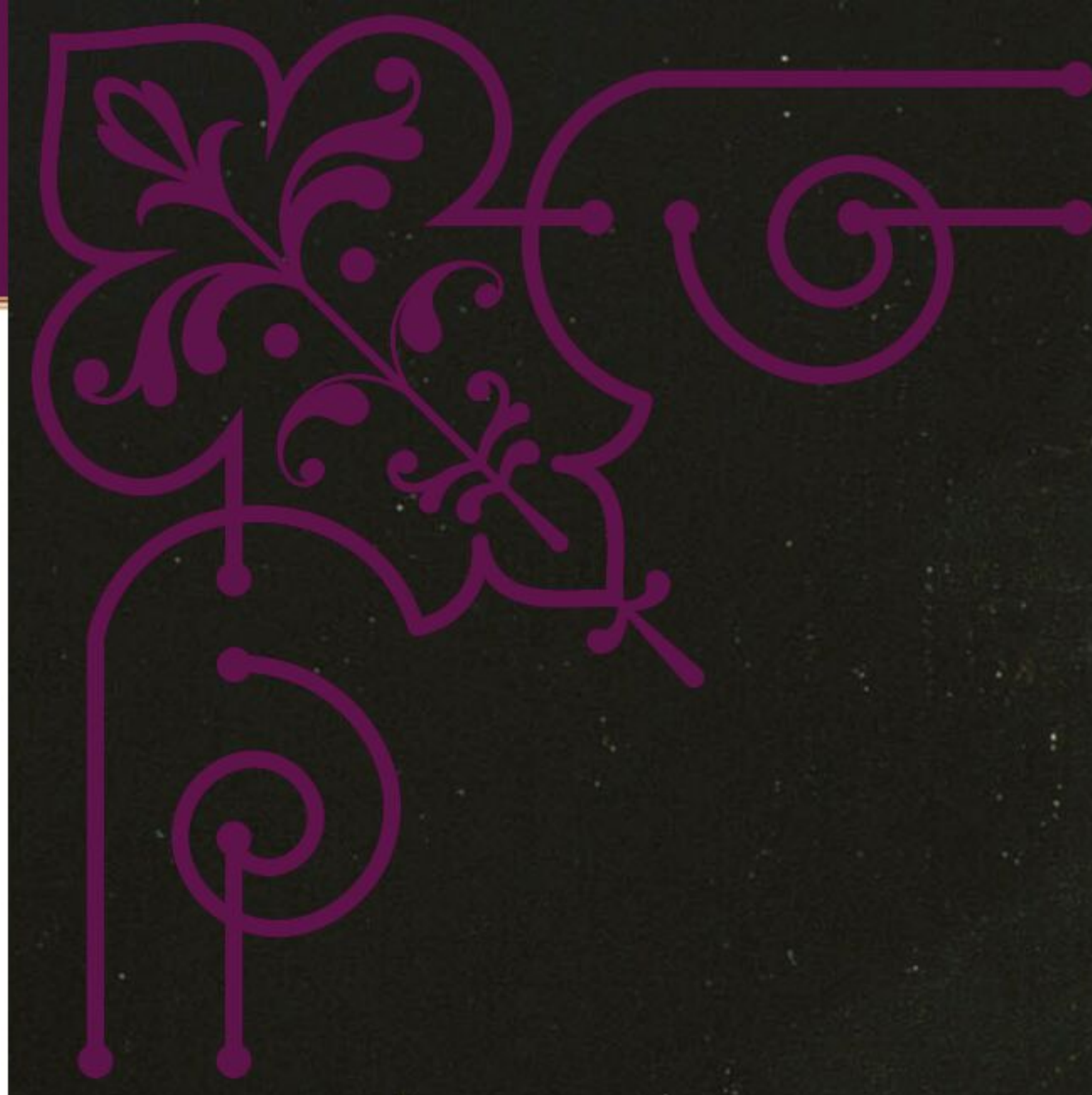
THE FIRST QUEEN?

There are three women in contention for the title of 'first female ruler of Britain', and Jane is one. Some argue that the 12th century's Empress Matilda, daughter of Henry I, was the first, though she was never crowned. Others give the title to Mary I, perhaps due to the brevity of Jane's reign. Indeed, Mary was first to reign in her own right, but the fact remains that Jane was the first queen crowned.

The nine-day queen

Less than 24 hours into her nine-day reign, Jane was visited by the lord treasurer, bringing her a selection of jewels. When she was presented with the crown for resizing, she hesitated: there would be no turning back once it was on her head. Jane herself sent for 20 yards of velvet, 25 ells (a contemporary unit of measurement) of fine Holland linen and 33 ells of lining material. What she did not do, however, was make herself known to the people. When Mary became queen, Jane did not protest or rebel - proof, perhaps, that she never wanted the burden of the role that had been forced upon her.





1516–1558

Mary I

The first legitimate queen regnant of England, Mary was a devout Catholic whose love for her nation became lost in a bloody legacy

Of all the dynasties to rule over England and its territories, few were as varied and impactful as the house of Tudor. Mary I, the first English queen to reign in her own right, was no exception. The eldest daughter of Henry VIII, she was defined by the turbulent religious metamorphosis England experienced in the early 1500s. In a time when religion and politics were inextricably intertwined, Mary would become a monarch so driven by her beliefs that she would murder hundreds of her own subjects in order to restore the sanctity of her own realm. But who was the woman behind the name 'Bloody Mary'? Was she really a bloodthirsty tyrant? Or was she a product of a country divided by the distinctions of its faith?

The answers find their roots in her early years. Born on 18 February 1516, Mary was the daughter of Henry VIII and his first wife Catherine of Aragon. Henry, a man not to be denied any desire, desperately wanted a son and heir to secure the House of Tudor's hold on the English throne - however, a series of miscarriages and the birth of a daughter only served to push the king further away from his Spanish queen. His pursuit of Catherine's maid of honour, Anne Boleyn, when Mary was around ten years old would push Catherine further out of favour with Henry's court - and the young princess along with her.

In early 1533, something happened that few could have predicted. Having already secretly married Anne Boleyn in January, and enraged at

the pope's refusal to annul his first marriage to Catherine on the grounds it was unlawful in the eyes of God, Henry defied Rome and ended papal authority over the English crown. Henry then appointed himself supreme head of the English Church and deemed his union to Catherine void. She was stripped of her title as queen and demoted to dowager princess of Wales, while Mary lost her princess status and became The Lady Mary. With her mother's marriage to the king in ruins, Mary was deemed illegitimate and no longer the heir apparent to the throne.

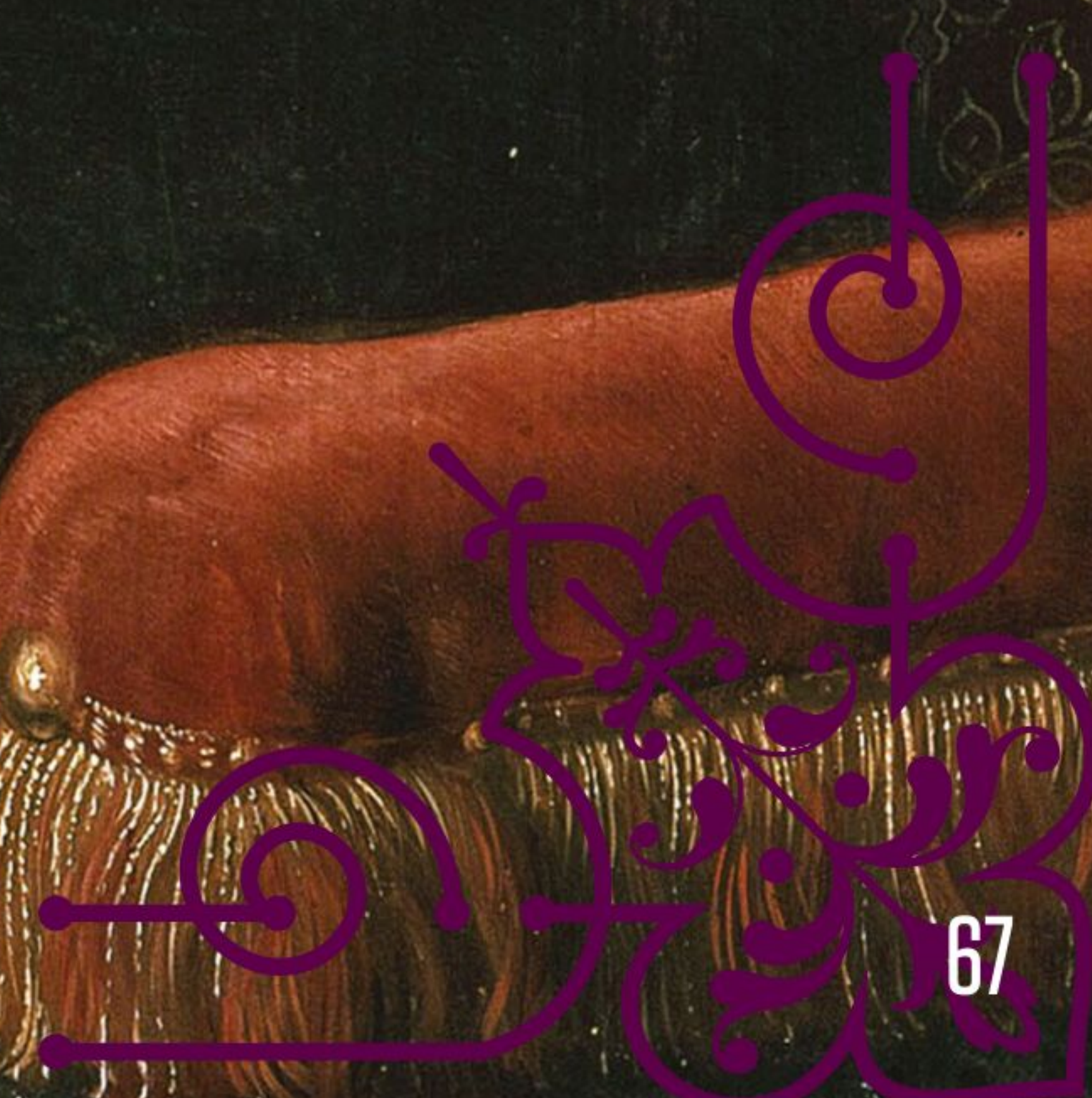
The year 1536 was another eventful one for Mary. Her mother passed away on 7 January and a few months later, tired of his second wife's inability to provide him with a son, Henry had Anne disgraced and eventually executed for a multitude of crimes. That year also saw the Pilgrimage of Grace, a political movement in the north of England that demanded the Act of Supremacy be repealed and Mary be reinstated as heir. While the rebellion came to nothing, it proved that Mary would always serve as a figurehead for loyal papist plotters.

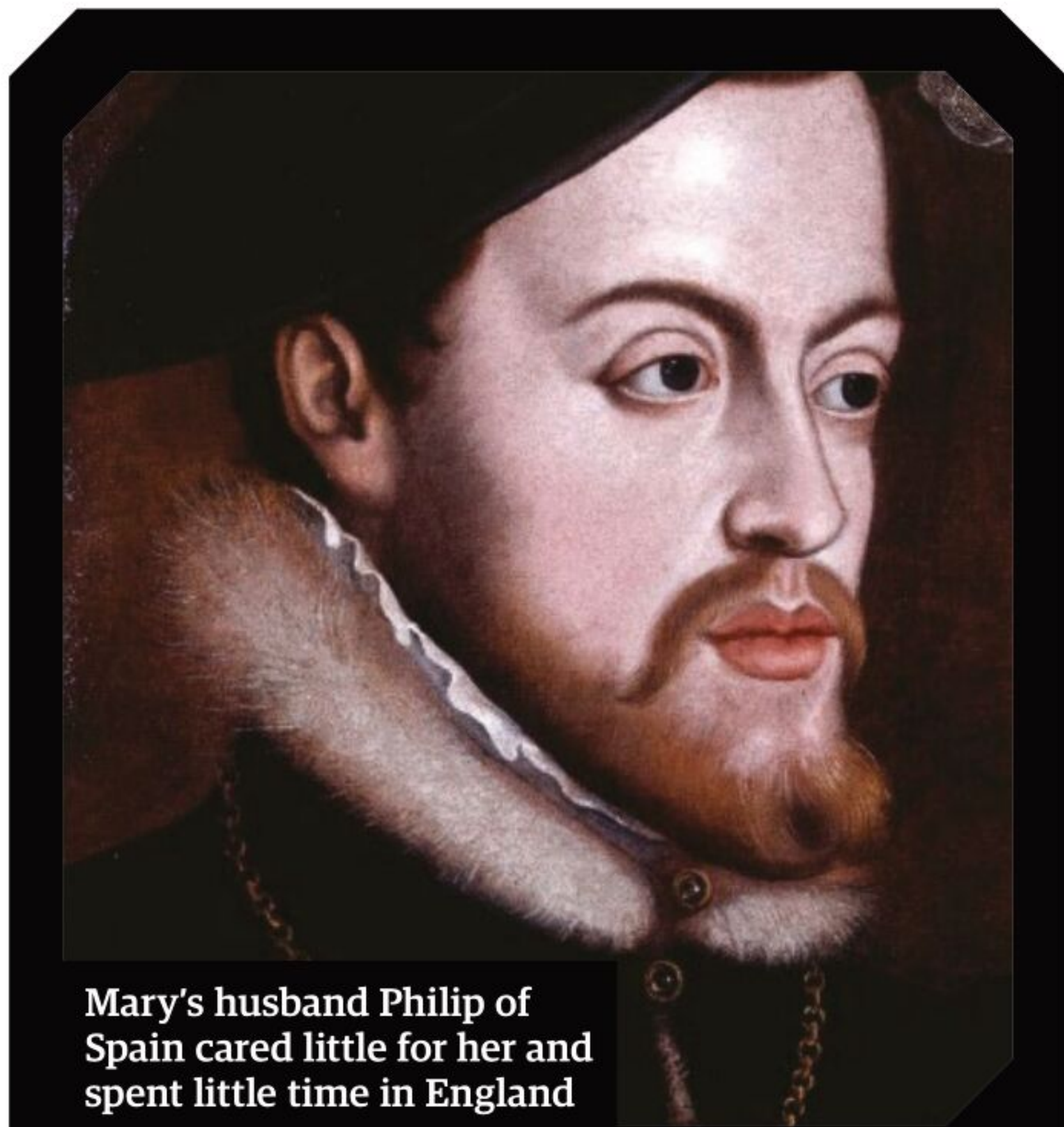
Mary attempted to create some distance between herself and the marital affairs of her father in the years that followed, but she remained the trump card of many a Catholic plot, including a supposed attempted marriage to Reginald Pole, an English cardinal who would eventually serve as archbishop of Canterbury under Mary's own reign. Mary enjoyed something of a better relationship with her



Mary loved music as a child and even entertained a group of French delegates by playing the virginal at the age of four







Mary's husband Philip of Spain cared little for her and spent little time in England

War with France

In January 1556, Mary's husband, Prince Philip of Spain, became King Philip II following his father's abdication. The Spanish monarch rarely visited Mary in England, but when he landed on English soil in March 1557 he came seeking her support for Spain's war with France. Mary, keen to preserve ties with such a powerful Catholic nation, was in favour of joining the conflict, but her closest allies persuaded her to hold off due to a wave of bad harvests and a tattered economy inherited from Edward VI's reign.

When Thomas Stafford, a noble who had already incited a rebellion against Mary in 1554, invaded England in June with the blessing and financial backing of the French king, Henry II, everything changed. The rebellion was put down fairly easily, but it was enough to convince Mary to commit to Philip's campaign.

The decision was a disaster for England, both financially and politically. Not only did it place strain on the relationship between England and Rome (since Pope Paul IV was allied with the French monarch), it also led to the loss of Calais, the last territory England had control of on the mainland of Europe. It was a terrible blow for the country – so much so that Mary was quoted as saying, "When I am dead and opened, you shall find Calais lying in my heart."

father's sixth and final wife, Catherine Parr. Parr did her best to repair Mary's relationship with the king, with Henry eventually signing a revised Act of Succession in 1544, which restored both Mary and Elizabeth as his heirs.

As Mary grew older, her dedication to her faith was always strong. Like many, she was forced to openly accept the king as her supreme ruler, but in secret her Catholic faith never wavered. When Henry died in 1547 and his only legitimate son, Edward, became king, England was launched into even stricter Protestant reform.

As much a puppet for his guardians as he was a devout Anglican, Edward VI clashed regularly with Mary. The two rarely spent time together but when they did, the 15-year-old king was exasperated with his sister's barely veiled Roman Catholicism. When Edward passed away from what was most likely tuberculosis on 6 July 1553, Mary's right as heir apparent was struck by another blow when Edward defied the Act of Succession and named Lady Jane Grey, the daughter-in-law of one of his guardians, as his rightful heir.

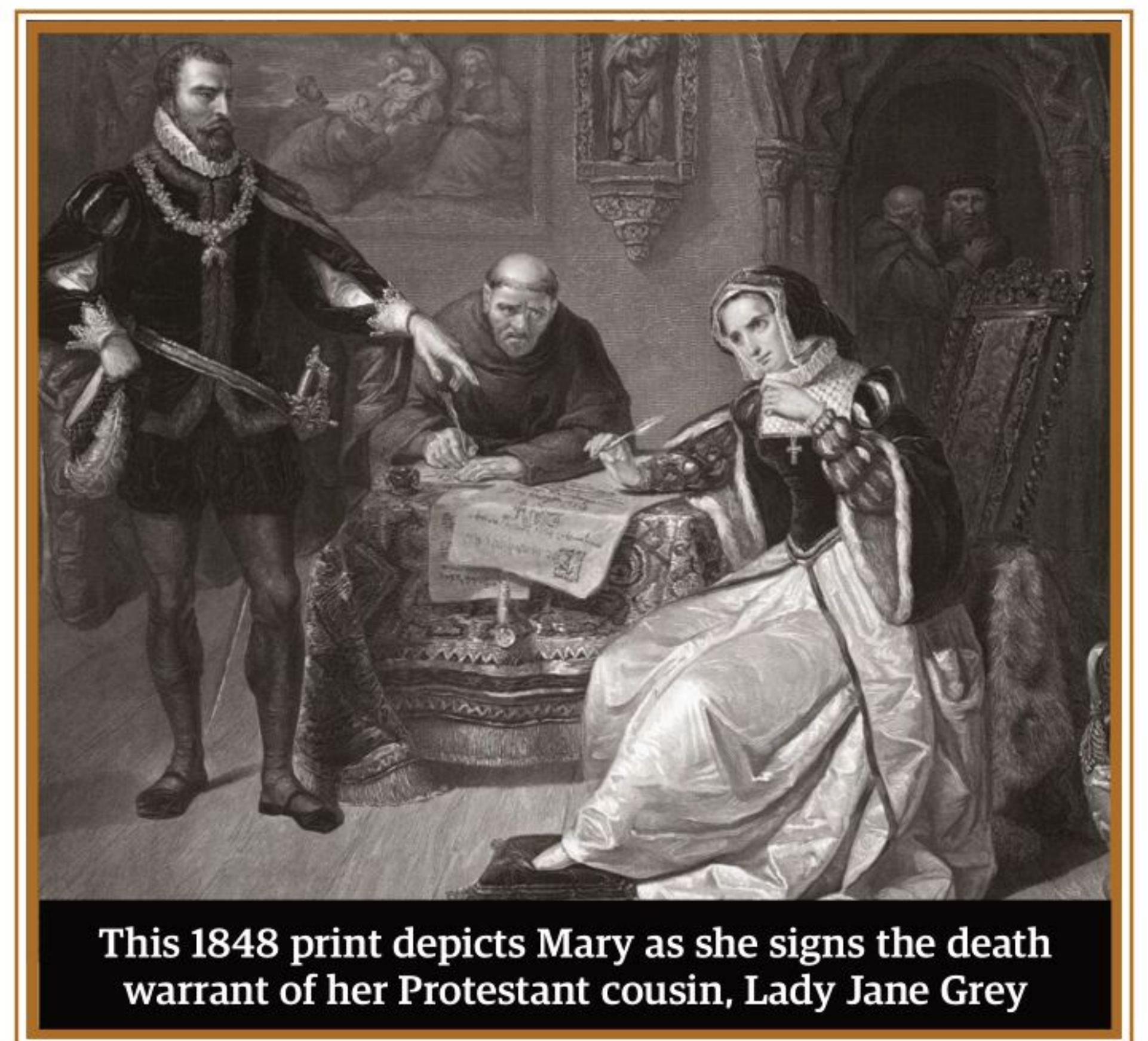
Edward had invited Mary to visit him, but her advisors warned her that it was most likely a trap to imprison her, so she fled to pro-Catholic East Anglia. With public support slipping following Grey's ascension, Mary and her allies amassed a sizable military force at Framlingham Castle in Suffolk and eventually marched on London to depose Grey and her supporters. On 1 October, Mary was finally crowned and, with the natural

authority that gave her, she was ready to right the wrongs of her half-brother and father.

Now that she was queen, there was the important matter of finding a husband who provided the right political stability for England. Keen to return the country to its former Catholic self, Mary became engaged to Prince Philip of Spain (the son of Holy Roman Emperor Charles V and heir to the Spanish throne). The union was controversial and far from a love match, but it was the first move that tied England to the Roman Catholic territories in Europe.

As England's first queen regnant (a queen made monarch by inheritance, not by marriage), the terms of the marriage were also amended to ensure that Mary's authority as queen could never be usurped by her husband. Mary and Philip were married on 25 July 1554, a mere two days after meeting for the first time in person.

Yet organising a political alliance with a powerful Catholic nation was no mean feat considering Mary



This 1848 print depicts Mary as she signs the death warrant of her Protestant cousin, Lady Jane Grey

"Mary's authority as queen could never be usurped by her husband"



ACT OF SUPREMACY

Henry VIII, has grown tired of bowing to the will of papal authority in Rome. When Pope Clement VII refuses to grant him an annulment for his marriage to Mary's mother, the king has Cardinal Wolsey and Parliament draw up a new act that proclaims the monarch to be the supreme head of the Church of England. By breaking from Rome, Henry begins a Reformation that drains monasteries of funds and lands.

November 1534

Act of Succession

After Henry marries Catherine Parr, he restores his two daughters to the line of succession. The Act of Succession 1544 effectively revokes Mary's illegitimacy.

14 July 1543

A new queen

Following the death of Edward VI, Mary is his named successor, Lady Jane Grey, imprisoned in the Tower of London. Citing the Act of Succession, Mary is proclaimed the new monarch.

19 July 1553

Timeline

The life and times of Mary I

1516

A princess is born

Daughter of King Henry VIII and his first wife, Catherine of Aragon, Princess Mary is born at the Palace of Placentia in Greenwich, London.

18 February 1516

Mary is betrothed

To establish stable ties with France, Henry betroths the princess to the French dauphin. Despite the potential strength of the arrangement, it falls apart three years later.

1518

Another engagement

With the potential marriage to the French king's young son in tatters, Henry is still determined to use his daughter as a pawn in another political alliance. Mary is betrothed to her second cousin, Holy Roman Emperor Charles V. This too falls apart a few years later.

1521



Princess of Wales

Mary is sent to Ludlow to preside over the Council of Wales and the Marches. She is only really there to represent the king but she is referred to as the Princess of Wales at this time, but is never officially granted the title by the king.

1525



had inherited a Protestant kingdom. Charles V and Prince Philip needed reassurance that England was indeed committed to restoring the old ways. Mary's English Counter-Reformation began almost immediately with her first parliament in October deeming the marriage of her late parents valid while passing the First Statute of Repeal, which essentially negated all the religious legislation enacted during Edward VI's reign. Her father's Act of Supremacy was also rejected, with religious authority removed from the crown and returned to Rome.

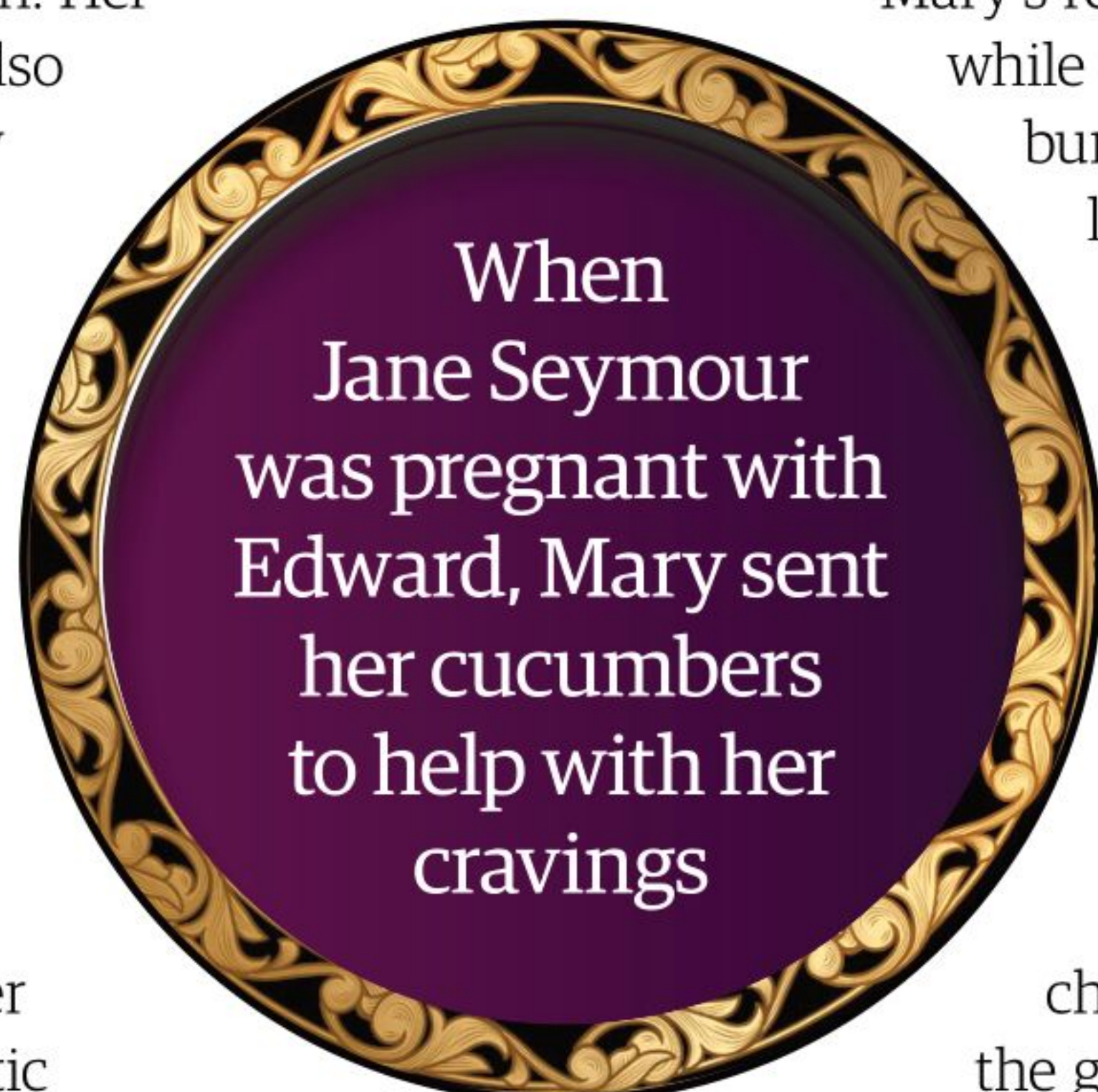
These changes were largely a popular move since England had only been a Protestant nation for six years, but such legislative restoration also came with a sting in the tail: the revival of the Heresy Acts. These deemed anyone practising any faith other than Roman Catholicism a heretic by proxy, leading to the voluntary exile of over 800 nobles who refused to renounce their new religion. The Heresy Acts decreed that heretics should be put to death by beheading or by being hanged, drawn and quartered; however the use of burning was also adopted. During Mary's reign, around 290 Protestants were executed - many of them burnt at the stake - for heresy, creating an air of aggressive persecution.

So was 'Bloody Mary' really the bloodiest monarch of the Tudor line? Despite her dramatic nickname, her brief Protestant purge was a single drop compared to the oceans of blood spilled by her predecessors. Edward VI had 5,500 rebels murdered in the Prayer Book Rebellion in 1549,

while Henry VIII executed a staggering 72,000 people - including two of his own wives - during his reign, according to Holinshed's *Chronicles*. It was more the stark violence of Mary's executions during a time when Reformist and Counter-Reformist propaganda was flying around Europe that gave her actions such a lasting infamy, creating the legacy we know today.

Mary's reign only lasted five years and while it was marred by the mass burnings of Protestants and the largely disastrous alliance with Spain - which even led to the loss of Calais to France in one of the Tudor dynasty's most embarrassing military debacles - Mary did attempt to make some changes that ultimately benefited the kingdom. Financial reforms included changing the way in which the government collected taxes, including the normalisation of import tax. She even used Philip's reluctance to include England in Spain's grip on the lucrative trade with the New World to create new trade opportunities with the east coast of Africa.

By the time of her death on 17 November 1558, Mary's attempts to restore England to its Catholic roots had left the country in religious and political turmoil. However, for all her violent acts of religious reform, and her poor choice of a marital alliance with Spain, Mary appears to have loved her country deeply. She also demonstrated that a woman could rule in her own right, setting a precedent upon which her half-sister and successor Elizabeth I would build.



When Jane Seymour was pregnant with Edward, Mary sent her cucumbers to help with her cravings

LANDMARKS OF MARY'S LIFETIME

IRISH SETTLEMENT

During her reign, Mary continued the Tudor conquest of Ireland by establishing a number of English settlements. These were placed in the Irish Midlands, effectively creating the King and Queen's counties. The two main towns were named Maryborough and Philipstown.

RAINY SEASON

The five years of Mary's rule were uncharacteristically rainy. Persistent rain for months on end led to oversaturated soil, which in turn ruined entire crops. This, and damage from flooding, plunged the country into famine.

A STRAINED ECONOMY

Poor weather conditions and harvests contributed to an already strained economic climate. Despite the alliance between England and Spain, trade between them was brittle at best. Spain refused to include England in its lucrative hold on the New World.

MARY AND MONEY

Mary made attempts to implement changes to the state of English currency and taxation. Prior to her reign, sheriffs had failed to adequately enforce and collect import taxes, so the queen had new legislation drawn up that clearly defined new rules for efficiently taking incoming resources.

MONASTIC RESTORATION

While the lands confiscated in Henry VIII's Reformation were not relinquished by the crown, Mary was determined to help rebuild the monasteries that were torn apart decades before. She even used her own finances to restore a number of sites across the nation.



● Marriage to Prince Philip

Less than a week after dealing with the conspiracy to place Lady Jane Grey on the throne, Mary marries Prince Philip of Spain. Such a marriage blocks her Protestant half-sister's position as heir.

25 July 1554

DEFINING MOMENT

ENGLAND DRAWN INTO WAR

In January 1556, Prince Philip's father Charles V abdicates from the throne, making Philip the new king. Often absent from Mary's side for great periods, the new Spanish monarch finally returns to England in March 1557 after reigniting the war with France and is keen to use his alliance with England to bolster his forces. War is officially declared in June, but the conflict causes strain with the papacy as Rome has political ties to the French king. The war is a political and economic disaster for England and even leads to the loss of Calais in January 1558.

March 1557

● Mary is crowned

After riding into London with her half-sister Elizabeth and 800 supporting nobles, Mary releases the imprisoned bishop of Winchester, whom she makes lord chancellor. She is crowned by him at Westminster Abbey.

1 October 1553

● The false pregnancy

Around September 1554, Mary's menstruation cycle stops - she then begins gaining weight as well as dealing with bouts of nausea. Mary takes this as a sign of a baby, but it was a phantom pregnancy.

1554

● Burning Protestants

At the beginning of 1555, the restoration of Catholicism in England leads to the return of the Heresy Acts. Mary starts executing Protestant nobles. Burning at the stake is the most prevalent method and around 290 are killed in the purge.

February 1555

THE QUEEN IS DEAD

As 1557 draws to a close, Mary appears to fall pregnant yet again. Sadly it proves to be another phantom term and the queen is forced to make the defining decision of her reign. In 1558 she names Elizabeth as her lawful successor. Mary falls ill during an influenza pandemic that is gripping London. It's not known whether it was the influenza that took her life or ongoing complications with ovarian cysts and uterine cancer.

17 November 1558

DEFINING MOMENT

1702





1533–1603

Elizabeth I

She fought off foreign invasions and domestic rebellions, but did she really preside over a golden age?

In 1588, against the advice of her most trusted aides, Elizabeth I rode out on her grey gelding to address her troops gathered at Tilbury in Essex in preparation of repelling the expected invasion force of the Spanish Armada. Looking out at the assembled faces before her, she delivered a speech that would go down in history and would forever define her rule: "I know I have the body of a weak, feeble woman; but I have the heart and stomach of a king - and of a king of England, too."

The speech would have to be transcribed and distributed for the soldiers who were unable to hear it, but they had all seen their monarch, armoured and on her steed, ready to stand by them to repel the Catholic invasion. This image of Elizabeth has been the key to our popular perception of her for centuries, but there's much more to her than that. Elizabeth was cunning and capricious, but she could be blinded by affection, if only temporarily. She was tremendously clever, with an almost unflinching sense of what her people wanted or needed from her, but had to see off foreign invasion attempts and homegrown rebellions. While she was sitting on the throne of England, the country became acquainted with some of its greatest triumphs and darkest hours.

When Elizabeth took the crown in November 1558, the whole of Europe was on tenterhooks. How would the new Protestant queen follow the reign of her Catholic half-sister, Mary? With an unstable nation and conspiracies at home and abroad, the situation required diplomacy, intelligence and bravery; three qualities that Elizabeth had always had in ample supply. In fact, the unstable situation was nothing new to her; Elizabeth's position had been precarious from the moment she was born. The daughter of Henry VIII's second wife, Anne Boleyn, she was immediately deemed as illegitimate by any Catholic nations, who regarded the king's divorce of Catherine of Aragon as illegal. In their eyes, Catherine's daughter Mary was the only rightful heir to the throne.

Although both parents had been desperate for a boy, Anne would be a doting mother to her infant child, but she was sent to the executioner's block in 1536 after failing to produce a male heir. Although Henry's third wife, Jane Seymour, was kind to her step-daughters, she had her own child to attend to with the birth of her son and Henry's heir, Edward. Henry himself would not see much of Elizabeth until 1542, when he decided the time had come to reacquire himself with his young daughter. He found her to be intelligent and charming, and decided that he would reinstate both Mary and Elizabeth back into his lineage.

In 1543, Henry married Catherine Parr, his last wife, and relations within the royal family warmed, as Mary took a maternal interest in young Edward, while Elizabeth enjoyed a sisterly relationship with both. However, when Edward took the throne upon their father's death, cracks started to form. Elizabeth had to contend with the amorous attentions of Catherine's new husband, Thomas Seymour, which caused a scandal at court in 1548. His advances were seen as treasonous, and Elizabeth was reported to be pregnant. The young princess vehemently denied these rumours. Seymour was executed the following year.

When the staunchly Catholic Mary refused to convert, Edward began proceedings to remove both his sisters from the line to the throne, fixing his hopes on his cousin, Lady Jane Grey, instead. However, the prince was seldom in good health during his short life, so it was no surprise that he died before the contract could be finalised and Mary became the new queen.

Just as Edward had asked Mary to change her faith, the new queen was determined that her sister should convert. She acquiesced without enthusiasm, but it was clear to both Protestants and Catholics that her true allegiance still lay with her father's Church of England. Over the course of Mary's reign, many conspiracy plots were designed to get Elizabeth onto the throne. None of them succeeded, but they did almost manage to get her killed.

In 1554, Thomas Wyatt attempted a rebellion following the announcement that Mary would marry King Philip II of Spain. The queen's reprisal was brutal and swift, executing the ringleaders. Elizabeth claimed ignorance - a trick she managed to successfully repeat a year later after another attempted rebellion - but her sister's patience was wearing thin and she was placed in the Tower of London, with some Catholic supporters clamouring for her execution.

Elizabeth's future prospects were looking anything but golden, and the next few months saw her walking a political tightrope. Mary, desperate to provide her husband and her country with a Catholic heir to end the uncertainty surrounding the throne, announced that she was pregnant, but by 1558, it became clear that Mary's condition was actually a devastating illness. Her health broke quickly, and she died on 17 November of that year after begging Elizabeth to keep England Catholic. Her wishes would not be fulfilled.

Elizabeth's coronation was a stunning balancing act. With countless eyes waiting for any hint of an overtly Protestant or Catholic gestures, Elizabeth managed to confound them all. Instead, the emphasis was elsewhere: Elizabeth's intention to restore England to a state of prosperity. She knew that if she was to have any chance of surviving her early years, she would need astute advisors - she chose William Cecil and Robert Dudley. Cecil had worked for Edward, survived the reign of Mary and was fiercely loyal to his new monarch. In contrast, Dudley's appointment and favour with the queen had nothing to do with his abilities as a politician. He had known Elizabeth since childhood and her affection for him had only grown stronger. Rumours abounded that she spent the nights as well as the days with him.

Cecil disapproved of Dudley and agreed with the majority of Parliament that Elizabeth should marry as soon as possible. The eyes of France and Spain were fixed on England and it made

sense for the queen to create a marriage alliance with one of these major powers for her and the country's safety. Philip II made no secret of his desire to marry Elizabeth, but she had no interest in wedding her half-sister's former husband. Henry of Anjou was suggested as a match, but he was still a child. Elizabeth spoke instead of being married to her nation, but scandal struck when Dudley's wife Amy died suddenly after apparently falling down the stairs in 1560. It was rumoured that Dudley had committed the deed for his queen, and Elizabeth was forced to expel him from her court.

In 1561, Elizabeth's cousin, Mary, Queen of Scots, returned to Scotland from France. For many Catholics, she was the true heir and she did little to downplay those clamouring for a Catholic monarch. Her arrival was perfectly timed as Elizabeth was on the verge of death due to smallpox, but the English queen recovered and, with the scandal over Dudley dissipating, Elizabeth chose him to be Lord Protector. Then she shocked everyone by

REBELLIONS AGAINST ELIZABETH

When Elizabeth ascended to the throne, she immediately faced the threat of rebellion from the Catholic nobility, who resented the fact that she was turning away from the changes made by her half-sister Mary. The first great uprising came in 1569, when the northern noblemen took advantage of the return of Mary, Queen of Scots, to England, and attempted to overthrow her. The duke of Norfolk, unhappy with being sidelined by the earl of Dudley, entertained a marriage plot with Mary, while the northern earls mounted rebellion. It was summarily crushed and hundreds were executed.

The earl of Essex, Elizabeth's great favourite, made the mistake of attempting a rebellion in 1601 after he was stripped of his powers in an attempt to gain influence. In line with his apparently oversized ego, he grossly overestimated his popularity, the people's dissatisfaction with their monarch and his queen's capacity to forgive one of her former favourites.

When Elizabeth was confronted with open defiance, she rarely hesitated to crush it. She understood when to be brutal and when to charm. With the rebellions against her she was unforgiving and generally unsparing, meting out punishments swiftly and unsparingly to rebels and traitors.



Elizabeth's coronation in 1558 was a joyous affair

suggesting a marriage between him and Mary. This was Elizabeth showing her political astuteness; she knew well that Scotland with a Catholic heir would have too much power, but an heir produced by her favourite could potentially unite the two countries. However, Dudley refused and Mary had no interest in marrying her cousin's paramour.

Instead, Mary married for love, choosing Lord Henry Darnley. Seeing this may have prompted Elizabeth to renew her interest in Dudley, which greatly upset the council - in particular, the ambitious Lord Norfolk. When the tension between Norfolk and Dudley grew too great, Elizabeth understood that she needed to assert her authority. "I will have here but one mistress and no master," she told Dudley. It was both a political statement and a personal one.

The lack of a husband and heir was only made worse in 1566 when Mary gave birth to a son, James, but she was desperately unhappy. Darnley was a violent drunkard: many believed he brutally murdered her secret lover, David Rizzio. Darnley would meet his own nasty end a year later, when he was found strangled. Mary quickly married the earl of Bothwell and Scottish forces rose against her. Imprisoned and forced to abdicate, she eventually fled to England. Elizabeth agreed to give her shelter, but Mary's arrival had given Catholics a figurehead and rebellion brewed.

The northern earls suggested that Norfolk should marry Mary: soon, the Northern Rebellion had begun. As the rebel forces marched south, Elizabeth moved Mary to Coventry and mustered

troops of her own. The southern earls rallied to her cause, which stunned the rebel forces, who began to retreat. Elizabeth's victory was quick and decisive, with 700 men being executed in a brutal display of power. Norfolk was placed under arrest, but a lack of concrete evidence postponed his execution. That is, until he was implicated in the Ridolfi plot, which aimed to make Spain's Philip II king of England. Elizabeth ordered and rescinded Norfolk's execution three times before finally deciding that he simply had to die.

If the queen's position at home appeared shaky, it was positively stable compared to how she was viewed abroad. The pope decreed that anyone who murdered the heretical English queen would be forgiven - a statement King Philip took to heart. Not wanting to risk open war, Elizabeth found other ways to aggravate her enemies. She quietly patronised the piratical exploits of John Hawkins and later his cousin Francis Drake. In 1577, when he planned to travel to South America to raid Spanish gold, Elizabeth met Drake with Francis Walsingham, one of her ambassadors to France.

The cautious Cecil had to be kept in the dark, but she told Drake explicitly that she supported him: "I would gladly be revenged on the King of Spain for diverse injuries I have received." Having sailed



Although Elizabeth is often depicted knighting Francis Drake, she actually didn't bestow the honour upon him herself

"The pope decreed that anyone who murdered the heretical English queen would be forgiven"



The return of Mary, Queen of Scots, to Edinburgh

Elizabeth would come to bitterly resent the circumstances of her Scottish cousin Mary's execution

Did England become a nation to be feared?

Elizabeth's foreign policy was more cautious than expansive – conflict was expensive and the outcome was always uncertain. However, she had a spirit that could easily be won over by the idea of adventure. She delighted in the expeditions of John Hawkins and Francis Drake, which could be seen to be aggravating Spain without actually declaring open conflict. In 1562, she agreed to a military expedition in Calais, which was crushed by Catherine de' Medici's forces, and this failure would influence her military decisions for the rest of her reign.

Her ally and enemy lines were drawn by religion. France and Spain were clearly opposed to England on these grounds, which is why her courtiers were so anxious that Elizabeth marry an eligible man from either country. Even after the Saint Bartholomew's Day Massacre in 1572, Elizabeth

was reluctant to be drawn into open war. The piecemeal way in which she gave the Dutch her assistance shows her reluctance to engage in open conflict of any kind, first offering financial support to the Dutch troops, then the duke of Anjou, before finally agreeing to send an English force when there was no other option. Her cautious attitude towards foreign policy doubtless saved the kingdom a lot of money. However, it was taken out of her hands when the Spanish Armada sailed on England.

Verdict

The victory against the Spanish Armada was a shining moment, but for the most part, Elizabeth kept out of foreign conflicts. When she did enter into the fray, she regularly suffered defeats.

WHY DID THE ARMADA FAIL?

King Philip amassed his Armada and sent them to the Netherlands to join up with his ground troops, led by the duke of Parma. The English outposts saw the ships coming and alerted the admiralty. The weather was against the Spanish, as they were blown off course. While they outnumbered the British fleet by two to one, the Spanish ships were enormous, built to carry troops that could board enemy vessels. Their crescent formation was famous, but it did little against the smaller English ships. When the English sent fireships into the Spanish fleet, the enemy panicked and scattered. They managed to regroup for one confrontation, and lost. The Spanish retreated, with many ships crashing on the rocks of the English and Irish coastline as they fled.

6. Bad weather

Bad weather prevents the Spanish fleet from organising and the English pursue them. Their ships are faster and much more effective.

3. Early warning

The Armada is sighted west of the English Channel. The English fleet is put to sea as the south coast warning beacons are lit. Legend says that Sir Francis Drake finishes his game of bowls first.

7. Ships wrecked

The weather blows the Spanish fleet into the North Sea and they are forced to retreat up England's east coast, beyond Scotland and down past Ireland. Many ships are wrecked.

2. Delays

Severe weather forces Philip to dock in Coruna to make repairs to his fleet. He is delayed by more than a month.

1. Armada sets sail

On 28 May 1588, Philip is ready to begin his invasion of England. He gathers his Armada and they sail from Lisbon.

4. Rendezvous

The Armada sails to Calais to meet Philip's most revered general, the duke of Parma. However, he is delayed and they are forced to wait.

5. Fireships

Spanish commanders panic when the English navy sends fireships in among their vessels. They scatter into the English line of fire but the losses are not too heavy.



The Spanish Armada is put into disarray by English fireships on 8 August 1588

through the Straits of Magellan and capturing a Spanish ship carrying up to £200,000 in gold, Drake decided to sail across the Pacific, becoming the first Englishman to circumnavigate the globe. Elizabeth gloried in his achievement, and when she met the Spanish ambassador in 1581, she pointedly wore a crucifix Drake had given to her from the loot. Drake had done her proud.

These piratical exploits stood in sharp contrast to the events of 1572. The Saint Bartholomew's Day Massacre in Paris – the assassination of a number of French Calvinist Protestants – shocked England and the ambassador Sir Francis Walsingham was forced to take refuge. Elizabeth brought him back to London to become her spymaster, where he advised that Mary, Queen of Scots, was a real danger. The uprising was not only a shocking scene for English Protestants; it was also a sign that the Protestant Netherlands and its booming wool trade would soon be in danger.

When William the Silent asked Elizabeth for military assistance, she did not want to be seen to intervene and give Philip of Spain an excuse to attack. Walsingham counselled war, while Cecil continued to preach marriage. So Elizabeth entertained the idea of marrying the duke of Anjou, roughly ten years after it had first been suggested. Then he had been an ugly youth and she had been a beautiful queen. Now she was visibly older and



The queen rallied the spirit of the English troops by declaring that she would fight by their side

“The English people found the idea of their Virgin Queen marrying a French Catholic absolutely repulsive”

the flattery of the French ambassador and Anjou's letters began to win her over. When they finally met, it appeared that Elizabeth really was in love, but there were genuine concerns over how the English people would react.

Although she clearly wanted to marry the man that she had nicknamed her “frog”, the English people found the idea of their Virgin Queen marrying a French Catholic absolutely repulsive. When a pamphlet appeared that condemned the union, Elizabeth decreed that both the author and his printer should have their right hands cut off. Her Privy Council was split in half, with the jealous Robert Dudley vehemently opposed. Elizabeth was heartbroken, but she agreed to abstain. She gave Anjou £10,000 to continue his war against Philip in the Netherlands, but did not see him again. He tried to take power for himself but failed and died a year later.

When William the Silent was assassinated in his own house in 1584 by a Catholic fanatic, it was clear that military intervention could not be put off any longer and so in 1585, to the relief of her

impatient councillors, Elizabeth agreed to send a small force of men. Dudley took command in the Netherlands but proved to be incompetent, losing territory to Philip's general, the duke of Parma. Mary was now more dangerous than ever. Elizabeth ordered her imprisonment at the urging of Francis Walsingham, who had no intention of allowing her to live much longer. He arranged for a servant, one of his own spies, to suggest that Mary smuggle letters in beer barrels, allowing Walsingham to read everything. When Thomas Babington wrote to Mary with a plan to assassinate Elizabeth and give her the crown, Mary wrote back with her approval; the spymaster's trap had worked perfectly and he had ensnared his unwitting prey.

Walsingham leapt into action and ordered the conspirators' execution. Elizabeth had always been reluctant to execute her cousin, but she agreed she would have to stand trial. It was no surprise when the court decided that Mary should be put to death. Elizabeth grieved for Mary, or at least lamented her death. The man who had delivered the warrant was imprisoned and stripped of his title.

Elizabeth was always reluctant to sign a death warrant - or at least she was reluctant to be seen to sign it. We can't know how much of the queen's grief was genuine, but she bitterly resented the circumstances of Mary's execution.

“Elizabeth was reluctant to be seen to execute first the senior nobleman in England, in Norfolk, and then a fellow queen, in Mary,” says Leanda de Lisle, author of *Tudor: The Family Story*. “That is not to say she regretted their deaths. She would have preferred to have Mary murdered, for example, as she made very clear.

“It is also notable that she was quite ruthless in ordering the deaths of traitors of humble birth - the 900 or so executed after the Northern Rebellion testifies to that. This was three times the numbers Henry VIII had executed after the far more serious Pilgrimage of Grace, and ten times the numbers Mary executed after Wyatt's revolt.”

Mary's execution provided Philip II with the reason he needed to declare war and his Spanish Armada co-ordinated with the duke of Parma's forces in the Netherlands, with the two forces meeting before sailing on England. They launched on 12 July 1588, their fleets possessing more than twice the number of English ships, but the English vessels did have some advantages; they were smaller, faster, and designed to carry guns rather than men. The English could outmanoeuvre the

Spanish in open water and they began to engage them in small skirmishes. It was at this point that Elizabeth rode out to meet her troops. With the threat of a Catholic force at their doorstep, the queen rallied the spirit of the English troops by declaring that she would fight by their side to repel anyone who dared to set foot on their land.

This grandstanding was impressive and may have gone down in history's annals, but was ultimately unnecessary. The Spanish Armada failed and Elizabeth's victory was the seal on her status. 'The Golden Age' had begun, where art and literature flowered. With England a visibly powerful state, the aristocracy began to patronise the arts with great abandon.

The famous playwrights of the age enjoyed patronage, albeit with some caveats. When Shakespeare wrote *Richard II*, he was encouraged to remove a scene suggesting the ageing monarch should step aside. "Elizabeth did not care for plays," confirms de Lisle. "All too often they were used to lecture her on this or that."

Her crown may have been safe for now, but she received devastating blows with the deaths of two of her most trusted advisors, Dudley and Walsingham. Dudley was replaced at court by his handsome stepson, the earl of Essex, and the young flatterer quickly became her favourite.

"Robert Dudley's death in 1588 signalled the passing of the old order, but Elizabeth still hoped

she could continue ruling according to her motto, 'Semper Eadem' ('Always the same')," explains de Lisle. "As the years began to pass and her servants died she either did not replace them or find a near-equivalent to the servant she had lost."

It's a sign of how much she leaned on her old guard that she continued to place her trust in William Cecil, even though he was almost entirely deaf and increasingly ill. It was only when he died in 1598 that Elizabeth finally agreed to appoint Robert Cecil to his father's old post.

When it became known that the Spanish were attempting to rebuild their fleet, Essex led a fleet on Cádiz and decimated their forces in port. The success gave Essex fame - something Elizabeth was taken aback by. She tried to curb him, aware that her standing among the people was her greatest asset, but Essex continued to promote his own celebrity. The queen became more and more frustrated with his outrageous behaviour at court, which came to a dramatic head when he half-drew his sword on her in a fit of pique.

The arts and literature may have been flourishing, but those who subscribe to this being a golden age in England's history often forget that even after the defeat of the Spanish Armada, other uprisings, such as the 1598 Irish rebellion, occurred. The country had long been a problem for Tudor England, which had attempted to impose English values on the Irish and had seen the Irish as

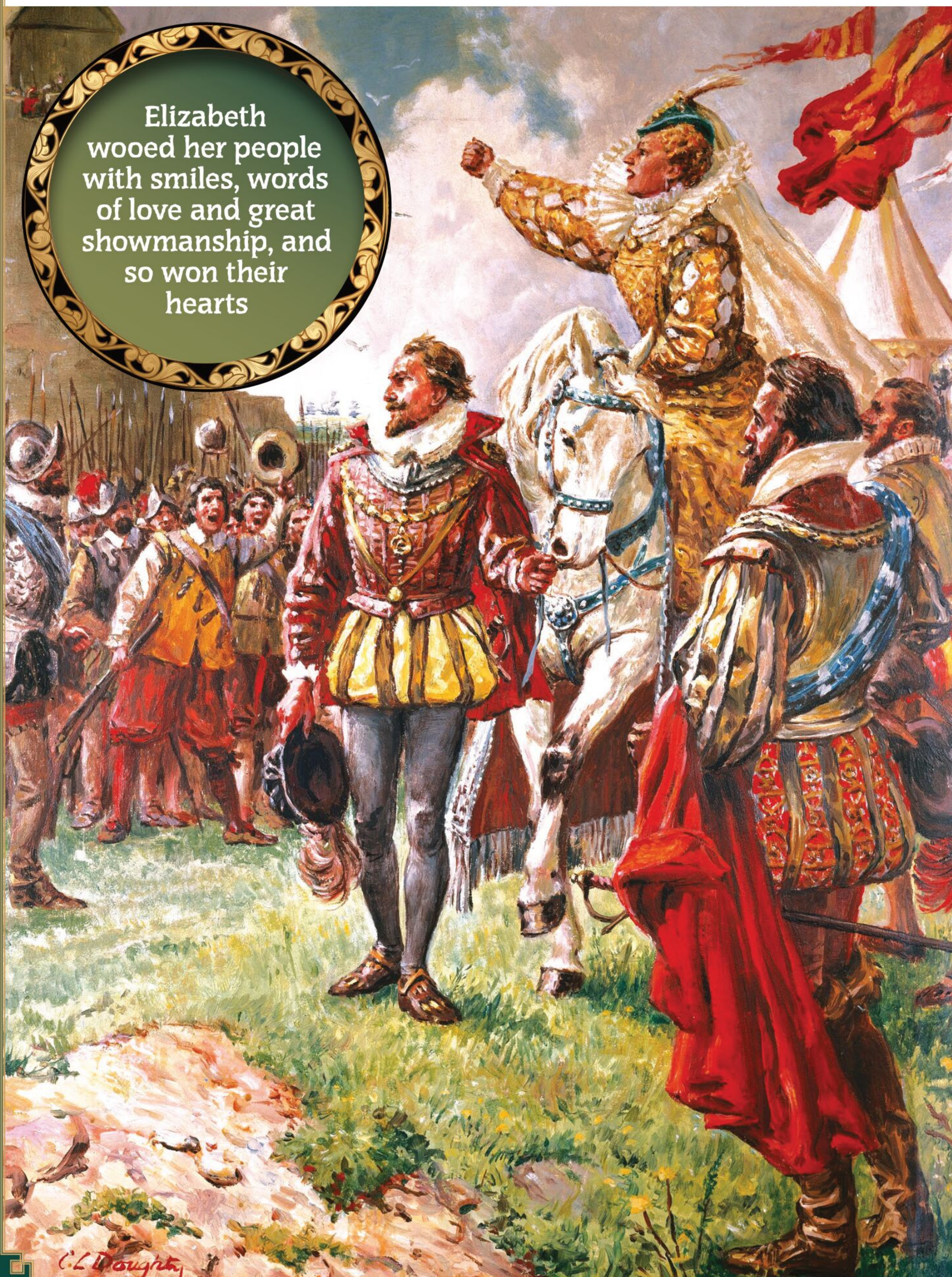
"The queen rallied the spirit of the English troops by declaring that she would fight by their side"

tenants on English territory. Now, with a Spanish-backed uprising, Elizabeth realised that she needed to take decisive action.

The queen sent her army at the start of 1599, led by Essex, who was looking to prove himself once more. He was a disaster. Rather than confronting the earl of Tyrone on the battlefield, he met him in secret and returned to England having made a treaty without Elizabeth's authority.

When Essex thought Cecil was plotting against him, he rushed to plead his case. Assuming he was still the queen's favourite, he burst into her bedchamber while she was preparing for the day. He had seen Elizabeth without her make-up and regal dressing; not as a queen, but as an old woman. She could not afford to be seen like this. The queen dismissed him before summoning him later to confront him with his failures and strip him of his power.

Rather than accepting his fate, Essex attempted rebellion. He assumed Londoners would back the popular war hero, but Elizabeth proclaimed him a traitor and sent her troops to meet him.



Elizabeth wooed her people with smiles, words of love and great showmanship, and so won their hearts

C.L. Douglas

The rebellion was a failure and Essex was executed as a traitor.

Although the later years of Elizabeth's reign were far from golden, she would always be able to rally her people when she needed to. The war in Ireland was expensive and unsuccessful, while overcrowding and failed harvests caused agitation. When Parliament publicly condemned her for granting monopolies to her favourite courtiers, which had led to price-fixing, Elizabeth was forced to address them in 1601.

The queen agreed to put a stop to the monopolies and she reaffirmed her love for England. She won over Parliament, there was a good harvest, and a truce was reached in Ireland and Spain. "Elizabeth, old and ill, did lose some of her former grip, but never entirely," states de Lisle. "She had followed Mary I's example in wooing the common people from the beginning of her reign, and they continued to support her."

Having seen off yet another uprising, the 50-year-old monarch's health was finally failing and after an all-too-rare period of good health, Elizabeth grew sickly. She was desperately frustrated by Cecil's growing power over her and refused to go to bed as she realised the end would be coming for her soon.

Elizabeth finally breathed her last at Richmond Palace on 24 March 1603. Although she had struggled to change with the times in the face of younger, ambitious advisors, she had been a formidable political operator. She had still shown the cunning and cleverness to understand her situation, and she had never lost the image of a queen who was loved by her people.

"That image was not created for her," explains de Lisle. "Elizabeth never forgot the events of 1553 when the ordinary people had backed the Tudor sisters, while the political elite had supported Jane Grey. Nor did she forget how in 1554, Mary had made a speech at the Guildhall that roused London in her defence against the Wyatt rebellion. Mary had spoken of her marriage to her kingdom, describing her coronation ring as a wedding band, and her love of her subjects as that of a mother for her children. These were the phrases and motifs

The deathbed of Queen Elizabeth in 1603

Elizabeth would use repeatedly and would become absolutely central to her reign.

"In addition, Elizabeth also had an instinct for the crowd's demands. Even her enemies would admit she had 'the power of enchantment'. She wooed her people with smiles, words of love and great showmanship, and so won their hearts. Elizabeth's people would never forget her. When she died and James I became king of England, people hugely missed the Tudor theatre of reciprocal love, of which Elizabeth had been the last and brightest star."

Elizabeth's reign was not the golden age that legend so often depicts; she faced serious uprisings, both internal and external, during her reign. She was capable of heartlessness and ruthlessness, and could be indecisive and impetuous. During the course of her rule, England saw famine, rebellion and war.

However, there's no mistaking her dedication to her country and her determination to listen to what the people wanted from her - and then give it to them. She walked a political tightrope for most of her life, and the fact that she died peacefully in her bed as queen was a major triumph in itself. The English people loved her, and she, in turn, loved them. In the hearts and minds of many of her subjects, she was - and will always be - Britain's golden monarch.

Did peace reign in England?

The early years of Elizabeth's reign were extremely unstable. The Catholics regarded the queen as a heretical bastard without a just claim to the throne, and she had to prove to her people that she was capable of ruling alone. Conspiracies at home and abroad plotted to remove her from the throne, and when Mary, Queen of Scots, took refuge in England, her Catholic enemies finally had someone to rally around.

1569 saw her face the first real uprising with the Northern Rebellion. The earls of Westmorland and Northumberland rallied the rebel aristocracy around them, but they were not prepared for the force of her reprisal. In her later years, she saw rebellion rear its head again as Essex overstepped his bounds. With famine and overcrowded cities, Elizabeth's position became unstable.

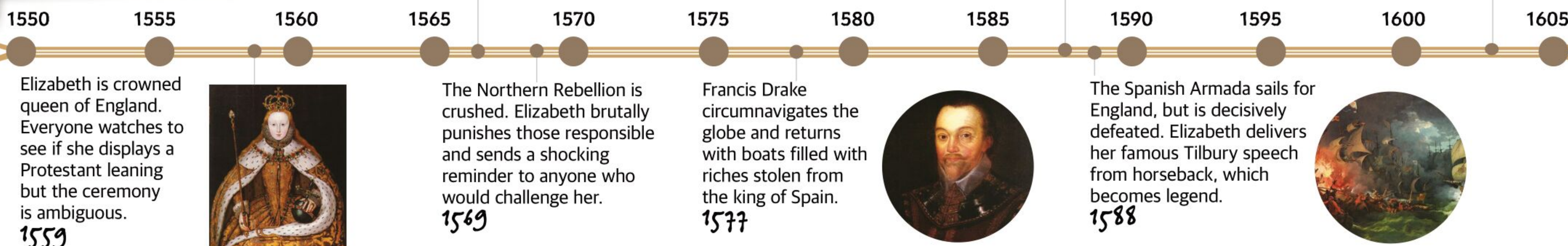
"Imagine if Elizabeth had died in October 1562 when she had smallpox," asks de Lisle. "Elizabeth had been on the throne almost four years: only a year short of her sister's reign. If she died, as many feared she would, how would her reign have been remembered? Elizabeth's religious settlement was not viewed as settled by anyone save the queen. One of her own bishops called it 'a leaden mediocrity'. In military matters, while Mary I's loss of Calais is still remembered, Elizabeth's failed efforts to recover Calais by taking Le Havre and using it as a bargaining tool are completely forgotten. The campaign had ended that August 1562, with the huge loss of 2,000 men."

Verdict

Elizabeth's reign featured numerous rebellions and uprisings, but this was not unusual for a Tudor monarch and, given the religious uncertainty in the country at the time, she handled the uprisings quickly and decisively.

Timeline

The life and times of Elizabeth





1532–1590

Sir Francis Walsingham

The extreme lengths Elizabeth's spymaster was willing to go to protect the Virgin Queen from plotters and foreign powers

The Elizabethan era is often seen as a golden age for England. The Virgin Queen offered stability after the bloody reigns of her brother and sister, Edward VI and Mary I. This led to a

flourishing of literature, art and music, with Shakespeare performing regularly in London. England also established its first colony, following Sir Walter Raleigh's exploration of the New World.

However, the truth is that 16th-century England was the centre of a web of political intrigue. Elizabeth I was in constant danger of plots to overthrow her, with discontented Catholics who wanted to see an end to Protestant rule. These conspirators were often in league with the most powerful nations in Europe, including Spain, France and the Papacy, all of whom had spies in the queen's court.

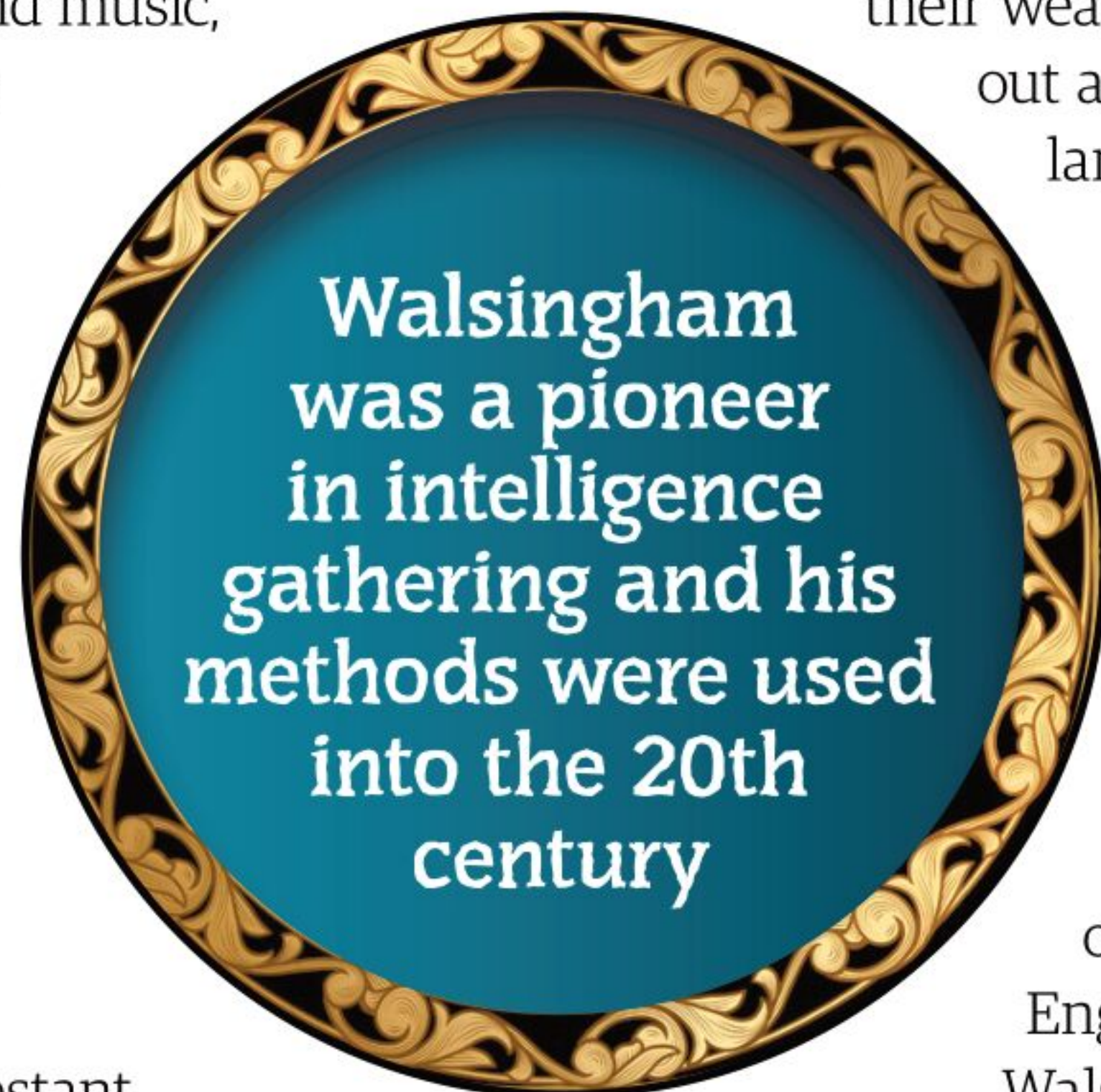
Fortunately, England had its own man in the shadows, a pioneer that would set the standard for secret intelligence for centuries. But like so many

spies living on the edge, this man and his agents would blur the line between right and wrong to protect queen and country.

Francis Walsingham was born into a well-connected family - one of many that had found their wealth in the capital, then moved out and established themselves as landed gentry in the countryside.

His father was a well-connected lawyer but he died when Francis was only two years old. His mother quickly remarried to Sir John Carey, a relation of Anne Boleyn through marriage. His strong familial links placed young Walsingham right in the centre of the most powerful players in England at the time.

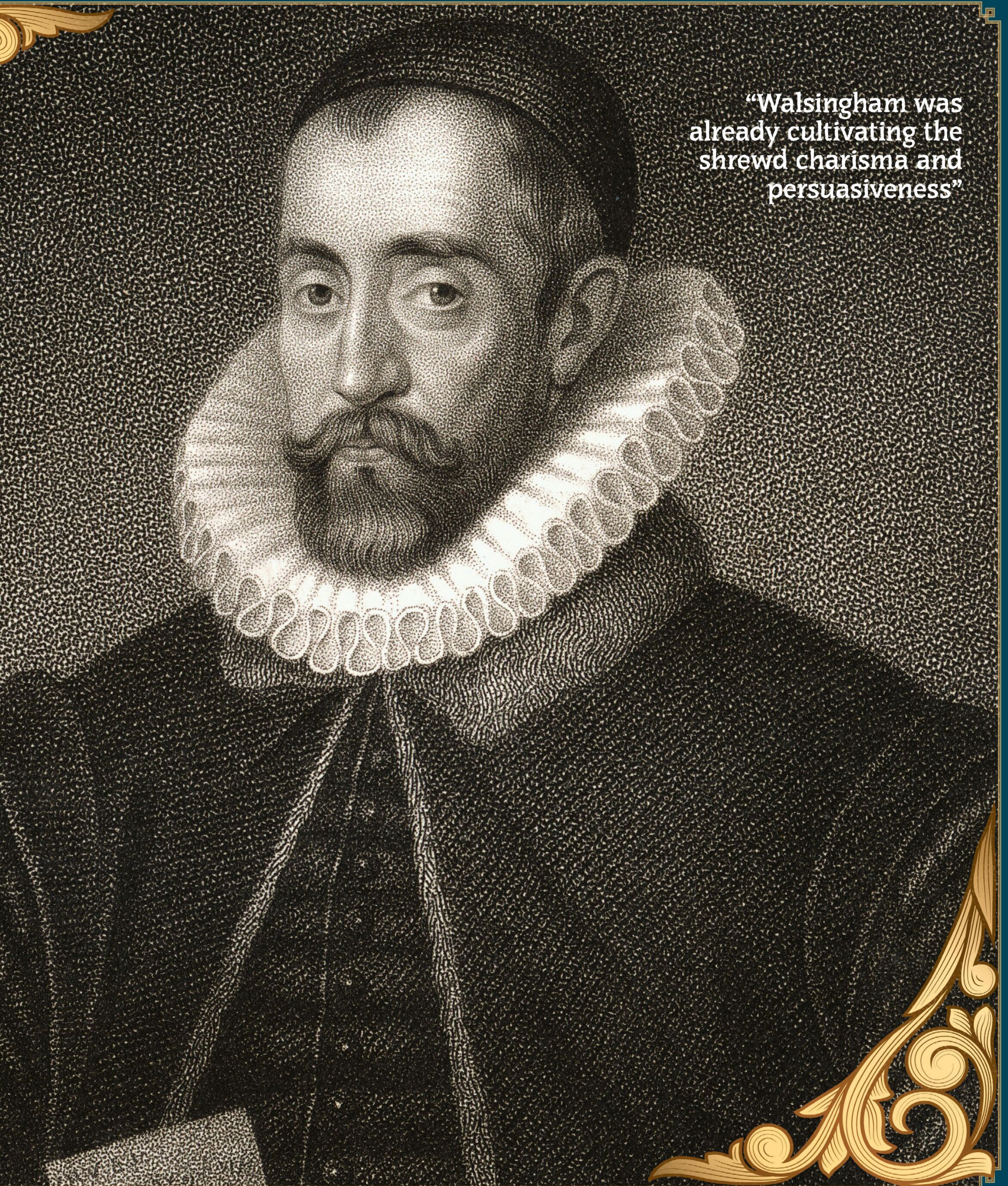
Walsingham experienced a privileged education but like many staunch Protestants, he had to flee the country when the zealous Catholic Mary Tudor ascended the throne. During this period he lived in Italy, developing his language abilities and, more importantly, his people skills. This was the first time he had been able to meet and converse with all different kinds



Walsingham was a pioneer in intelligence gathering and his methods were used into the 20th century

Walsingham witnessed the Saint Bartholomew's Day massacre first hand, where thousands were killed

“Walsingham was already cultivating the shrewd charisma and persuasiveness”



of people and he would later comment that it was important to take note of the “manners and dispositions” of people from all walks of life. He was already cultivating the shrewd charisma and persuasiveness that would see him become one of the most powerful men in England.

When Elizabeth was crowned in 1558, it was finally safe for Walsingham to return home. Only a few months later, he was elected as a member of Parliament, though he had very little enthusiasm for this role despite holding it until his death. There was something he did have an interest in, however, and with Elizabeth’s ascension the age of it had begun - espionage.

England’s relationship with Spain had been good under Mary I - she had even attempted a marriage with King Philip - and there was talk of Elizabeth continuing this trend. However, this was not to be. Rather than a strengthened bond between the two nations, they drifted apart. Of course, Spain’s Catholic king was not overly fond of Elizabeth’s Protestant allegiances and when Protestant rebellions sparked in Spanish-owned countries, England’s calls for Protestant unity did not go unnoticed. These tensions eventually mounted into Spanish ships attacking English privateers and any chance of an amicable alliance was lost.

The king himself, Philip II, did little to help relations. He was an infamously suspicious man, untrusting even of his own faithful servants, and he often disgraced men and women loyal to him. He was dubbed the ‘spider king’ due to the many plots he would weave from the shadows.

His own court historian wrote that “his smile and his dagger were very close”. This caused bitter infighting within the Spanish court, which seeped into government and the country itself. This court of distrust and betrayal created the perfect atmosphere for foreign powers to take advantage - and England intended to expose and extort of all of the king’s weaknesses.

Walsingham had already been plucked by William Cecil, Elizabeth’s most trusted secretary, to perform “confidential” tasks. He was a talented linguist and used his skills to spy on foreigners in London who may have borne ill will towards the monarch. Walsingham was not only good at this - his skills were unparalleled. He developed his own resources, recruiting talented men to work for him throughout the country, as well as in the major cities of Europe.

He was already hearing whispers of a plan by Spanish and French Catholics to place the Catholic Mary Stuart - also known as Mary, Queen of Scots

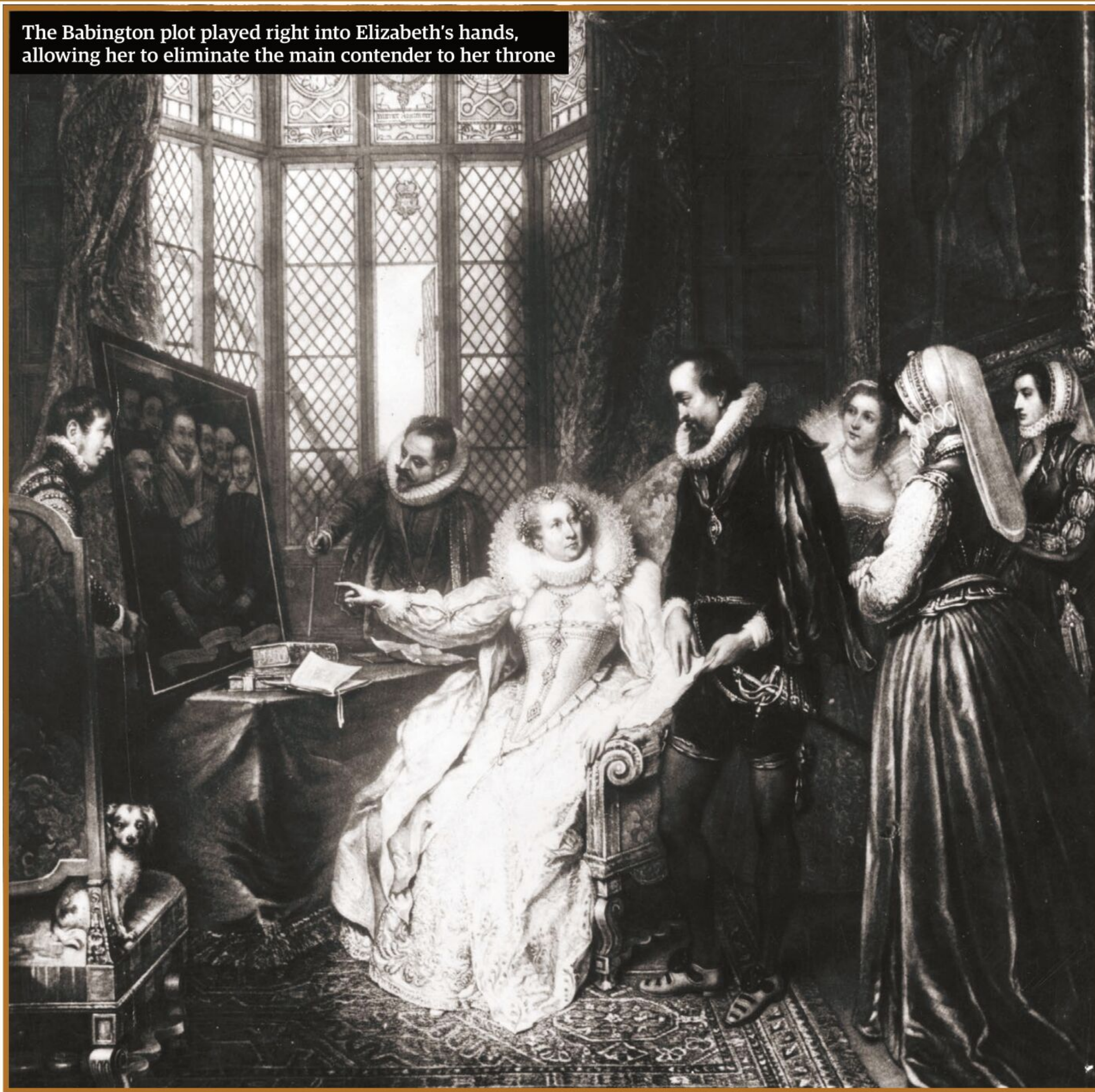
- on the throne and he urged Cecil to take these rumours seriously, saying that “there is less danger in fearing too much than too little”. This mantra would follow him throughout his career and see him foil some of the most dangerous conspiracies against a monarch in English history.

Walsingham’s persuasion skills did not go unnoticed, and between 1570 and 1573 he served as the ambassador to the French court. Here he tried to obtain a union between Elizabeth and the duke of Anjou, hoping that an alliance between the two old enemies would stop France from siding with Spain against England. However, he merely became convinced that an accord between the two nations with their differing religious beliefs was impossible, and that instead it is “less peril to live with them as enemies, than as friends”.

Walsingham knew enemies - he knew how to spy on them and how to deal with them. He knew how to be distrustful. What he wasn’t so good at, however, was cultivating friendships. He was dry, dark, sallow and brutally honest with his companions. For many, Walsingham was a difficult pill to swallow and he even had fiery encounters with Elizabeth herself. However, all this was tolerated due to his supreme political and intelligence-gathering skills. Elizabeth knew she faced one of the greatest political schemers in Philip II and she needed her own weaver of plots in order to best him.

Walsingham returned to England towards the end of 1573 and was made a principal secretary, handling domestic and foreign affairs - but his attention was drawn to one very specific person. He knew that all Catholic hope now rested on

The Babington plot played right into Elizabeth’s hands, allowing her to eliminate the main contender to her throne



As a Protestant, Elizabeth faced plots to put Catholic royals on the English throne

Mary Stuart and as long as she remained alive, schemes would rise up to put her on the throne. Walsingham was determined to squash every single one of them.

The spymaster concentrated on expanding his ring. He had eyes not only in every major county of England, but also France, Scotland, Spain, Italy, Turkey and even as far as North Africa. It is rumoured that at one time he had 53 agents in foreign courts and 18 more with undefined roles. Almost all of these spies were Catholics willing to betray each other, and he obtained his men by any means necessary. Walsingham used prison informants and double agents sourced through bribery and even threats. At home, men were trained to decipher correspondence, feigning handwriting and even in the art of repairing seals so no one would ever know that they had been tampered with.

It was the vastest and arguably most successful spy ring of the Elizabethan age, and a model that would be replicated and expanded on into the 20th century. Walsingham was eventually given an annual stipend of £2,000 a year to fund his secret activities. He wasn't the only person employing and using spies at this time - far from it - but his ring was so extensive and deployed so expertly that no one else could hope to rival it.

“He was a talented linguist and used his skills to spy on foreigners in London”

Walsingham's efforts did not go unrewarded. In 1583, one of his spies in the French embassy in London caught wind of secret documents being passed through the embassy itself. The man suspected of being involved was Francis Throckmorton, and Walsingham placed him under increased surveillance. He was arrested six months later and on his person was a map of ports and a list of Catholic supporters.

After some persuasive torture techniques, the details of the plan were confessed. Throckmorton was involved in a planned invasion of England by combined French and Spanish troops, as well as a planned assassination of the queen that would end by placing Mary Stuart on the throne in her place.

Not only was Throckmorton convicted of treason and executed, but the Spanish ambassador, found to be involved in the plot, was expelled from the country. The conspiracy revealed plainly that Spain was never going to be an ally to an England ruled by Elizabeth and diplomatic relations with the country were severed - no more Spanish ambassadors would be welcome in the London court. Spain was now an enemy.

The Throckmorton plot only served to increase Walsingham's concerns about growing support for Mary in England, and he was right to be suspicious.

CRIME AND PUNISHMENT

Elizabeth's top torturer had ways of making you talk

Richard Topcliffe was born into a very well connected family, with links to Anne Boleyn and Catherine Parr. When his father died young, he found himself in charge of a large and wealthy estate. A close companion of the queen, he was employed to extract 'confessions' through interrogation and often torture. Bashed by some as an inhumane beast capable of unimaginable cruelty, he would often attend the execution of his victims as a kind of master of ceremonies. Described as a "veteran in evil", Topcliffe was immensely proud of his work.

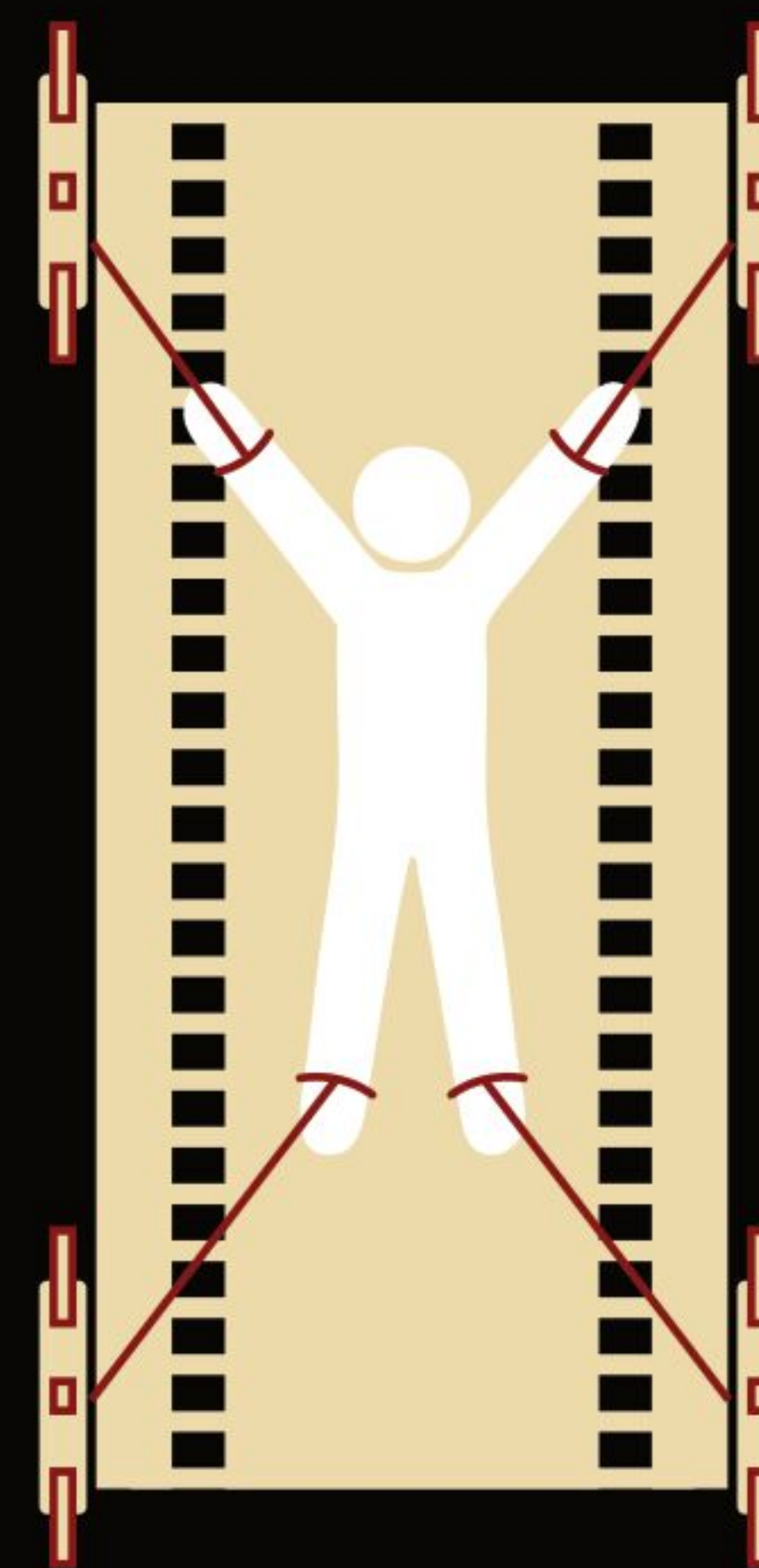
Manacles

Prisoners were hung by the wrists in metal manacles. This procedure would last for hours at a time without any break and could cause permanent internal injury and death.



The rack

A man was fastened to the contraption and very slowly and painfully stretched, causing bones to become dislocated. Topcliffe put his own spin on this by placing a large stone under the victim's spine.



Mental torture

Not all of Topcliffe's abuse was physical - he would also talk to and scream at his victims to break their spirit along with their body. He would lie to and berate them until they no longer knew the truth from their dark prison cell.



Torture machine

Somewhat of a mystery, Topcliffe was known to have his own torture chamber created in his London home. There he claimed to have a torture machine designed by himself that was apparently far more efficient at eliciting confessions.



Rape

Although not a legal form of torture, at least one confirmed case of rape occurred during Topcliffe's time. Either himself or one of his men raped Anne Bellamy to extract a suspect's location. She became pregnant and was forced to marry a servant to cover up the crime.

Elizabeth gifted this painting to Walsingham personally, showing her trust and appreciation for his work



THE ROGUES GALLERY

Walsingham's men were spies who sold their honour and loyalty to the highest bidder

GIORDANO BRUNO

An Italian friar, poet and philosopher, Bruno was close friends with Philip Sydney. While he was in London, it is believed that Walsingham had him deployed as a spy for the court in the French embassy. His information led to the reveal of a plot to dispose of Elizabeth and replace her with Mary Stuart.

THOMAS PHELIPPES

Coming from humble origins as the son of a cloth merchant, Phelippes managed to climb the social ladder thanks to his amazing ability with languages. Speaking French, Italian, Spanish, Latin and German, his skills easily transferred to make him a talented cryptographer and he was snatched up by Walsingham to help decipher enemy letters. His work proved that Mary Stuart was involved in a plot to oust Elizabeth, which resulted in her execution.

ROBERT POLEY

Poley's origins are swathed in mystery. In 1580, he appeared almost out of nowhere with a large amount of money. He was determined to find work as a spy and Walsingham ushered him into the network as a Catholic informer. He befriended the masterminds of the Babington plot and proved to be monumental in its undoing.

GILBERT GIFFORD

Born to a Catholic family, Gifford was ordained as a Catholic deacon. He was actually arrested by Walsingham but agreed to work for him as a double agent. Given the codename 'number four', he befriended Mary Stuart and secretly delivered coded letters from her to Walsingham. After the plot was revealed, he quickly fled to France and was ordained as a priest in Rheims. To this day, whether he was allied to Walsingham and Elizabeth or Mary remains a mystery.

ANTONY STANDEN

Known by the alias Pompero Pellegrini, Standen was another Catholic who had been convinced by Walsingham to act as a spy. Although he was settled in France, he was able to obtain crucial information about plans for the Spanish Armada for over two years, including a list of ships, supplies and men. Despite his service to England, Standen's devotion to the Catholic Church resulted in him being imprisoned in the Tower of London.



Walsingham's intervention in the Babington plot led to the downfall and execution of Mary, Queen of Scots



Philip reigned over Spain at its most powerful, but there were also five state bankruptcies

Cut off from correspondence for nearly a year, Mary was eager to take advantage of a chance to send and receive her mail through beer barrels. Little did Mary know, her letters were falling right into the hands of Walsingham and his men, decoded and read in London, then sent on their way.

During this infiltration, messages were received from Anthony Babington, a wealthy Catholic gentleman who had recruited his own team with one aim in mind: assassinating Elizabeth. This society also had links with Europe and, of course, Spain. Before the plot, or the queen, could be executed, Walsingham tricked the men into revealing themselves and they were promptly rounded up and arrested. Many of the conspirators were tortured, most notably a priest, Ballard, who had to be carried to his execution in a chair as he was unable to walk.

However, the biggest success was that it directly implicated Mary herself in the scheme. Elizabeth finally had reason to act and Mary was arrested, sent to trial and found guilty. The queen then reluctantly signed her own cousin's death warrant and she was beheaded. The Catholic threat, from within England at least, was, for now, eliminated and it was all thanks to Walsingham's eyes and ears across the nation.

Although Walsingham was successful with foiling plots from within the nation, the threat from outside was still very real. Philip the spider king had given up all pretence of allying with England and instead set about making sure Spain would be the most powerful nation in Europe.

His most alarming action was his move to conquer Portugal by force, claiming the land was his as the recently deceased king was his childless nephew. Elizabeth, however fiery, did not wish to go to war with the nation but found herself with no



During the Armada, Elizabeth proclaimed herself to "have the heart and stomach of a king - and of a king of England, too"

option but to send troops to the Protestant rebels in the Netherlands, who were revolting against the Spanish king's hegemony. To Philip, this move was unacceptable - he believed that only by defeating England could he continue his quest for power and control over Europe.

Philip had a plan and it was a huge one. He would create an armada large and powerful enough to put a stop to England's meddling once and for all - and conquer it in the process. He did everything he could to gain Catholic support for this mission against the Protestant nation, although quite a few of these allies showed doubt if Philip's interests were truly to Catholicism or purely to Spain. However, for all intents and purposes, things were going to plan. As he rapidly built up his numbers, Philip secretly schemed the downfall of his most persistent thorns: Elizabeth and England.

England, however, was not oblivious to the spider king's plans. Walsingham had already been informed by his many spies, expertly placed in foreign courts, that Spain was planning to launch an invasion of the country. He wasn't powerful enough to stop it completely, but his intelligence meant he could certainly prepare the country and lessen the threat.

Dover Harbour was rebuilt so that it was ready for an invasion and he urged his agents across the world to promote more aggressive strategies by attacking Spanish holdings in the hope that this would distract Spain, giving him more time to prepare. In particular, he ensured that Francis Drake's surprise raid on Cádiz would remain just

that, which he did by feeding false information to the England ambassador in Paris.

Walsingham already suspected the ambassador was working for the Spanish and, as usual, his hunch was correct. Drake's raid was a success - it wreaked havoc with the Spanish logistics and set the launch of Philip's Armada back by a considerable amount.

When the Armada finally set sail in 1588, Walsingham already knew how many ships to expect, how many men

were on board and what they were carrying. Not only was the 'moor' given frequent updates from the English Navy, but he even raised his own land defence, should it get that far, with 260 men at his command, ready to defend England.

When the Armada was vanquished in August 1588, the naval commander Lord Henry Seymour wrote to Walsingham: "You have fought more with your pen than many have in our English navy fought with their enemies." For now, at least, the Spanish threat was crushed but Philip would continue to set his sights on England for years to come. However, as long as Walsingham and his spies were listening in the shadows, Elizabeth would be one step ahead of the spider king's ploys.

Walsingham lived in Padua, Italy, for five years, and while there he became fluent in Italian and French

Elizabeth nicknamed William Cecil her 'spirit' alongside Walsingham's 'Moor'



“The risks were high, but the profits, if successful, were even greater”





The Tudor Empire

In the age of exploration, the fate of nations and the fortunes of men were created, sunk and stolen on the open seas



In the years before Elizabeth ascended the throne, England was plagued by internal conflicts. Her father Henry VIII's split from the Roman Catholic Church had caused England to fall out of favour with Rome, and then the early death of his heir Edward VI prompted a succession crisis. The country had switched from Protestant to Catholic with the rise of Mary I, and those who dared to challenge her were burned in the streets without mercy. While other countries were prospering, England was struggling to maintain order within its own borders. What the country needed was a stable, temperate ruler, one whose reign would allow the nation to flourish; that is what it found in Elizabeth.

A Protestant, but without the extreme beliefs of her father, Elizabeth was tolerant, moderate and wise enough to listen to her counsellors. Finally, with the country somewhat stable, its population was able to look outwards. They discovered that the world had very much moved on without them. Spanish, Italian and Portuguese explorers ruled the waves. Using their sophisticated navigation tools, they had set up powerful and profitable trading routes, and if it didn't act soon, England would find itself isolated and vulnerable.

Armed with new navigation tools, English sailors were finally bold enough to sail beyond the sight of land and into the open sea. The spirit of exploration gripped the nation, which was eager to best the competition, spread Christianity and, most importantly, claim riches.

Figures such as Walter Raleigh and Francis Drake, a virtual unknown, became household names after completing valiant voyages. As riches began to pour in, more and more ambitious seamen took to the waves eager for a taste of glory, wealth and adventure. The risks were high, but the profits, if successful, were even greater.

It became obvious that true wealth lay in trade and an abundance of chartered companies began to pop up around the country. Making perilous journeys to plant their flags in far-off exotic lands, traders brought a stream of valuable eastern spices, pepper, nutmeg, wine, precious stones, dyes and even slaves pouring into England.

It was an era of exploration, an era of change; a time when a lowly sailor with an adventurous spirit could make his fortune if he was daring enough to take it. There was a new world to explore, and it seemed like the entire world order could change as quickly as the wind.





The pirate knight

Writer, courtier, spy – Sir Walter Raleigh used his favour with the queen to wipe out his Spanish rivals

The life story of Sir Walter Raleigh is one of glittering highs and devastating lows. It perfectly encapsulates how, in the age of exploration, one's fate could be changed, for better or worse, in an instant.

Born into moderate influence, Raleigh was the youngest son of a highly Protestant family. Educated at Oxford University, it seemed he was set for an academic life, but when the French religious civil wars broke out, he left the country to serve with the Huguenots against King Charles IX of France. However, it was his participation in the Desmond Rebellions in Ireland that would forever

alter his life. When uprisings broke out in Munster, Raleigh fought in the queen's army to suppress the rebels. His ruthlessness in punishing the rebels at the Siege of Smerwick in 1580 and his subsequent seizure of lands saw him become a powerful landowner and, most importantly, it caught the attention of the queen.

Oozing natural charm and wit, Raleigh became a frequent visitor to the royal court and he soon became a firm favourite of Elizabeth. She bestowed her beloved courtier with large estates and even a knighthood. Her deep trust in Raleigh was demonstrated in 1587, when she made him captain of the Queen's Guard.

It is no surprise then that when Raleigh suggested colonising America, it was supported wholeheartedly by the queen, who granted him trade privileges to do just that. From 1584 to 1589, Raleigh led several voyages to the New World; he explored from North Carolina to Florida and bestowed it with the name 'Virginia' in honour of the Virgin Queen. His attempts to establish colonies, however, ended in failure. His settlement at Roanoke Island especially was a disaster, as the entire colony mysteriously disappeared, their fate unknown to this day.

Raleigh and his men attacking a Spanish fort



SHIP'S LOG *Tudor ships explored the world, but the journey was anything but luxurious*

7 February 1595

Rats have infested the ship, making the deck even more uncomfortable and cramped to sleep on. After the vicious winds last night, the sails have been repaired and the water pumped out of the ship. Luckily my backgammon set was not harmed.

15 March 1595

Supplies running low. Hardtack biscuits are completely riddled with maggots and worms but, with nothing else, there is no choice but to eat them. Water no longer suitable to drink, so must survive on beer alone.

18 April 1595

Many of the men have fallen victim to scurvy. The doctor is unable to do much to

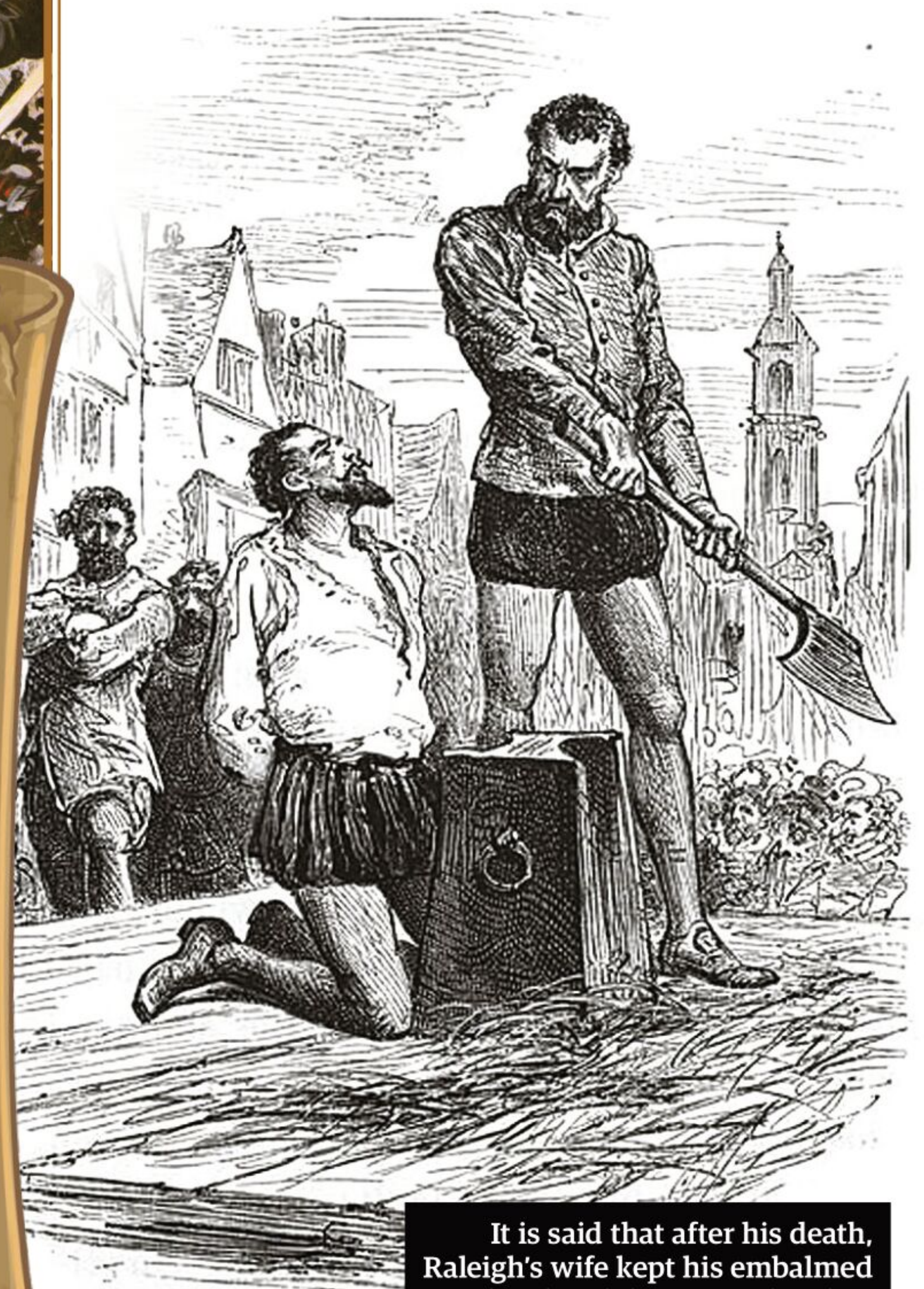
ease their symptoms. Their teeth are falling out and sores have broken out all over their bodies. Some cases became so severe that several men have died. We threw the corpses overboard.

2 June 1595

The men are getting restless and rebellious. One had to be flogged after speaking back to an officer. Another was keelhauled – tied to a line looped around the ship, thrown overboard and dragged under the vessel. The barnacles cut him up so terribly that he lost an arm.

29 June 1595

Saw some driftwood today, and another officer informed me he saw a seabird. We may be close to land. This completely contradicts the map we were given (again), so new instructions will need to be drawn up if land is spotted.



It is said that after his death, Raleigh's wife kept his embalmed head with her in a velvet bag





The Roanoke colony was not the only one to experience a disastrous end - Raleigh's relationship with the queen was destroyed when she discovered his secret marriage to one of her own ladies-in-waiting. Not only was she 11 years younger than him, but she was also pregnant. Furious that he had failed to obtain her permission, and likely more than a little jealous Elizabeth had Raleigh imprisoned and his wife cast out of court.

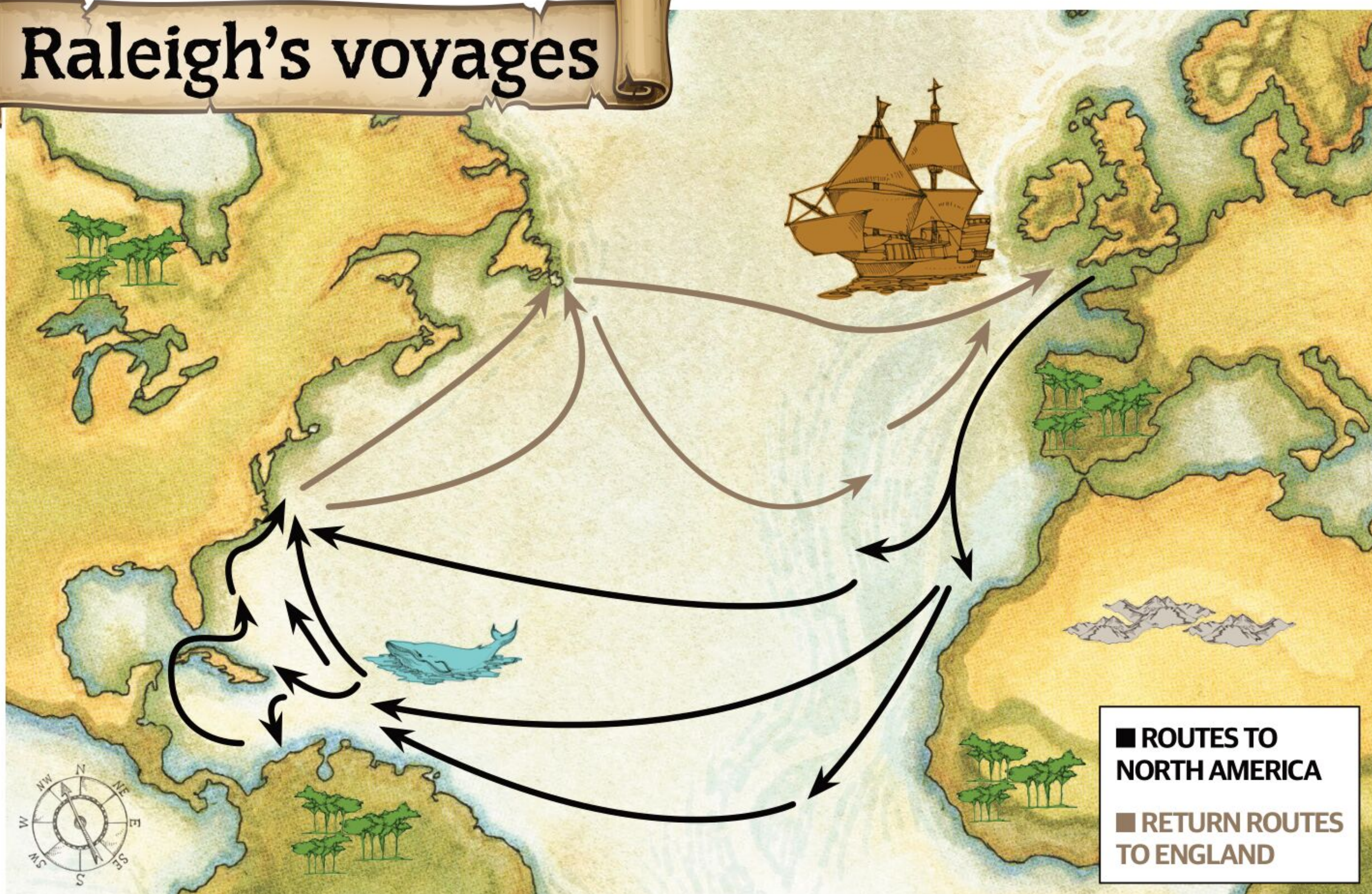
Upon his release, Raleigh was eager to reclaim favour with the monarch so led a mission to search for the legendary city of gold - El Dorado. Although his accounts would claim otherwise, he did not find the city of legend, but instead explored modern-day Guyana and Venezuela. His attack on the powerful Spanish port of Cádiz and attempts to destroy the newly formed Spanish Armada helped to gradually win back favour with Elizabeth.

When Elizabeth died and James I came to the throne in 1603, Raleigh must have realised his

time was up. His ruthless spirit and charm had won him a soft spot in the English queen's heart, but the Scottish king took an immediate dislike to him. Raleigh was arrested and imprisoned in the Tower of London less than a year after James' ascension. He was found guilty of treason, but was spared from his death sentence and committed to life imprisonment. In 1616 he was released by the money-hungry king to, yet again, search for the fabled city of gold, which his own accounts had helped make into a legend.

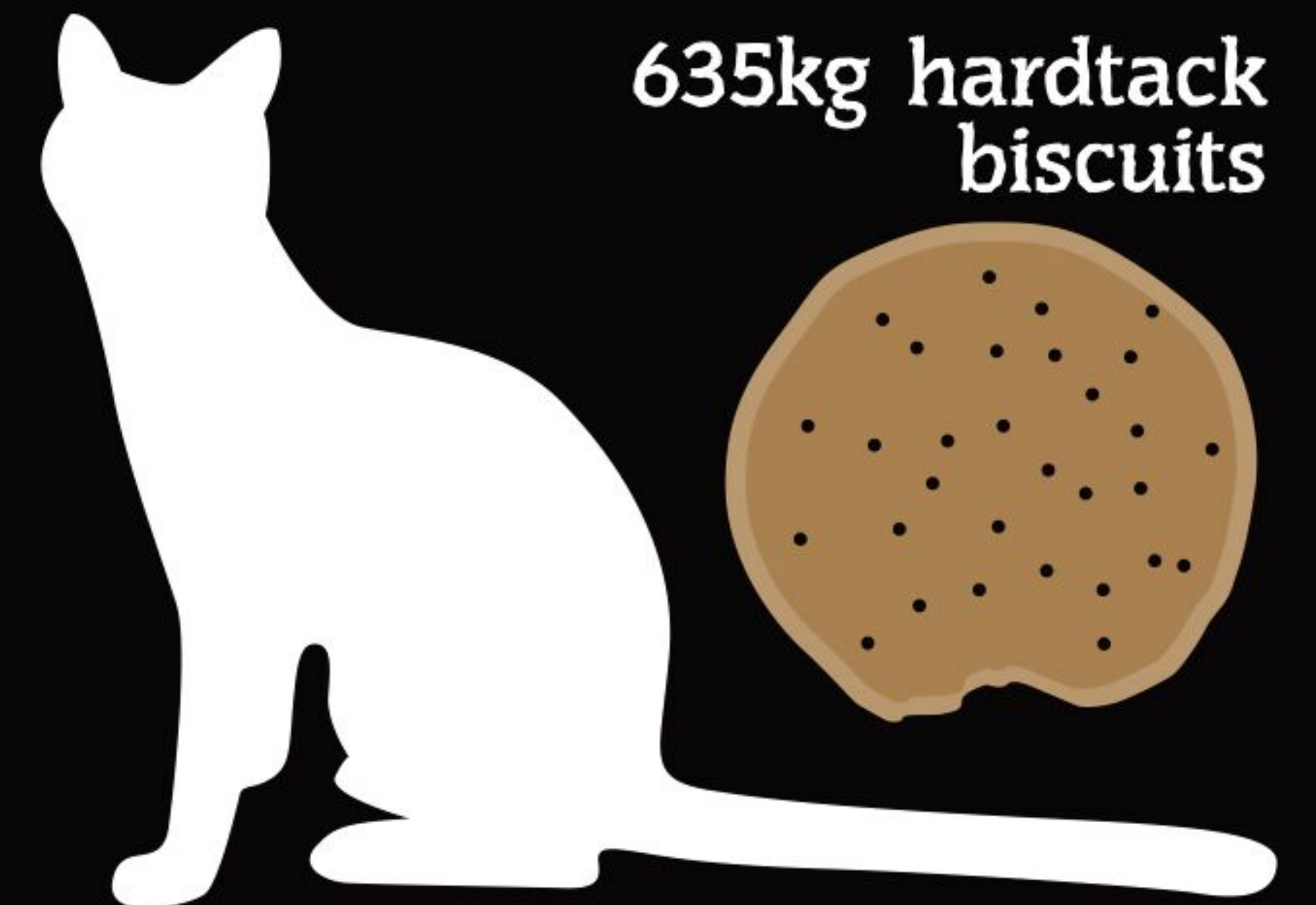
During the expedition, he disobeyed James' orders and attacked a Spanish outpost. Spain was furious, and in order to appease them, James had no choice but to punish the rebellious adventurer. Raleigh was re-arrested and his sentence was finally carried out. Bold and cunning to the end, Raleigh reportedly said to his executioner: "This is sharp medicine, but it is a cure for all diseases. What dost thou fear? Strike, man, strike."

Raleigh's voyages



WHAT WAS ON BOARD

A ship of 200 men setting sail for a week would be loaded with...



635kg hardtack biscuits

1 cat
(black or white)



68kg fish



726kg salted beef or pork



1 set of clothes per man



200 rats



34kg butter



54kg cheese



20 animals
(including goats, chickens, pigs and lambs)



1,400 gallons of beer





A SHAKY START

1 On 15 November 1577, Drake sets off from Plymouth, but his voyage is immediately halted by bad weather. He is forced to return to Plymouth to repair his already battered ships. On 13 December, he sets sail again on the Pelican. He is accompanied by four other boats manned by 164 men, and he soon adds a sixth vessel to his fleet.

THE MYSTERY LANDING

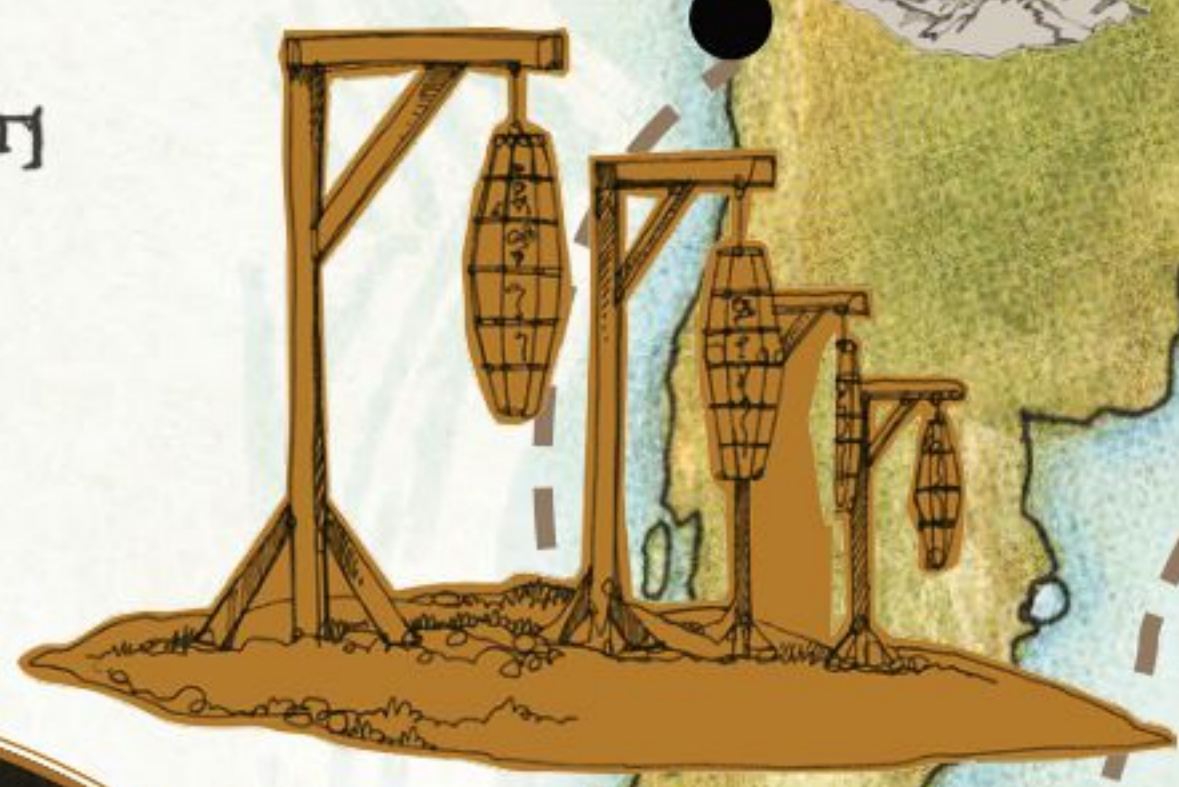
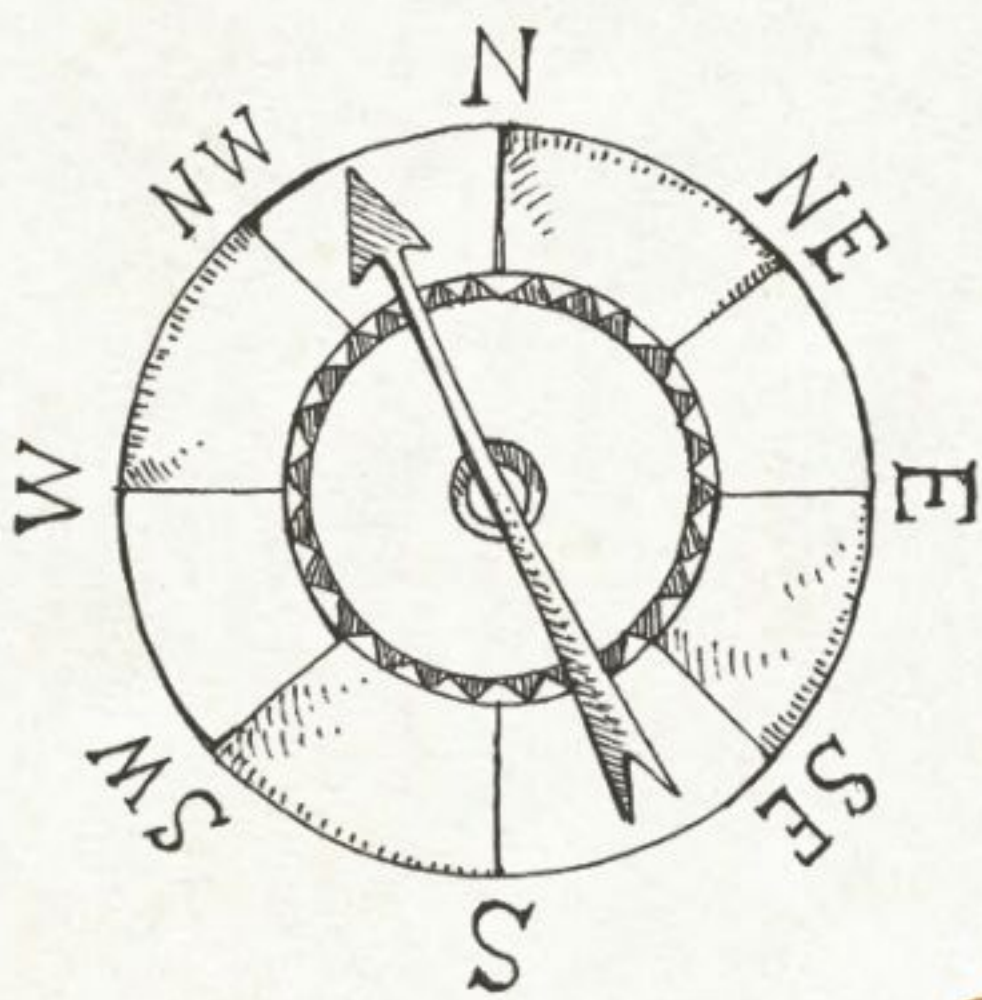
4 Drake sails north and lands on the coast of California on 1 June 1579. While there he befriends the natives and dubs the land Nova Albion, or New Britain. The location of this port remains a mystery to this day as all maps were altered to keep it a secret from the Spanish. The officially recognised location is now Drakes Bay, California.

A GRIM LANDING

2 After being forced to sink two ships, Drake lands on the bay of San Julian, where he burns another rotting ship. There, Drake tries Thomas Doughty, who is accused of treachery and incitement to mutiny. He is sentenced to death and executed alongside the decaying skeletons swinging in the Spanish gibbets.

THE LONE FLAGSHIP

3 With just three ships remaining, Drake reaches the Pacific Ocean. However, sudden violent storms destroy one and force another to return home. The flagship Pelican is pushed south and they discover an island, which Drake names Elizabeth Island. He then changes the name of his lone ship to the Golden Hind.



For many, Sir Francis Drake is a physical embodiment of the glories of Tudor England. But Drake

himself was an entirely untypical hero.

His birth was viewed so unremarkable that no one is sure exactly when it was. He came from a very ordinary family; he was the eldest of 12 sons, and his father was a farmer. When the Catholic Mary began to persecute Protestants, the family fled from Devonshire to Kent, where his father became a preacher. It seemed fate itself wished to place Drake on a ship, as he was apprenticed to their neighbour, and when the old, childless sailor died, he left his ship to his favourite pupil.

By the 1560s, the young Drake was making frequent trips to Africa. There, he would capture slaves and sell them in New Spain. This was against Spanish law and in 1568 his fleet was trapped by Spaniards in the Mexican port of San Juan de Ulúa. Although Drake managed to escape, many of his men were killed. This incident instilled a deep hatred in Drake towards the Spanish crown that would last throughout his entire life.

In 1572 he received a privateer's commission from Elizabeth and set his sights on plundering any Spanish ship that crossed his path. He targeted wealthy Spanish-owned port towns and settlements, attacking them and claiming as much gold and silver as he could load on to his ships. It

Dragon of the seas

A world full of riches awaited to make England a wealthy and powerful nation once again

THE HIND LIVES ON

5 Drake reaches a group of islands in the southwest Pacific known as the Moluccas. After a close shave in which the Golden Hind is almost lost after being caught on a reef, Drake befriends the sultan king of the islands.

THE VALIANT RETURN

6 On 26 September 1580, the Golden Hind finally returns to Plymouth with Drake and the 59 remaining crew members onboard. The queen receives half of the treasures and spices loaded onto the ship. In return, Elizabeth gives Drake a jewel with her miniature portrait, now known as the Drake Jewel.

Tudor navigation

Although Tudor sailors liked to paint themselves as masters of the seas, their navigation tools were rather primitive and a lot of guesswork was involved. Maps did exist, but they were often incorrect as much land was undiscovered. Compasses were used for direction and an instrument called a nocturnal was used to determine the alignment of the stars, which helped to calculate tides. The term 'knots' came from a Tudor method to calculate the speed of a ship - a piece of wood attached to a rope with knots in it was cast out and the knots counted as they passed through a sailor's fingers. Another sailor used a sandglass to determine how many knots were travelled in a period of time.

was Drake who, when discovering that he had too much gold to carry, decided to bury it and reclaim it later. This was not the only comparison made between Drake and pirates. Although in England his success had seen him become a wealthy and respected explorer, this was not the case in Spain. To the Spaniards whose ships he had plundered, Drake became a bloodthirsty figure to be feared; they even gave him the terrifying nickname 'El Draque' - the Dragon.

Dragon or not, the daring and bountiful voyages of the English adventurer had impressed Queen Elizabeth I. He perfectly epitomised the kind of pioneering English spirit that she felt her country needed to ensure it became a major world power.

In 1577, she sent Drake on an expedition against the Spanish along the Pacific coast of South America. He raided the Spanish settlements in his usual ruthless style and, after plundering Spanish ships along the coasts of Chile and Peru, he landed in California and claimed it for his queen. His journey continued through the Indian Ocean and when he finally returned to England on 26 September 1580, he became the first Englishman to circumnavigate the world. This delighted the queen, but what pleased her even more were the pretty jewels he bestowed upon her. In a move that insulted the king of Spain, she dined on board the explorer's ship, bestowed him with a jewel of her own and gave him a knighthood.

Drake's formidable success at the expense of Spain did not end there. In 1588 he was made vice admiral of the navy, and when 130 Spanish Armada ships entered the English Channel, he fought them back with relish. Now he wasn't only a wealthy explorer and royal favourite - he was also a war hero. However, in 1596 his luck finally ran out. The queen requested him to engage his old enemy Spain one last time and in a mission to capture the Spanish treasure in Panama, Drake contracted dysentery and died. His body was placed in a lead coffin and cast out to sea. His enduring legacy remains, and to this day divers continue to search for the coffin of the man who led Elizabethan England to glory.

The Muscovy Company's demands to close Russian trade to other European powers were met with anger by Tsar Ivan IV



TRADE INVOICE

Slaves: Africa

Oriental spices: cinnamon, cloves, peppers – China and India

Currants: dried wine grapes – Eastern Mediterranean

Wine: Eastern Mediterranean

Cotton: Eastern Mediterranean

Silk: Eastern Mediterranean

Cordage: Russia

Hemp: Russia

Furs: Russia

Carpets: Turkey

Silk: Persia

Fruit: Mediterranean

Sugar: North Africa

Treasures of the empire

A world full of riches awaited to make England a wealthy and powerful nation once again

When it came to trade, England had some catching up to do. For a long time, Italian spice and dye traders dominated the seas, but that monopoly was finally broken by Spain and Portugal. In their efforts to loosen the Italian hold on trade, these traders discovered sea routes to the Indies and the hugely valuable spices that lay beyond. England looked on greedily as Spain grew wealthier and became determined to share in the riches that were on offer in the New World. If England failed to get a foothold in exploration, its European rivals would leave it behind and the nation would be left vulnerable. Trade didn't just mean riches anymore - it meant survival.

After an English spy gained a copy of *Breve compendio de la sphaera*, a secret Spanish textbook that held the secrets to success at sea, craftsmen began designing new instruments and English explorers were finally ready to take to the waves. Queen Elizabeth supported the voyages of these intrepid explorers and expressed that she would not disapprove if they were to take advantage of richly laden Spanish ships while doing so. Soon, English adventurers gained a reputation for piracy, although the raids were conducted not by pirates but by 'privateers'. Spanish ships in the Caribbean trembled in terror upon the sight of an English galleon. A new world was dawning, and English traders would come to rule it.



The East India Company

The tiny English company that came to control half of all the world's trade

When Queen Elizabeth granted a royal charter to the traders that would become the East India Trading Company, it's doubtful she could foresee the impact it would have upon the world. The 15-year charter permitted the fledgling company a monopoly on trade with countries east of the Cape of Good Hope and west of the Straits of Magellan, but they were motivated by one thing - spices. However, the Dutch East India Company had the monopoly and the small English company had to work from the bottom up, slowly gaining income and respect. Eventually the company's trade in spices, cotton and silk saw profits pour in. Just 47 years after its creation, the little business had morphed into a giant. For many, the pioneering nature of the company was symbolic of the spirit of exploration, tearing down the barriers of the world. But as the company became more powerful, its ambitions grew in kind. The initial focus on trade turned into dangerous colonial aspirations that would lead to the company's eventual downfall.



Elizabethan privateer James Lancaster commanded the first East India Company voyage



A 1593 map of Muscovy, in modern-day Russia

Expanding East

The East India Company weren't the only English traders to rule the seas

Although the East India Trading Company was a major player in English trade, many other companies were making waves worldwide. The first major chartered joint stock company was the Muscovy Company, focusing on trade between England and Muscovy in modern-day Russia.

Dealing with this mysterious state in the frozen tundra involved perilous journeys that left one crew frozen, but when Richard Chancellor finally made it to Moscow he found a market eager to trade. English wool was exchanged for Russian fur and an array of valuable goods. The Muscovy Company even led to a marriage proposal from Ivan the Terrible to Queen Elizabeth.

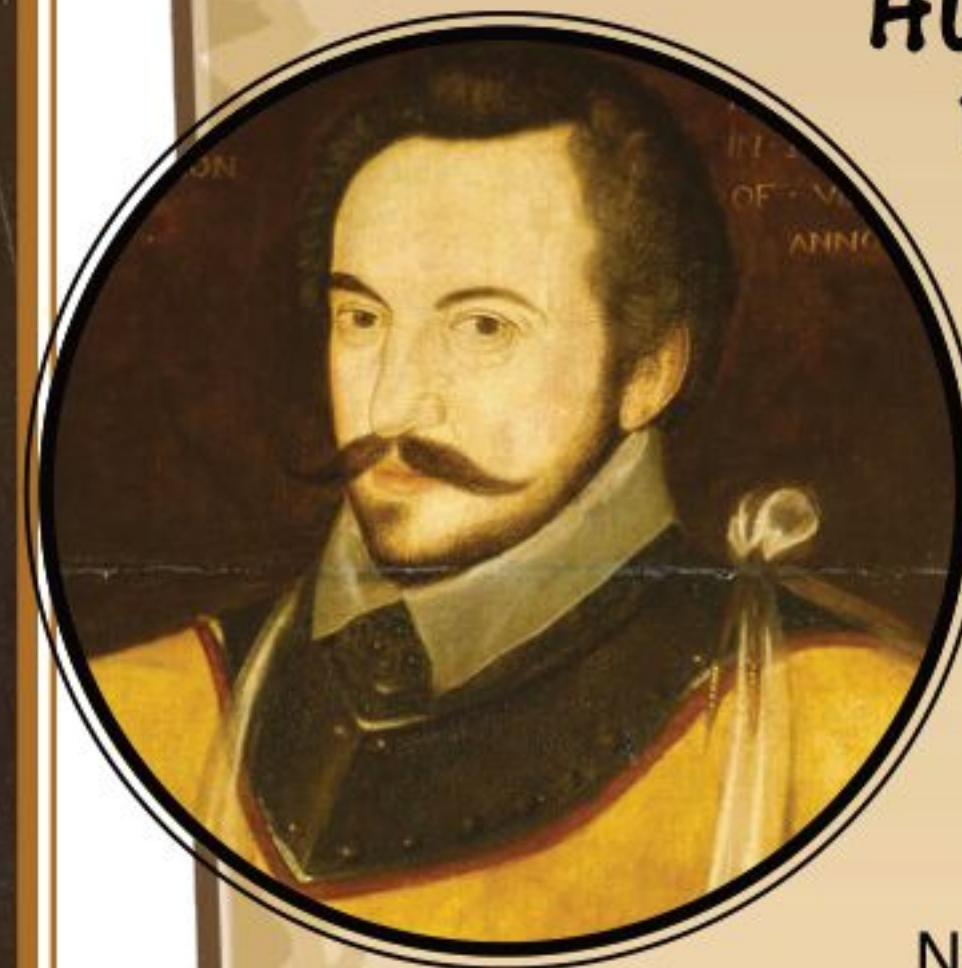
Another major English chartered company was the Levant, or Turkey, Company, drawn to the Ottoman Empire by the lure of exotic spices. The Levant Company amassed a small fortune trading in silk and valuable currants. What set the company apart was that the leaders never appeared to have colonial ambitions, instead working closely with the sultan. This allowed for a relationship of mutual benefit.

FORGOTTEN TUDOR EXPLORERS

The men whose voyages carved the world for England

HUMPHREY GILBERT

1539-1583



Gilbert's voyages established St John's Newfoundland, the easternmost province of Canada, in 1583. An early pioneer of the English colonial empire in North America, Gilbert initially sailed to find a sea route through North America to Asia.

JOHN HAWKINS

1532-1595



A cousin of Francis Drake, Hawkins was not only the chief architect of the navy, but also conducted several voyages to West Africa and South America. He was a trade pioneer and made a huge profit from the slave trade

RICHARD GRENVILLE

1542-1591



A war hero, Grenville was a major part of early attempts to settle in the New World. He attempted to set up colonies in Roanoke Island and his death aboard his ship Revenge is immortalised in Tennyson's poem 'The Revenge'.

MARTIN FROBISHER

1535/1539-1594



Frobisher was determined to find a northwest passage as a trade route to India and China, and made three voyages in an effort to do so. He collected what he believed was 1,550 tons of gold, but was actually worthless iron pyrite.

RICHARD HAWKINS

1562-1622



Son of John Hawkins, he set sail to prey on the Spanish settlements in South America. Although his plundering strongly suggests otherwise, he maintained that it was all in the name of geographical discovery.

Tudor Castles

Discover the palatial homes of one of England's most infamous royal dynasties



The importance of royal residences such as palaces and castles in the Tudor period cannot be overstated. They were not only the homes of the Tudor monarchs but the buildings where politics, power, pleasure and scandal intermingled, bearing witness to some of the biggest moments in English history.

The nobility would flood to these residences in the hope of gaining patronage and favour from their ruler. Many of the palaces and castles from the Tudor period, such as Hampton Court Palace, were intricately designed so that certain parts, such as the monarch's private rooms, could only be accessed by those highest in rank. This was a practice adopted by King Henry VII when he assumed the throne and one subsequently continued by his descendants.

In particular, King Henry VIII and Queen Elizabeth I were known for their glittering courts filled with banquets, dances and all sorts of entertainment, often held to show off the wealth and glamour of the English monarchy to foreign ambassadors. Of course, there would be hundreds of workers at these palaces and castles to serve the monarch and their courtiers, turning these residences into some of the largest employers in the land.

For the Tudor palaces and castles that still survive to this day, they offer visitors a unique opportunity to step into history and bridge the gap between our present and our fascinating past.



Henry's tutor once stated that "Hampton Court hath the pre-eminence"



The Palace of Whitehall City of Westminster, London

The centre of power and government during the Tudor dynasty

Another residence that had once belonged to Cardinal Wolsey, Henry VIII seized York Palace and expanded it greatly, transforming it into the Palace of Whitehall. It was here that Henry secretly married Anne Boleyn, and the palace held her coronation celebrations. Just ten days after Anne's execution, Henry married Jane Seymour there in 1536. Henry then extended the palace once again, ordering refurbishments to celebrate his marriage to Catherine Howard in 1540. Just seven years later, Henry died here on 28 January 1547 at the age of 55.

While life at Whitehall was uneventful during the reigns of King Edward VI and Queen Mary I, the palace was a favourite of Queen Elizabeth I and was where she spent most of her time. In fact, Whitehall was the location of the queen's famous 'Golden Speech' to Parliament in 1601, when she surprised the members by announcing that it would be her final parliament and spoke of her love for them and her country.

Sadly, the majority of the palace was destroyed by fires in 1691 and 1698, although the Banqueting House, the location of King Charles I's execution on 30 January 1649, still stands today.



Hampton Court Palace

Molesey, Surrey

Henry VIII's iconic pleasure palace

Famously remembered as Henry VIII's favourite palace, Hampton Court was actually built for his lord chancellor, Cardinal Thomas Wolsey. After Wolsey's downfall, Henry took the palace for himself and expanded it, notably building the great hall and enlarging the kitchens. It was at Hampton Court that Henry hunted, played tennis and held lavish banquets.

The palace witnessed some of the biggest moments of Henry's life, including his first letter to Rome threatening to break with the papacy, his divorce from Anne of Cleves and marriage to Catherine Howard, the discovery of Catherine's previous relationships and her subsequent arrest, and his marriage to his last wife, Catherine Parr. In fact, all six of Henry's wives spent time at Hampton Court, with symbols representing Catherine of Aragon, Anne Boleyn and Jane Seymour still present today.

However, the most important event to happen at Hampton Court was the birth of Henry's long-awaited son and heir, Prince Edward. The little prince was christened in the palace's Chapel Royal just over a week before the death of his mother and Henry's third wife, Jane.



The Palace of Whitehall was the largest in Europe



Hever Castle

Hever, Kent

The famous seat of the Boleyn family

Hever Castle is arguably one of the most famous residences associated with the Tudors as Anne Boleyn's childhood home. Inherited by her father, Sir Thomas Boleyn, in 1505, Anne would have spent much of her childhood here with her siblings, Mary and George.

While it is disputed whether Anne was born at Hever Castle, she did live there until she was sent to the court of Archduchess Margaret of Austria in 1513, before moving to France to attend King Henry VIII's sister Mary upon her marriage to King Louis XII in 1514.

Anne famously returned to Hever in 1526 after catching Henry's eye, supposedly retreating from court to resist his amorous advances. Her absence would eventually spur a proposal from Henry, who began annulling his marriage to Catherine of Aragon. Anne would return to the castle again in 1528, this time suffering with the deadly sweating sickness, with Henry sending his own doctor to care for her.

After Anne's downfall and execution in 1536 and Thomas' death three years later, Hever Castle was passed on to Henry, who promptly gave it to his fourth wife, Anne of Cleves, as part of her generous annulment settlement in 1540. Following her death in 1557, the castle was owned by a number of different families, never to revert back to the Tudor crown.



Palace of Placentia Greenwich, London

*One of the most important palaces
of the Tudor period*

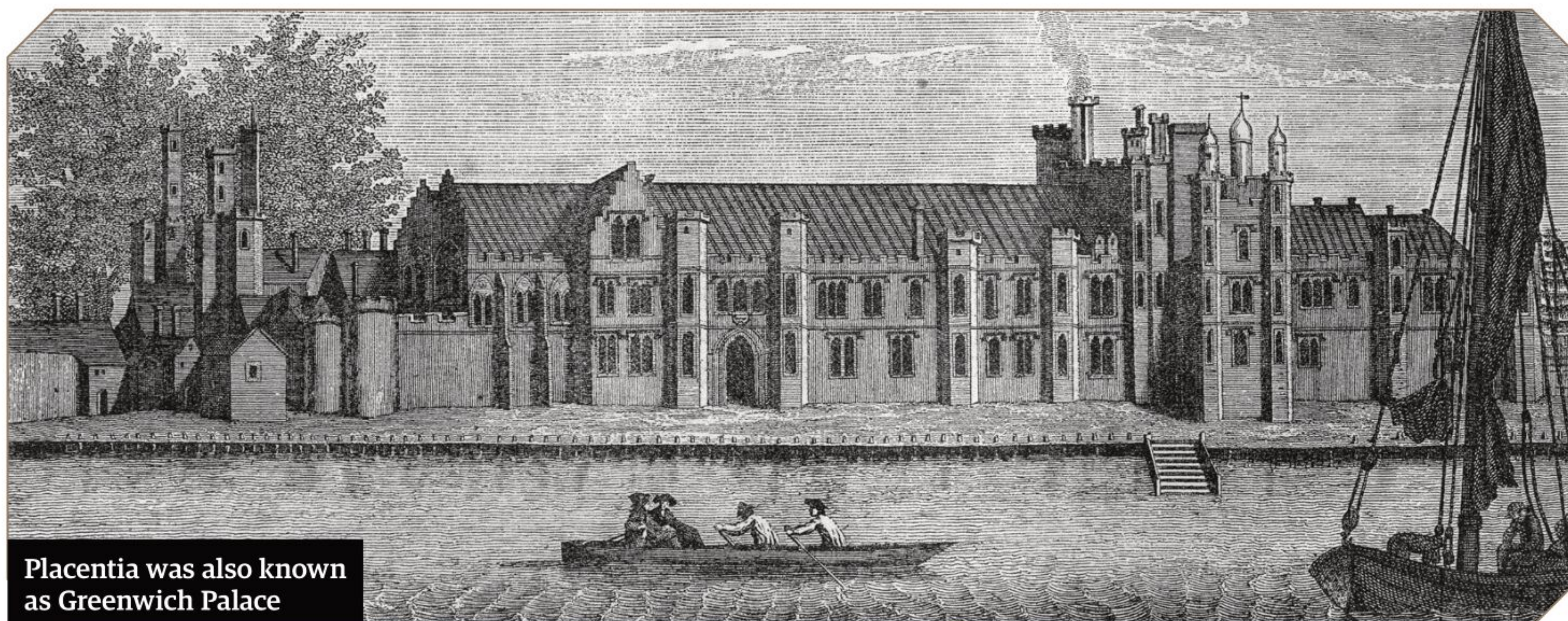
Following his victory in the Wars of the Roses, Henry VII rebuilt and enlarged the Palace of Placentia, creating a royal residence fit for his new dynasty. On 29 June 1491, his son, the future King Henry VIII, was born there and almost three decades later, it would become the birthplace of Henry VIII's first daughter, Mary, and then his second daughter, Elizabeth, in 1533.

The palace remained one of the key residences of Henry VIII's reign, and he held various entertainments

for the court there. Henry married his first wife, Catherine of Aragon, and his fourth wife, Anne of Cleves, at the palace in 1509 and 1540 respectively. In 1536, it was rocked when Anne Boleyn was arrested on charges of adultery and taken to the Tower of London.

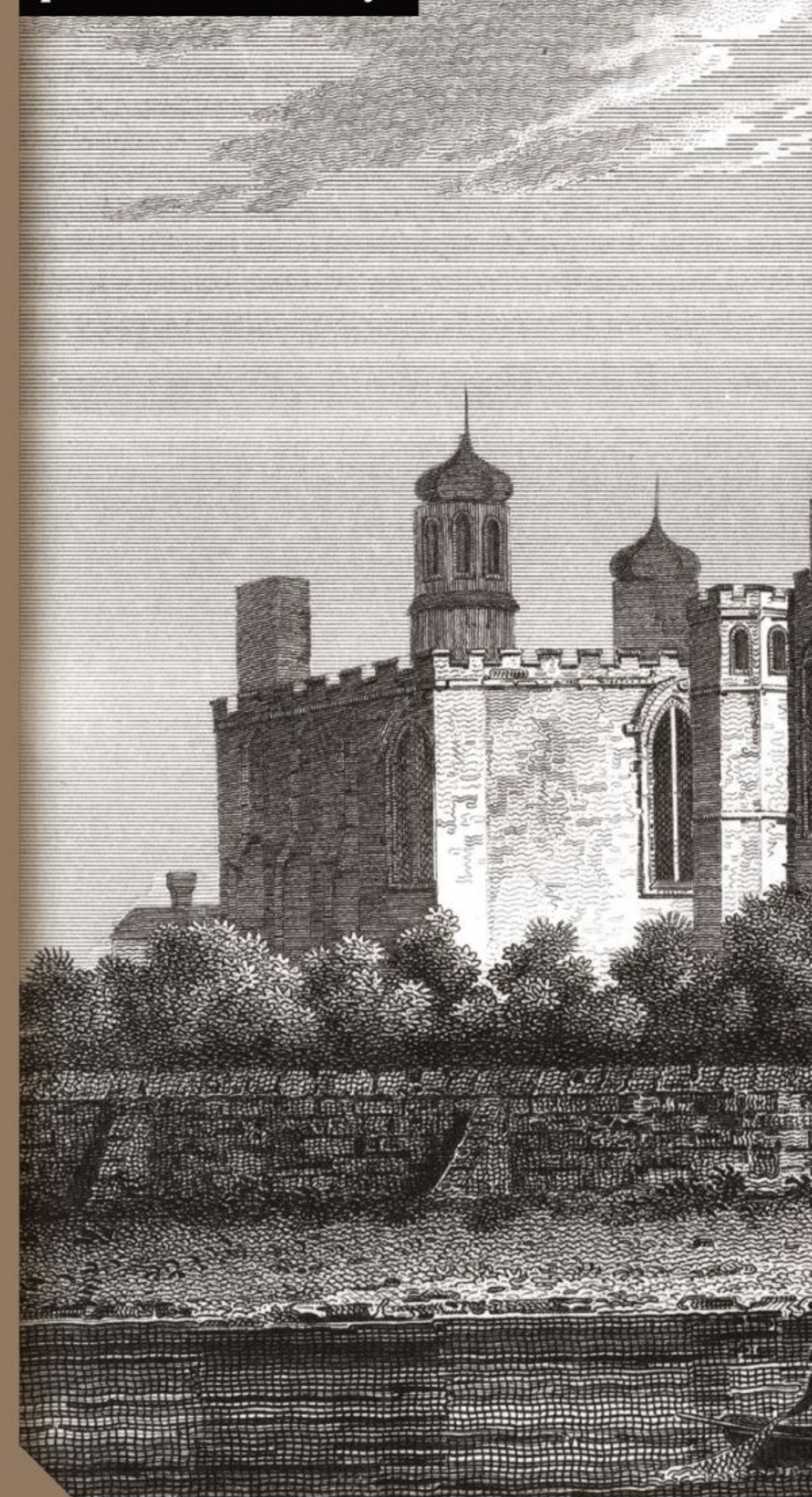
Henry's successor, Edward VI, moved to the palace during his final illness, and he eventually died there on 6 July 1553 at just 15. It is said the young king had shown himself to the public one last time by appearing at his window there just five days before his death.

Both Mary and Elizabeth lived at the palace, and it's believed to be where Sir Walter Raleigh laid his cloak down so that Elizabeth could walk across it. To this day people visit the tree in Greenwich Park known as Queen Elizabeth's Oak, where she supposedly played as a child.



Placentia was also known as Greenwich Palace

Unfortunately, very little of this once great palace survives today



The oldest part of the castle dates back to the 13th century



St James's Palace City of Westminster, London

This palace served as the principal royal residence for the reigning monarch for over 300 years

Unlike Hampton Court and the Palace of Whitehall, St James's Palace was actually commissioned and built by King Henry VIII between 1531 and 1536. The building takes its name from the hospital that used to stand in its place, which had been dedicated to St James the Less, a figure from early Christianity who was titled 'the Less' to differentiate him from other prominent men called James.

Constructed from red brick, the palace served as an escape for the king away from court life at Whitehall, and it was decorated with the entwined initials of Henry and Anne, perhaps in anticipation that it would become a residence for the queen. On top of this, the Chapel Royal, along with the gatehouse, a few turrets and two rooms from Henry's reign still exist to this day.

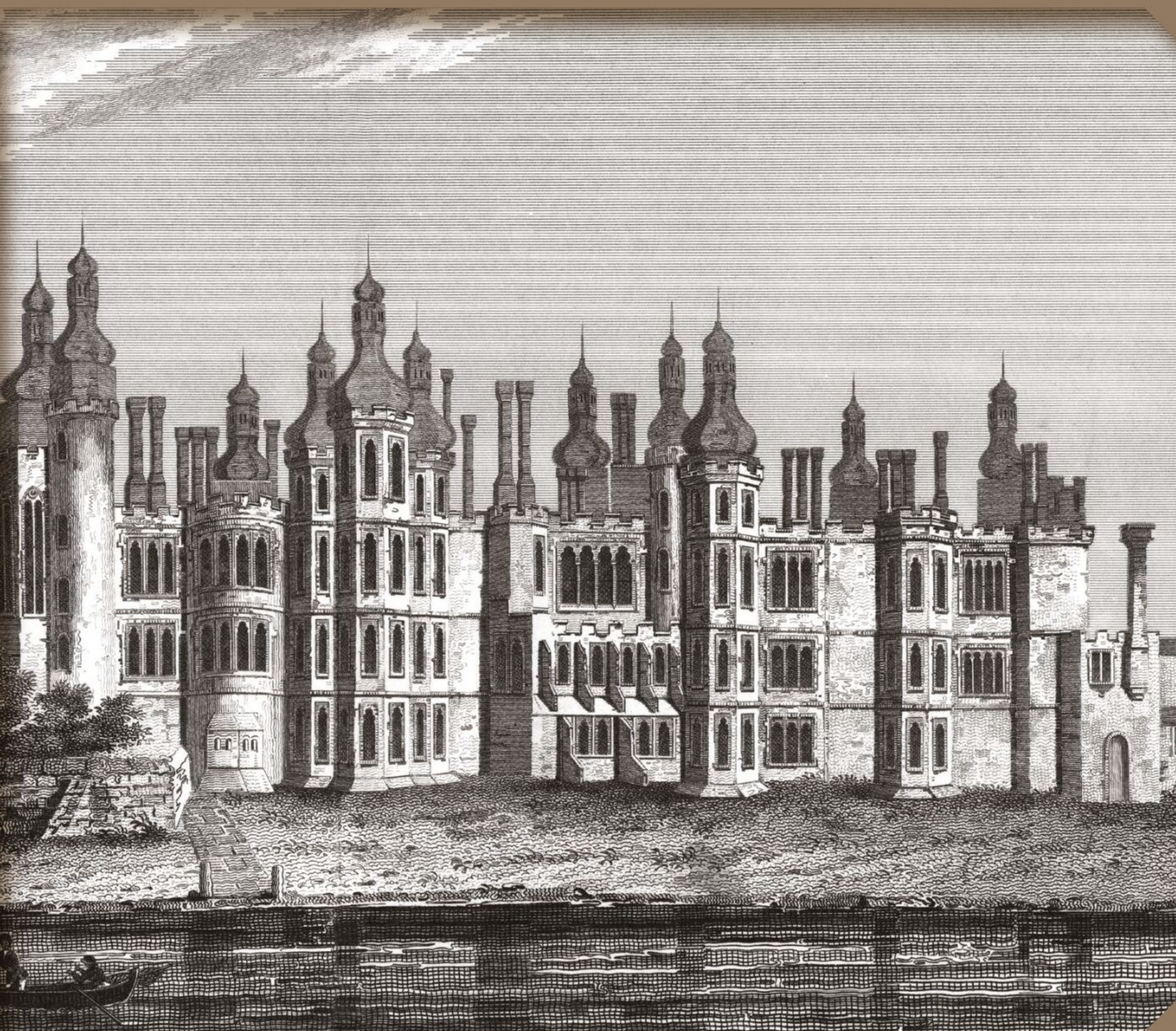
The palace witnessed one of the darkest moments of Queen Mary I's reign as it is where she signed the treaty surrendering Calais - England's last remaining possession on the Continent - to the French in 1558, a moment that left her heartbroken. Mary would die at



Although it is no longer the main residence of the British monarchy, St James's Palace remains the official home of the royal court

the palace a few months later at the age of 42. Her half-brother and King Henry's illegitimate son, Henry FitzRoy, had also died there back in 1536.

St James's Palace is noted for being the residence where Queen Elizabeth I stayed while awaiting the Spanish Armada, which had set sail in May 1588 on the orders of King Philip II of Spain with the intention of restoring Catholicism to England). She set out from the palace to deliver her famous address to the troops stationed at Tilbury on England's south coast.



Richmond Palace River Thames, Surrey

Queen Elizabeth I's favourite palace

When a fire destroyed the Palace of Sheen in 1497, King Henry VII decided to build a new one, Richmond Palace, on the same site in 1501. Just eight years later he would succumb to a fatal bout of tuberculosis at the palace and was subsequently succeeded by his son, the infamous King Henry VIII.

Henry spent time at Richmond with Catherine of Aragon, and it is where their short-lived son, Henry, Duke of Cornwall, was born in 1511. The king's attention was eventually diverted to Hampton Court, and it is known that his eldest daughter, Mary, lived at Richmond following the end of her parents' marriage. Along with Hever Castle, Richmond was given to Anne of Cleves after her annulment from Henry in 1540.

Out of all the Tudor monarchs, it is Queen Elizabeth I who is most associated with Richmond Palace. It was a good residence for hunting with the nearby Richmond Park, and Elizabeth enjoyed spending her winters and Christmases there, particularly as it was the warmest out of all the royal residences. After suffering from ill health for some time, Elizabeth died at the palace on 24 March 1603, bringing an end to the Tudor dynasty.

The Renaissance in England

Sparking in the workshops of Florence, Europe's cultural rebirth spread throughout the continent and found its own unique flare in England

In January, 1504, perhaps the greatest work of art mankind had yet produced was about to be unveiled for the first time. The Vestry Board of Florence's Cathedral gathered in eager anticipation to see what the artist Michelangelo Simoni had been working on in total secret for over two years. Standing at 14 feet, carved flawlessly out of pure white marble, *David* was revealed towering over them - it was unlike anything anyone had seen before. What they beheld was an anatomically perfect, if giant, reinterpretation of the biblical character, in tense preparation to fight Goliath - a metaphor of Florence's defiance and strength. Today we see one of the many treasures of the Renaissance, Europe's cultural rebirth.

In the 15th and 16th centuries, Florence was the unquestionable heart of the Renaissance. A city constantly steeped in fear of invasion from foreign powers and disastrous plagues, it was here that some of the foremost thinkers, artists and writers of the era would find patronage and inspiration for their work. Though throughout the Reformation the Italian cities remained Catholic, this fear of life's frailty gave much of the art and literature in this era notable humanist traits.

In a break from Medieval traditions, artists began to depict scenes with unprecedented realism,

utilising light and dark to cast their figures in new and more dramatic tones. For the first time the Virgin Mary, or the Madonna with child, actually appeared lifelike, bringing out her humanity to the observer. Biblical figures, in addition to characters from antiquity, were being brought to life in a way never seen before in terms of their form as much as the new and more vivid colours artists could bring to their brush.

With a population of around 60,000 at the outset of the 15th century, Florence was a small, but by no means feeble city state. 12 artist guilds chiefly led the city, monitoring and regulating the flourishing cloth and textile trade that brought in vast amounts of wealth. The city was also sporadically headed by one of several ruling families. The most famous of these was

Lorenzo de' Medici, who became the patron of some of Florence's most brilliant minds and artists, including Sandro Botticelli, the aforementioned Michelangelo and Leonardo da Vinci. This method of working under patronage would come to typify lives of many Renaissance artisans, who quickly found fame and fortune plying their skills for rich patrons and royalty all over Europe.

The ideas and ideals of the Renaissance were much slower to spread to England than elsewhere. While Botticelli was completing one

“The ideas of the Renaissance were much slower to spread to England”





Key figures



**HENRY HOWARD,
EARL OF SURREY**

A friend of King Henry VIII, Howard is considered to be among the foremost instigators of English Renaissance court poetry and the English sonnet form. Sharing his verse among a select coterie of friends at court, his work reflects on life, death and the ideals of living 'the happy life'. Howard rose in the royal graces after his first cousin Anne Boleyn married the king in 1533. Though he eventually fell from Henry's favour and was executed in 1547 just days before the king's own death, for many Howard embodies the Renaissance spirit of the warrior, the scholar and the poet.



INIGO JONES

A highly skilled engineer and artist, Jones spent many of his formative years in Italy, where he absorbed much of the artistic styles brimming in Florence and elsewhere at the end of the 16th century. He gained fame and fortune first as a set and costume designer for King James I, where he worked on the court's extravagant court masques. Soon he was introducing the grandeur of Italian Renaissance architecture to England, working on renovations to St Paul's Cathedral, a new Banqueting House at Whitehall, and even the lavish Covent Garden estate in London, where he designed the capital's first square in the style of Italian piazzas.



BEN JONSON

Jonson attended a Westminster elementary school at an early age, where he embarked on rhetorical and classical training, as well as lessons in Greek and Latin. A lack of funds forced him to return to his stepfather's trade as a bricklayer, but Jonson was driven to better himself and soon entered the world of the emerging Elizabethan theatres in Bankside. A friend and colleague of Shakespeare, Jonson became among the foremost literary critics and playwrights of his era. After gaining a royal pension shortly after the publication of his first folio, he is even considered to be England's first ever poet laureate.



Bankside in the Elizabethan era, where the Globe Theatre was built

of his most famous masterpieces in 1483 - *Venus and Mars* - England was only just emerging from the latest clash of its bloody civil war. Botticelli's painting depicts a sleeping Mars, the Roman god of war, and an alert Venus, the goddess of love. In England, at least, love and peace were restored after the coronation of Henry VII and his marriage to Elizabeth of York, uniting two warring families and establishing the Tudor dynasty.

In this new peace, patronage of the arts and the emerging mercantile class could thrive, rather than suffer under heavy investment in war. Though a printing press had been brought to England in around 1575, most of the population remained illiterate in the pre-Reformation state. However it was Henry VIII's reign, beginning in 1509, that would truly see the Renaissance blossom.

Henry was a huge admirer of art and architecture as well as being a keen musician. Befitting a man of his high royal status, he was well educated and was

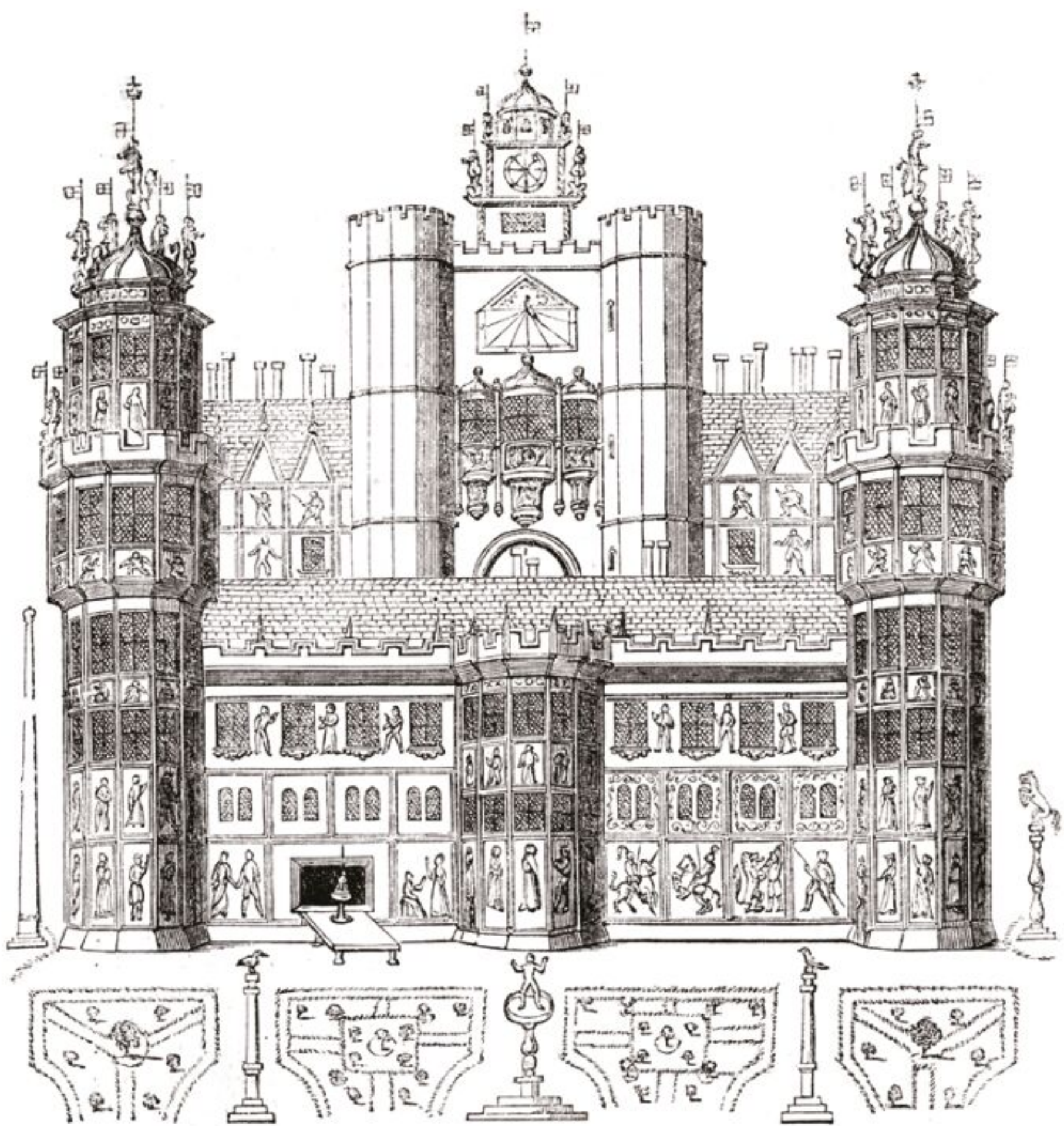
even an amateur alchemist, with his own personal collection of medicinal ingredients. In particular, Henry's love of music, song and poetry spread throughout his court, and it was during his reign that the English composer Thomas Tallis made a name for himself.

“Henry’s love of music, song and poetry spread throughout his court”

Leading the Royal Choir, Tallis was a gifted singer and organist, appearing at Sunday Mass on a rotary basis. Though much of his earlier life is undocumented, he found great success under Henry's patronage and continued to serve in the Chapel Royal into Edward VI's, Mary I's and even Elizabeth I's reigns. During this time he worked

within and composed for his choir, appearing at all state occasions such as funerals, weddings and christenings. Among one of his most famous works is *Gaude Gloriosa Dei Mater* (*Rejoice Glorious Mother of God*), composed for a six-part choir and written possibly near the end of Henry VIII's reign, though symbolically it would have been popular during the rule of Mary I, given the subject matter of the Virgin Mary.

Of course, like any egoist king, Henry was also enthusiastic about his own image and his status of power. He commissioned Nonsuch Palace in 1538 to rival the grand royal buildings seen in France at the time, introducing some of the first Renaissance architecture styles to the country. To design Nonsuch's grand facades, Henry employed Nicholas Bellin of Modena, who had previously been working for the king's great rival, Francis I of France. Bellin was chiefly responsible for the ornate slate carvings covering the building, each depicting



Nonsuch palace was Henry VIII's great architectural project, where he displayed all his wealth and prestige, as well as brought continental styles to England

classical scenes from antiquity. Henry's other grand building projects included his palaces at Greenwich, Hampton Court and Whitehall, which he spent vast fortunes on renovating and re-shaping to his own taste and to signify his power. Inevitably all these grand buildings required fine artwork to fill them. Henry's taste in art varied, and he filled his halls with everything from historical battle scenes to portraits of his ancestors and biblical imagery.

In the 16th century, England had not yet produced a portrait artist of note to rival the brilliance of those emerging from the continent, so royal commissions for new masterpieces had to come from abroad. Antonio Toto and Pietro Torrigiani, both from Florence, each completed sculptures and furniture designs for the king, who was eager to surround himself in the latest splendour seen elsewhere in Europe.

However the most successful artist under the king's patronage was Hans Holbein the Younger, a German student of the humanist and philosopher Erasmus. Introduced to court by Anne Boleyn, Holbein served as the official royal painter from around 1532 until his death in 1543. He produced some of the most enduring images of the king, as well as his courtiers, in many ways sparking an increased desire for the nobility to invest in the latest artistic talents from the continent.

Undoubtedly the most celebrated aspects of the English Renaissance are its writers. Thomas More, the king's Lord Chancellor, was among the foremost scholars in England in his time, writing translations of ancient texts, as well as his own poetry and a lengthy work of fiction called *Utopia*. Though he is celebrated as a gifted social philosopher and one of the Renaissance's foremost humanist writers, More was entirely against the Protestant Reformation and Henry's abolition of the monasteries, and it was for this that he was eventually executed in 1535.

Rather than published works, it was within the tradition of court poetry, with manuscript verse

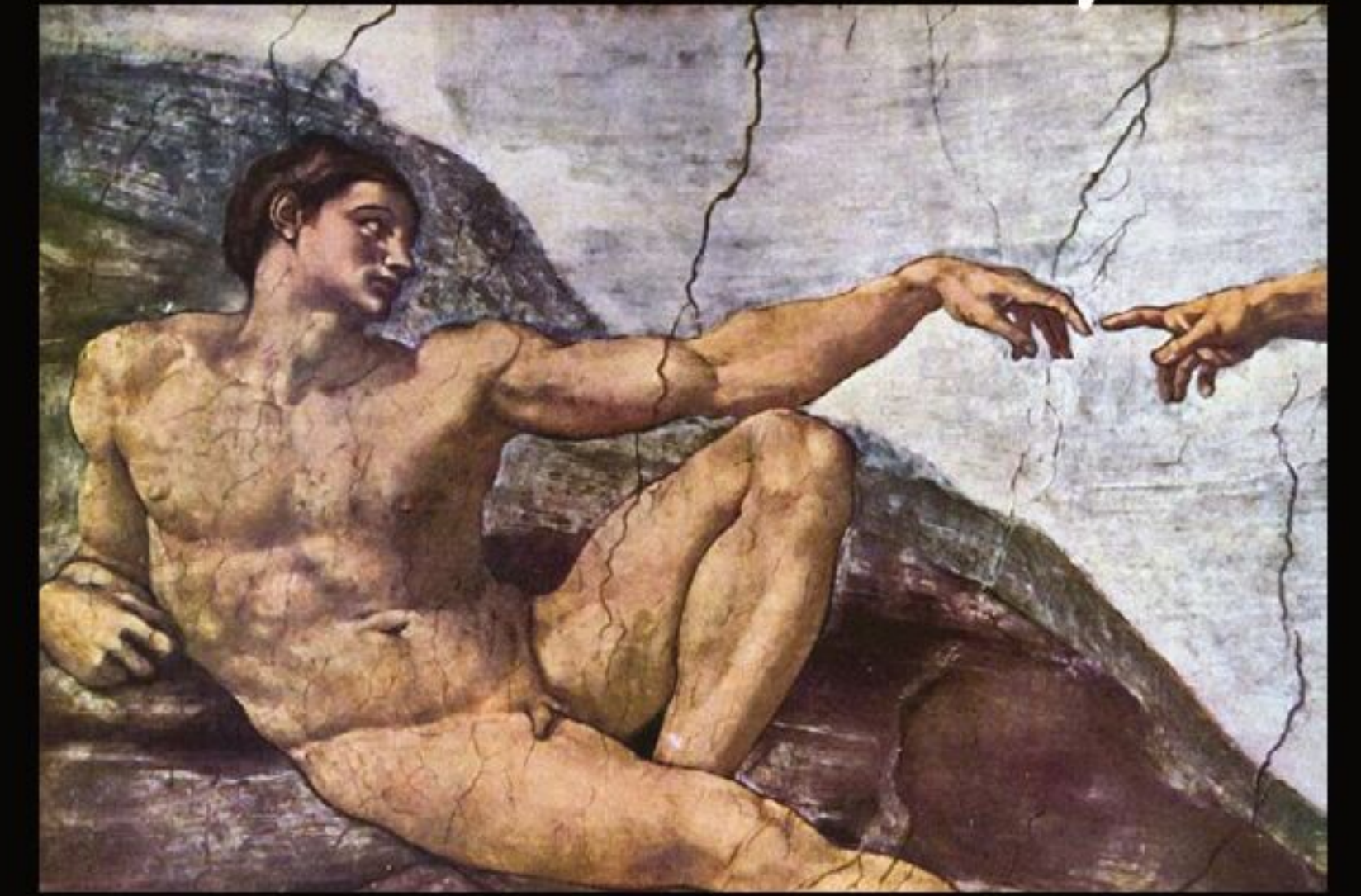
EUROPE'S TWO RENAISSANCES

How the movement differed in England and mainland Europe

England



Mainland Europe



Music

After the English Reformation, the place of music in Church and in life changed dramatically. The leading composers of the era were all connected inextricably with the Church, the royal court, or both. With the emergence of printed sheet music, the flow of compositions from the continent steadily grew more and more in popularity.

Groups of musicians in Europe could travel between territories much easier than their English counterparts, and would perform at royal courts in several countries. Franco-Flemish composers such as Josquin des Prez were incredibly popular in the early stages of the 16th century, and were still heavily influenced by Catholic mass.

Art

Many of the most famous painters to work in England were from continental Europe. For example, Hans Holbein the Younger, a German artist, produced one of the most famous portraits of Henry VIII in 1536. Henry also commissioned copies to be made of tapestries designed by Raphael, which had previously hung in the lower walls of the Sistine Chapel in the Vatican.

Among the most celebrated sculptures, portraits and religious paintings that we now consider to typify the Renaissance, the majority grew out of the traditions and practices of Florence's artist guilds. Soon the Florentine school – as it became known – produced painters and sculptors that were eagerly sought after by all of Europe's nobility and royalty.

Architecture

As the most popular and sought-after architectural styles in the era were drawn from Italian influences, as with portraiture, many royal building projects commissioned Florentine craftsmen. It wasn't until much later, with the likes of Inigo Jones, that English designs, albeit with heavily Italian influence, were popularised in London.

Drawing from the ridiculously fertile crop of artistic talent from Florence and elsewhere, the rich and the powerful all commissioned the finest visionaries for their building projects. Much Renaissance architecture was typified by huge commanding domes and soaring pillars, in imitation of classical Roman buildings.

Literature

English courtly poetry thrived in the 16th century, with manuscript verse passed between small groups of close friends, establishing new trends in written English. Soon after the introduction of the printing press, literacy levels throughout the country soared, and London's theatres housed some of the Renaissance's most brilliant writers.

Interest and interpretation of classical writers such as Homer and Ovid, sparked a new trend of translation and re-invention across the continent. The foremost change to literature on the Continent came with the production of the Gutenberg Bible, the first book to be mass-produced in Europe.

Medicine

Alchemy, quack doctors, even wise women and witches still made up the majority of medical authorities in Tudor England, which was a similar situation to the Continent. Physicians were available for only the very wealthiest in society, and commonly they were immigrants from abroad, such as Dr Rodrigo López, Elizabeth I's personal physician.

Among the greatest advances in medicine and the studies of human anatomy came from the mainland. Though da Vinci was dissecting and analysing human bodies much earlier, his work was not used to further the understanding of surgery or physiology. Andreas Vesalius was among the first doctors to use dissection as a means to understand the human body.



Among the most celebrated painters of Henry VIII's court, Hans Holbein was responsible for many of the famous portraits of the king and his courtiers



Hunsdon, The Lord Chamberlain's Men playing company gave regular performances at The Globe and at Elizabeth's court.

being passed between small groups of close friends, that some of the greatest advances in English literature took place. Encouraged by the king, Henry's court was brimming with literary talent, such as Thomas Wyatt and Henry Howard. These noblemen are credited with establishing the form of the English sonnet, which would be picked up and adapted by the likes of Shakespeare, John Donne, Ben Jonson and others. The form follows a structure of three quatrains (groups of four lines) and a final rhyming couplet, usually completing a witty conceit or whimsical flourish.

Both men were constantly in and out of the king's favour, each being closely linked with Anne Boleyn; Howard was Boleyn's first cousin, while Wyatt was rumoured to have been her lover. As a result of his often-fluctuating fortunes, Howard's verse in particular reflects on life, death, and man's place in the world. Like much Renaissance literature on the Continent, the sonnets of the Tudor court draw heavily from classical references, while including idealistic images of the natural

world and man's natural state within it - rooted in the Renaissance humanist tradition. Similar to their counterparts in France and Italy, the poets of the Tudor court were also scholars, engrossed in the writers from antiquity.

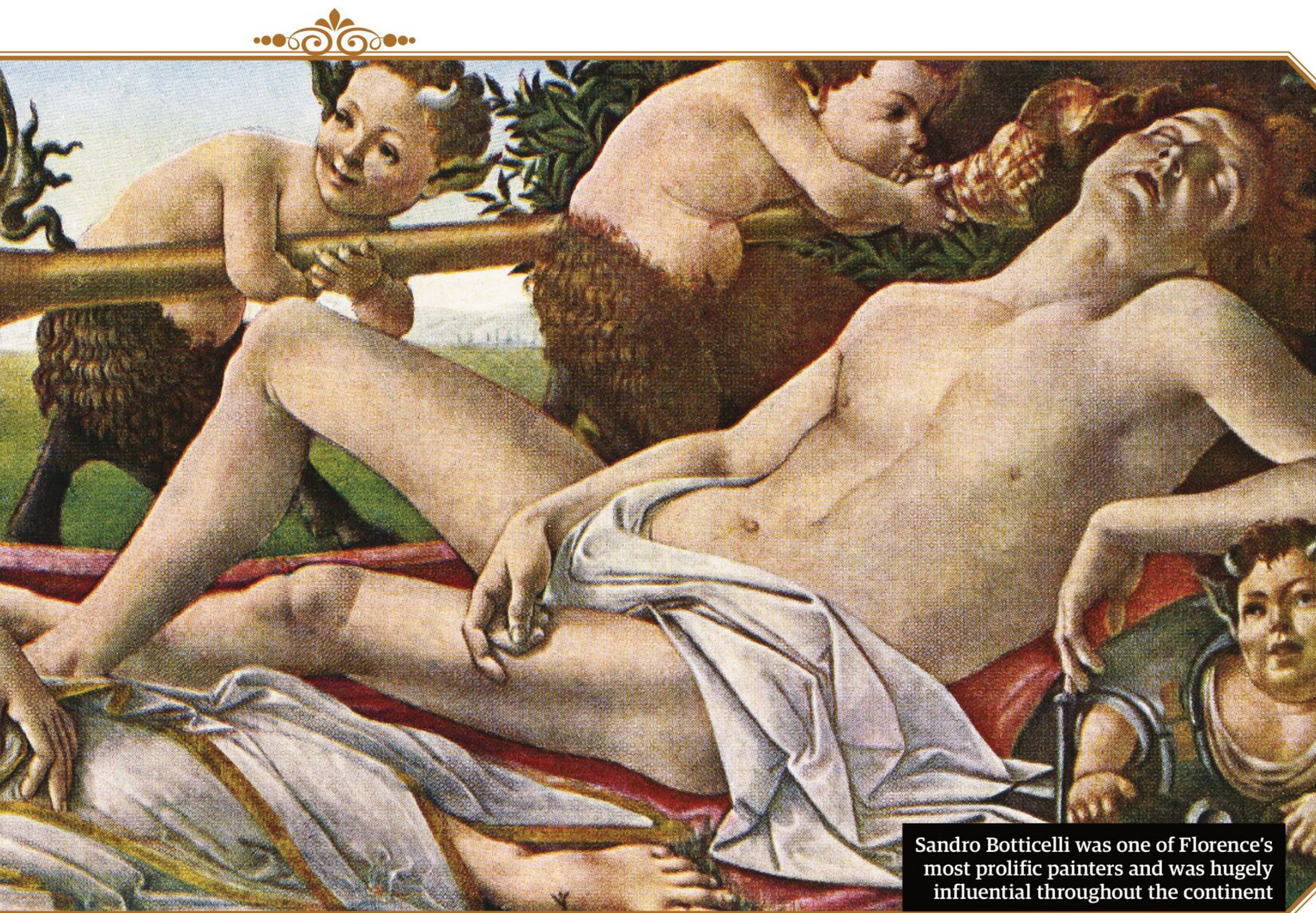
If it can be said that Henry's reign saw the importing of the Continent's Renaissance in art and architecture, then the Elizabethan era saw the rise of the great playwrights and poets England would come to celebrate. Like her father, Elizabeth was a gifted scholar and had a passion for the arts. Her court was filled with musicians and singers, while plays, or royal masques as they were called, also gained immense popularity.

In 1576, the first playhouse in London was opened in Shoreditch, just north of the city wall, by James Burbage, an actor-turned-businessman. 22 years later in 1598, his son Richard, along with his acting company, would dismantle this playhouse and transport it to Bankside in Southwark, where it would be reconstructed as the Globe Theatre. Under the patronage of Henry Carey, First Baron

During the latter part of the 16th century, London's population soared to well over 200,000 (a huge number at the time). As people travelled to the capital to seek their fortunes, some of the greatest writers and artists became inevitably drawn to the booming theatre scene of Bankside. As well as Shakespeare, Thomas Dekker, Ben Jonson, Samuel Daniel, Christopher Marlowe and others all found great success in the playhouses, where there even emerged a rivalry between playing companies and theatres.

Just as England's cultural Renaissance came much later than its continental cousins', so too did it begin its exploration overseas long after its rivals. While Spain in particular had been reaping the benefits found in the New World for decades, it wasn't until Francis Drake's expedition to circumnavigate the globe began in 1577 that England began to reap the benefits of overseas exploration. New, more efficient ship designs made vessels stronger, faster and easier to handle, and this made captains more daring and crews more willing to risk the vastness of the Pacific Ocean and beyond to see what they could find.

Spices, sugar and tobacco flooded into London, bringing with them the opportunity for even more profit, while gold stolen from Spanish treasure ships was returned from royally sanctioned privateer missions. New companies and businesses sprang up constantly, and new monopolies granted by Elizabeth created vast fortunes for the profit of London's merchants.



Sandro Botticelli was one of Florence's most prolific painters and was hugely influential throughout the continent



Sir Thomas More was one of the foremost scholars in Henry VIII's court, and one of the most celebrated humanist writers in the era

However, not every aspect of the Elizabethan Renaissance was fixed in the material world. The queen's close advisor and personal astrologer Dr John Dee is one of the most celebrated and controversial scholars in the Elizabethan court. A brilliant mathematician, philosopher and alchemist, he struck a peculiar balance between science, magic and the divine in his work.

As new trade links with far-off Russia in the east and the Americas in the west were required, Dee's skills were called into service, using his knowledge of the night sky to help teach captains new methods of navigation. Dee was even consulted by Pope Gregory XIII, who introduced the Gregorian Calendar in 1582, though England would not adopt it until 1752.

The death of Elizabeth in 1603 marked the end of the Tudor era in England, and in many ways the end of its unique Renaissance. By the beginning of James I's reign, Europe was already beginning to change once again. As the Reformation spread, and Protestant states began to grow in power, a Catholic Counter-Reformation would eventually bring about the Thirty Years' War. As fighting and unrest ravaged Europe, funding turned from the arts and literature, to arms and armies.

In England, the arts would have their own unique struggle against Puritan elements in London, who in particular saw the playhouses of Southwark as bawdy pits of vice. Soon a new civil war broke out, this time between parliament and the monarch, and the playhouses were closed for decades. As it did some 200 years previous, the country would be irreversibly changed by war, and remade in its aftermath - another rebirth was at hand.

PATRONAGE IN THE RENAISSANCE


During the Renaissance, royalty, nobility and the merchant class all desired the finest art to display their status. They also commissioned portraits of themselves and their family, to become 'immortalised' on canvas, dressed in their best clothes and even surrounded by mythological or religious iconography. Meanwhile, poets and writers found rich patrons to fund their work, who in return would receive plays and poems dedicated to them. Some writers would even live with their patron, serving as tutors to the family's children.

For many, the ultimate patronage was that of a monarch. Shakespeare's theatre company was initially patronised by Henry Carey, First Baron Hunsdon, and accordingly became known as the Lord Chamberlain's Men. But after James I's ascension to the throne, the king patronised the company himself, thereby dubbing it The King's Men. Through this sponsorship, the company went on to flourish.

In Florence, much of the work by some of the most famous creators was accommodated by Lorenzo de' Medici, the de facto ruler of the city. Da Vinci, Botticelli and Michelangelo all benefited greatly from the political connections, influence and power Lorenzo could lend them. Skilled artists were also regularly employed by the Church. Michelangelo's *David*, for instance, was an original commission by the Cathedral of Florence, while da Vinci's *The Last Supper* was painted for the Santa Maria delle Grazie, in the city of Milan.



Henry Carey became patron of Shakespeare's company



Shakespeare has become known as one of the greatest poets and playwrights of all time

William Shakespeare

From humble beginnings, the Bard came and conquered the literary world, leaving a legacy that time has only strengthened



William Shakespeare is beyond a household name - he is a legend of the written word, a poet, dramatist and cultural icon. His plays have been adapted countless times and remain some of the most famous pieces of art to ever come out of Britain. Shakespeare's success spanned not only his own age, but has ably stood the test of time, breaking cultural barriers like no other literature in history. Despite the fame, there is much of the man himself that remains shrouded in mystery.

For Shakespeare's early life, we can only rely on factual documents to give us a glimpse into the boy that would become a legend. His father, John, was a glove maker and wool merchant and must

have experienced somewhat of a step up the ladder when he married Mary Arden, the daughter of a wealthy landowner. We do not actually know the true date of Shakespeare's birth, but his baptism on 26 April 1564 has placed the traditional celebration of his birthday on 23 April. Shakespeare would have likely attended a free grammar school, where his education centred around Latin with some history, philosophy and poetry.

Shakespeare was clearly not particularly taken with education as he did not attend university but instead married Anne Hathaway aged 18. Then Shakespeare disappears from official records for eight years. In fact, we do not hear of him again until his name begins to appear in London theatre records around 1590.



William Shakespeare



The First Folio (above) featured 36 texts, including 18 printed for the first time

The Tudors

The problem is that Shakespeare was not a wealthy man and his upbringing was deemed unremarkable. However, in 1592 a fellow dramatist called Robert Greene brought him back into official records by insulting him on his deathbed, branding him an "upstart crow". So we know that at this point Shakespeare was well known enough to be worthy of some degree of contempt, mostly due to his meagre parentage. The apologies that followed show he was making powerful friends.

Although we are unclear when his career in the theatre began, by 1594 Shakespeare was a key member of the Lord Chamberlain's Men, a company of actors that was a huge success. Not only did they have Shakespeare's talent behind them, but they also had Richard Burbage, one of the most popular actors of the era. They also possessed the best theatre in the famous Globe. Shakespeare invested the company's money into the unique building to give himself and the other actors a share in the company's profits and the playhouse. The Globe was an instant success with theatregoers and the company itself. The theatre was a 20-sided structure standing more

focused more on history, such as *Henry VI* and *Richard II*, and also comedies such as *A Midsummer Night's Dream*. His famous tragedy *Romeo and Juliet* was also written during the earlier part of his career. Many of his plays written in this period deal with the folly of weak or corrupt rulers, likely a way of pleasing his Tudor monarchs. He became a favourite of Elizabeth I and was invited to perform in front of the queen at court.

By 1602, this success allowed the Bard to move to the upmarket Silver Street, where he penned many of his most famous tragedies, including *King Lear*, *Hamlet*, *Macbeth* and *Othello*. The characters of many of these plays are defined by their moral failings, which drive the plots to dramatic and often

"It is this sense of mystery around the man that has prompted so many conspiracy theories about his true identity"

than 30 feet high with three levels of seating depending on how much the viewer had paid for a ticket. It was a truly immersive theatre experience and inspired many of Shakespeare's most well-known works.

With Shakespeare having an active investment in making sure the theatre was a success, he became a prolific playwright, producing roughly two plays a year from 1594 to 1611. His earlier works

bloody conclusions. The exploration of humanity in these plays proved universal to all who watched, from the upper to the lowest classes.

In the final period of his life, Shakespeare combined his two loves - tragedy and comedy - to write several tragicomedies, such as *The Tempest* and *The Winter's Tale*. Although still dealing with dark themes, these plays have a more optimistic end, usually involving reconciliation.


Shakespeare's success was not only due to his incredible wordplay and memorable characters; he was also somewhat of an entrepreneur, buying properties in London and Stratford. His income from these investments earned him enough to work on his plays uninterrupted. He also seemed unconcerned with rubbing shoulders with the elite,

Shakespeare did not write all his plays alone and was known to collaborate with other playwrights, especially John Fletcher



The characters from Shakespeare's plays are among the most widely known in the world

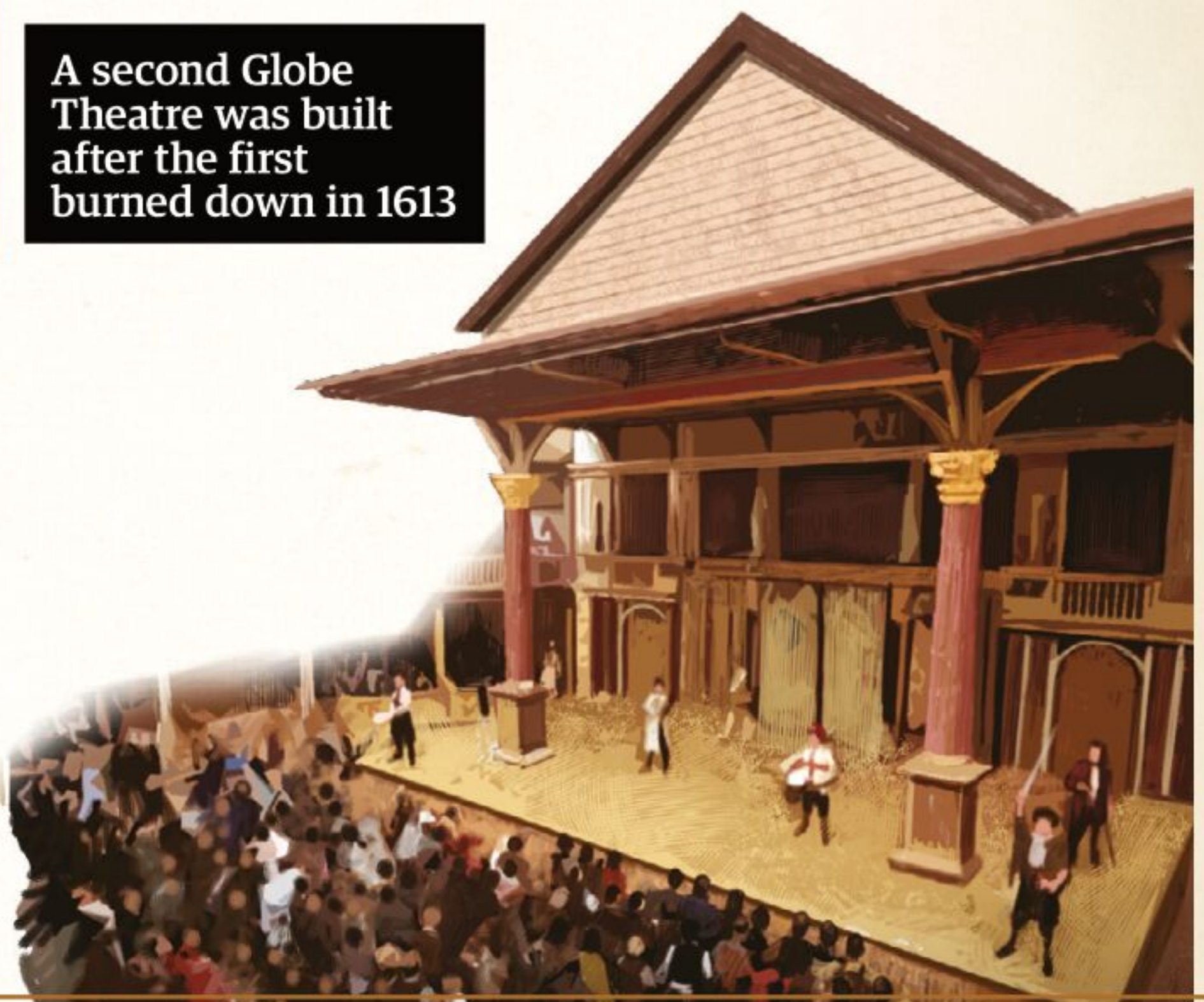
William Shakespeare



It's estimated that Shakespeare introduced nearly 3,000 words to the English language

occurred on his 52nd birthday on 23 April 1616, but many scholars believe this to be unfounded. His body was interred at Trinity Church on 25 April. We don't know the cause of his death, but it was later reported he died of a fever after drinking "too hard". He was survived by his daughters Susanna and Judith and wife, Anne, to whom he left his "second best bed" - a gesture that caused many to believe they had marital issues, though there is no evidence of this.

The first collection of Shakespeare's work, *The First Folio*, was published in 1623. In the collection Ben Jonson penned a poem in which he praised the playwright as "not of an age, but for all time". Jonson was soon proved right. Shakespeare was praised in his time but not revered; however, after his death his reputation grew, and by 1800 he was a national poet. The Bard has been embraced by the modernist revolution, feminism, new historicism and African-American studies, truly proving himself a visionary for all time.



A second Globe Theatre was built after the first burned down in 1613



Sir John Gilbert's depiction of all of Shakespeare's plays

which is part of the reason why personal accounts of him are so rare.

It is this sense of mystery around the man that has prompted so many conspiracy theories about his true identity. One of the most significant theories is that playwright Christopher Marlowe faked his own death and continued to write under the guise of Shakespeare. Although this theory has some compelling ideas, such as the fact that

Shakespeare seemed to emerge out of nowhere two weeks after Marlowe's death, it is generally regarded as a fringe theory. Indeed, much of the speculation about Shakespeare being a front for another playwright lies in the Bard's humble origins and the notion that these do not align with the literary genius that followed - a rather close-minded view.

In keeping with his life, Shakespeare's death is also somewhat of a mystery. Tradition dictates it



Everyday life in Tudor England

The Tudor period was a time of incredible growth and economic expansion for England, with every citizen contributing to its success



The popular image of Tudor life paints a picture of kings, queens and nobles engaged in courtly intrigue and living lives of magnificent excess, but the truth is that urban existence was very much a minority way of life, with 90 per cent of the population living and working in rural areas. For every ornately dressed noble, dashing explorer and majestic monarch, there were countless commoners providing the food for their tables, the textiles for their clothes and the trade goods on which their fortunes, dynasties and empires were built. Despite the huge contrasts in their everyday lifestyles, the rural and urban communities were entirely dependent on each other for their existence.

The poorest rural folk lived in one- or two-room huts, dirt-floored and built from cob (a mixture of mud, straw and lime), with a shuttered or curtained window to allow some light to enter. For the wealthier peasant, homes took the form of 'crook' houses, built around simple timber frames with wattle and daub walls between the timber sections. Furnishings were minimal and functional: a table and stool, an open fire in the centre of the main living area with a hole in the roof allowing smoke to escape, beds that consisted of little more than straw-filled mattresses and a woollen blanket. In addition, the living space might

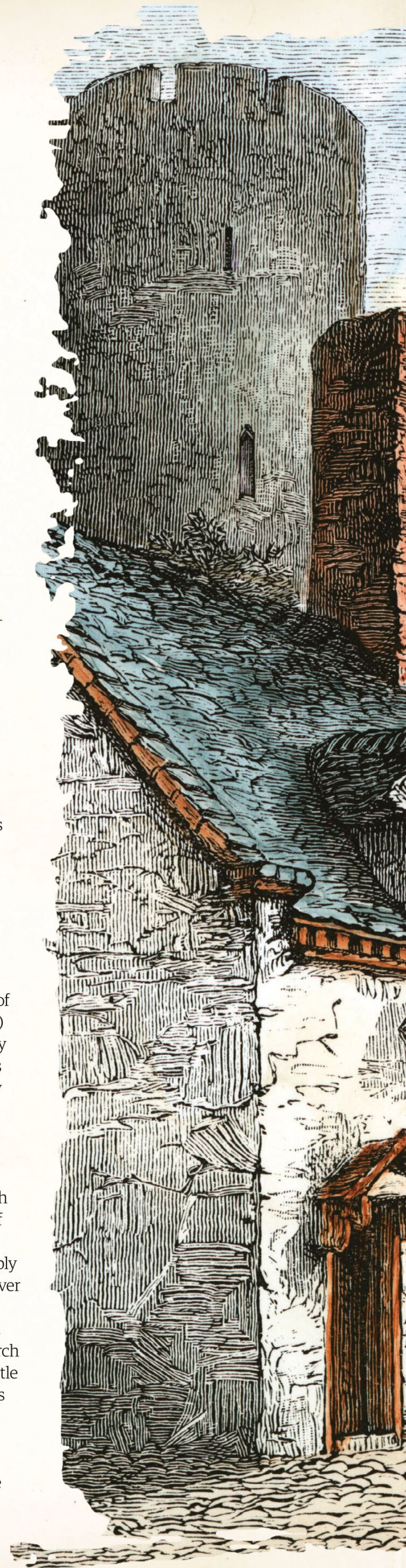
well be shared with any animals a family kept, bringing extra warmth to the house, but also less welcome associated smells.

Monasteries held a prominent role in the early Tudor period; much of the land was owned by local monasteries and priories, and was leased to the peasants to live on and work. Schooling was available to those who could afford to attend priory classrooms, and with many of the country's waterways owned by the Church, use of a watermill to grind grain and 'full' (or cleanse) cloth meant paying the local monastery for the service. The Church's coffers benefited at every level of society and very little of a peasant's daily life was not impacted in some way by the local monastery. When Henry VIII broke with the Catholic church in 1536 and dissolved many of the monasteries, the land and resources they owned were simply redistributed to nobles who took over the local administration, reaping the benefits previously enjoyed by the Church.

While the funds generated moved from the Church to the crown, from the peasant's point of view little had changed: land still had to be rented and dues still had to be paid.

The backbone of the Tudor economy was agriculture. Farmable land was valuable, and it wasn't unheard of for landowners to increase the rent charged on peasants' homes to the point

Many peasants received a pig as part of their annual wage; many rural households kept at least one to rear for meat



Everyday Life in Tudor England

Vegetables were the food of the poor; the upper classes enjoyed meat-rich diets. Gout was a common ailment for them



Castle Gate in Shrewsbury was a typical Tudor street, featuring half-timbered houses

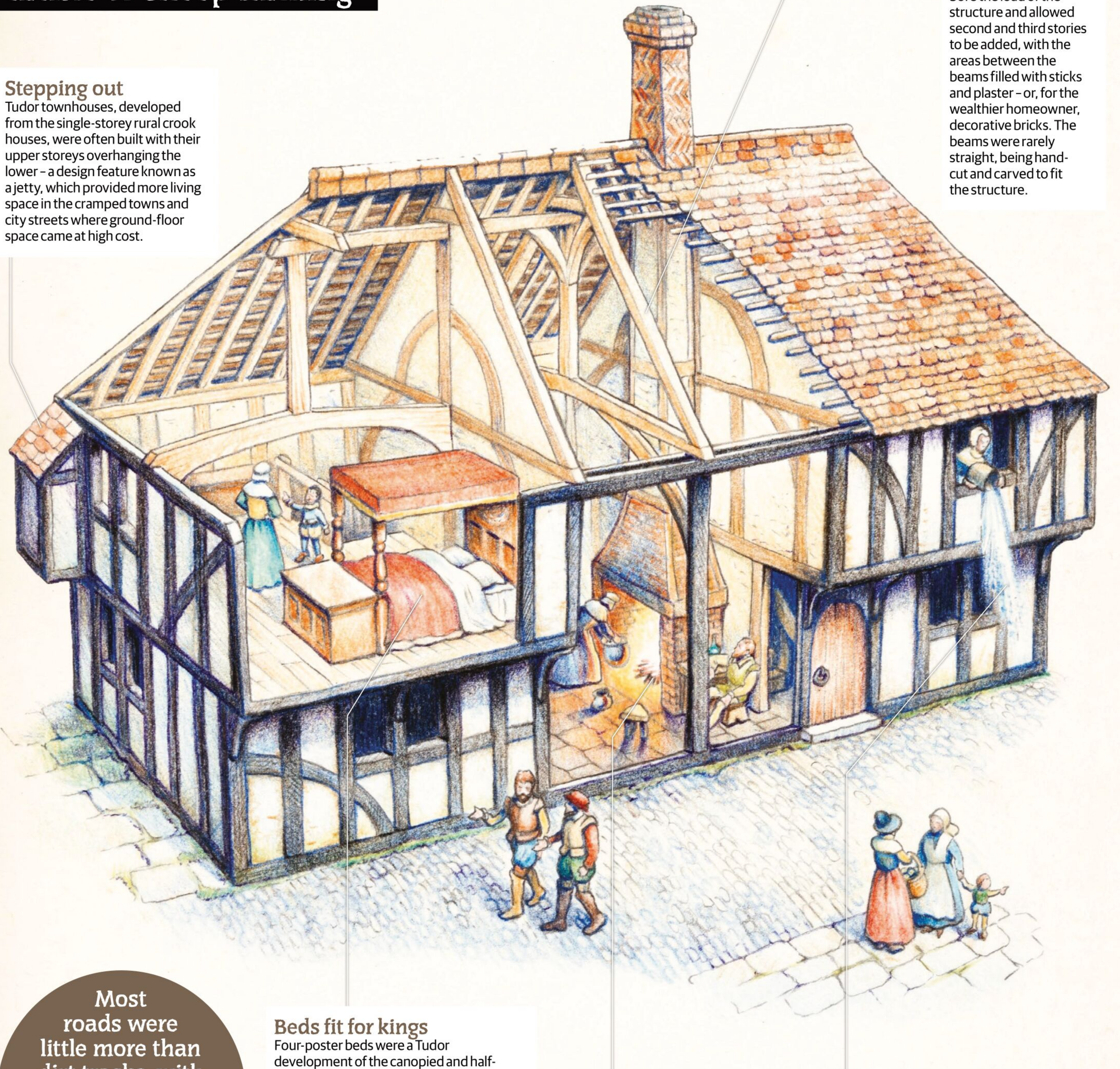
“Growth of the cloth trade during the early 1500s prompted many farmers to switch from mainly arable to sheep farming”

Stepping out

Tudor townhouses, developed from the single-storey rural crook houses, were often built with their upper storeys overhanging the lower – a design feature known as a jetty, which provided more living space in the cramped towns and city streets where ground-floor space came at high cost.

A solid foundation

Tudor town houses were often built as a skeleton of timber beams, which bore the load of the structure and allowed second and third stories to be added, with the areas between the beams filled with sticks and plaster – or, for the wealthier homeowner, decorative bricks. The beams were rarely straight, being hand-cut and carved to fit the structure.



Most roads were little more than dirt tracks, with paving mostly restricted to areas of high traffic, such as around city gates

Beds fit for kings

Four-poster beds were a Tudor development of the canopied and half-tester beds of earlier periods, and were often a status symbol, lavishly decorated with ornate carvings of coats of arms and elaborately embroidered bedding. Their canopies prevented anything unpleasant from falling onto the sleepers below, a valuable feature at a time when many houses still had thatched roofs that were home to countless insects and vermin.

Fire without smoke

The increasing use of coal as fuel in Tudor times, and the need to expel the greater quantities of thick smoke it produced compared to wood from the living space, led to enclosed fireplaces and brick-built chimneys becoming common in homes.

An unsanitary practice

With no internal plumbing or sanitation, household water for washing and cooking would be drawn from a nearby well. Waste water, spoiled food and human waste would be thrown out of windows into the street, to be cleared away by the night soil collectors and used for fertiliser.



An English merchant, noble and lady-in-waiting wearing the typically ostentatious fashions of the wealthy

where the inhabitants could not afford to pay, forcing them to move away and releasing their land back to the landowner who could then turn it into more farmland. With every penny counting, wastage was kept to a minimum, with every possible source of income exploited. Livestock were bred to serve multiple purposes, with sheep providing milk, cheese and meat as well as wool; food scraps fed pigs; animal hide was turned into leather and vellum; and horn was used in the production of hornbooks for schools. Even animal fat could be boiled down and soaked into reeds to create rushlights, providing an economical, if foul-smelling, source of light on dark evenings.

Growth of the cloth trade during the early 1500s prompted many farmers to switch from mainly arable to sheep farming, though where possible farmers would maintain mixed farms, also growing barley, peas and grass for animal feed, and raising pigs and poultry. But the principal source of income for many farmers was wool, and the higher-quality pasture of English fields meant that English wool grew finer and longer than much of the continental stock, increasing its value.

Woollen textiles grew in demand, replacing the raw fleeces that had previously been England's main wool export, and generating as much as £1.5 million per year in export trade. Estimates place the population of sheep in the country at the time as two to three times that of the people, and the processes involved in producing textiles – including shearing, spinning, weaving and dyeing – provided reliable, year-round employment for many living in rural communities.

Profitable sheep-rearing required land, and the growing practice of 'enclosure' saw landowners begin to erect fences and hedges around previously open fields and common land, which had been freely available for the use of peasants to forage and graze livestock. Restricting the use of the common land was understandably unpopular, leading to civil unrest and, in some cases, outright rebellion by the peasants against the landowners.

In Norfolk in 1549, Robert Kett, himself a landowner who had previously enclosed land,

TUDOR PROFESSIONS

What were the different career options in rural and urban areas?

TOWN



WOAD DYER

The primary source of blue dye for textiles was a plant called woad. A particularly unpleasant job, extracting the dye required fermentation in vats of urine, producing noxious fumes that forced woad dyers to live and work on the edges of towns.

GONG SCOURER

Gong scourers were employed to remove the human waste from a town's privies, public latrines and cesspits. Working only at night, and often in cramped, highly noxious environments, they would remove the waste and take it to designated dumps, or to be spread as fertiliser on fields.

EXECUTIONER

In an era where treason and religious dissent were rife and carried the most serious of penalties, executioners were an unfortunate necessity. The job was often well paid, but also brought with it a degree of fear, distrust and social exclusion.

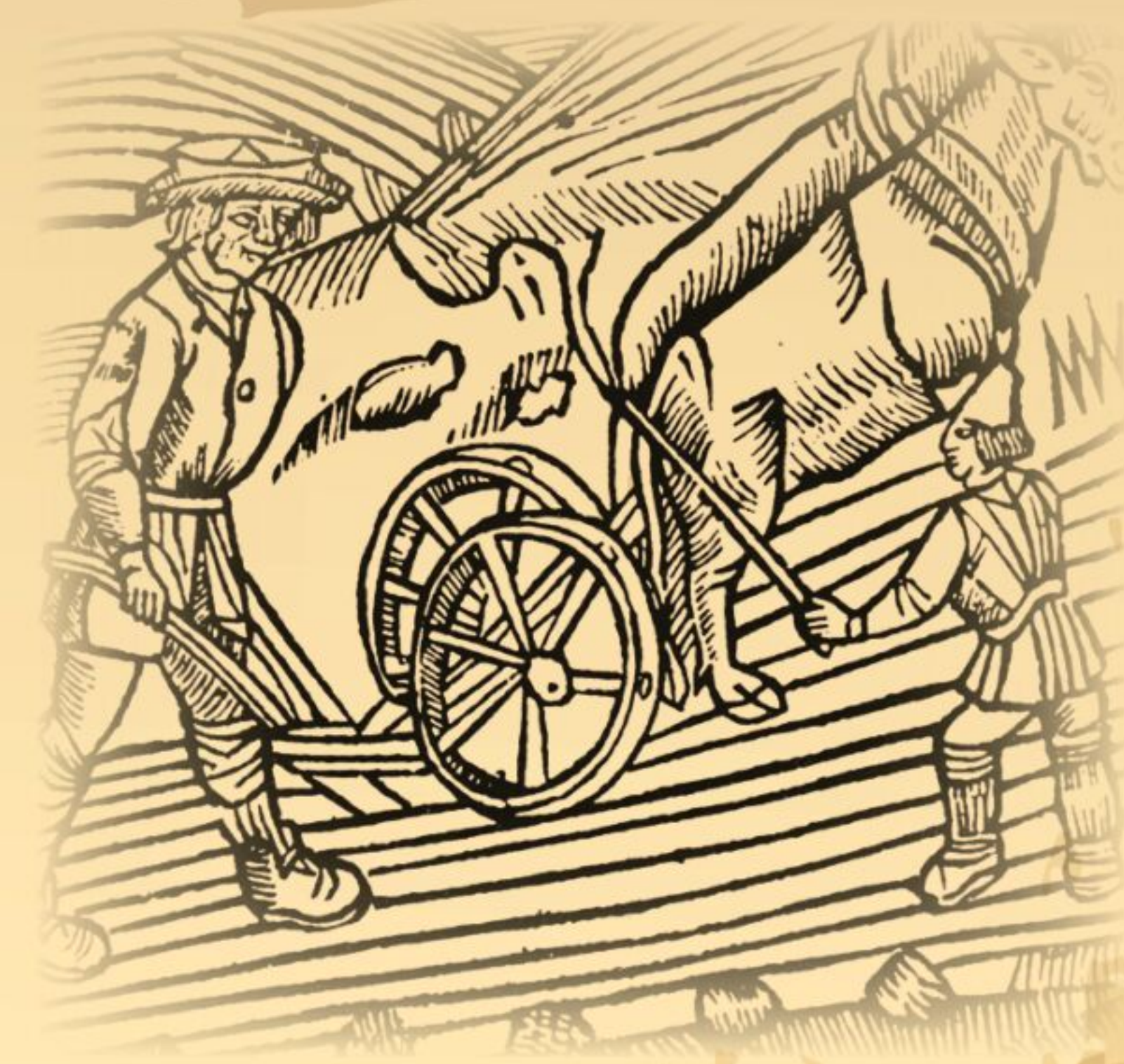
MERCHANT

With goods flowing through towns, opportunities to profit were frequent, and the rewards for establishing successful trade partnerships were immense. While wool was the most prominent export, money was also to be made from importing spices, coffee, tea and exotic foods.

MAYOR

As the elected representative of a town, the mayor's responsibilities were wide-ranging, from performing civic and social duties and overseeing the town's administration, to enforcing parliamentary statutes and acting as local magistrate to ensure that order was maintained.

COUNTRY



LEECH COLLECTOR

The use of leeches in medicine meant money could be made by anyone able to get them. Leech collectors, often women, waded into marshes and ponds, using their bare skin to lure the leeches, putting themselves at significant risk of injury.

FARMER

The importance of the humble farmer to Tudor society can not be overstated – the export of cloth relied on the rearing of sheep, and without the constant supplies of grain, meat and vegetables they provided, towns would have had to rely on more expensive imported food supplies.

BAILIFF

Bailiffs were employed by the Church, county sheriffs and private landowners to collect taxes and fines, assemble trial juries and execute official orders like foreclosures and eviction notices. Many would accept bribes and gifts.

FULLER

Fullers took spun woollen material, soaked it in stale urine and pounded it for hours beneath heavy stones at the local mill to turn it into softer, warmer woollen cloth. The work was dirty, noisy and unpleasant, but the quality and value of the fulled cloth was greatly increased.

NOBLE LANDOWNER

In many ways enjoying a privilege more than a profession, the noble landowner was a prominent figure in rural life. With income from rent and taxes collected from the local peasants, the landowners were able to live comfortably, enjoying pastimes such as hunting and tennis.

TUDOR FARM: DAWN TO DUSK

03:00 – 05:00

AN EARLY START

Work began before dawn with feeding the livestock. Breakfast for the farmer was often pottage – a thick vegetable stew.

06:00

TESTING THE BOUNDARIES

Branches from hazel coppices were woven together to form wattle fences, used as enclosures for livestock. Proper fencing was essential.

07:00

TENDING THE FLOCK

Sheep, required constant care and attention. The flock had to be fed, milked, moved from pasture to pasture, and shorn of their wool or butchered.

11:00

FEEDING THE WORK FORCE

The main meal of bread, vegetables and ale was eaten before noon. Ale was safer to drink than water as the alcohol killed off most bacteria.

12:00

PREPARING THE HARVEST

As well as keeping livestock, farmers grew crops like barley and peas. Cattle and oxen were used to plough and harrow the fields ready for sowing.

20:00

LABOUR'S END

According to the Elizabethan Statute of Artificers, labourers worked until 7 or 8pm in spring and summer, making the most of the daylight.

realised that the practice was causing more harm than good and offered to help the protesting peasants air their grievances against the other landowners. He felt the best way to have the peasant's opinions heard was to march to Norwich, and with local villagers flocking to join him en route, his peasant army stood at 16,000 strong by the time he reached the city gates. Initially denied entry to the city, Kett and his army attacked, taking the second largest city in the country by force of arms.

Kett formed a council made up of representatives of the local villagers and sent their demands to Edward VI. Edward's response was brutal – an army was sent to Norwich, butchering the rebels in the fields outside the city, and Kett was captured and later executed. Parliament, seeing the incendiary effect that enclosure was having on the populace, passed laws preventing recently enclosed common land from being used for pasture, and imposed poll

taxes on sheep in the hope of settling the situation. However, with responsibility for actually enforcing these laws falling to the landowners who had caused the problem in the first place, they were often ignored.

If the villages and hamlets of rural England were the centres of production, the market towns and cities were the centres of commerce. With produce to sell, farmers needed venues at which to trade. While small local markets, often held on monastery land, were available, the main economic hubs were the country's market towns. Farmers brought their produce to the market towns where they could be traded with craftsmen, merchants and local businesses to be converted into other goods or transported on to the cities and ports, and from there to Europe. As domestic production grew, the frequency of market days increased, with many becoming weekly occurrences; the increased popularity of

Bread and ale were the cornerstones of Tudor meals, with the average peasant consuming up to eight pints of ale each day



Public executions, including hangings, were a common feature of Tudor life

Timeline

Social reform in Tudor England

1485

● The English Poor Laws

The Poor Laws evolved constantly throughout the 16th century, often focusing on punishments for vagrancy and how beggars might be put to work, but also leading to more positive changes such as statutes that enforced the provision of relief for the poor and providing work for those that could not find employment.

1495-1601

● Enclosure

With the rise in demand for wool, landowners looked for ways to increase their profits from the booming cloth trade and began to enclose fields and areas of common land to increase available grazing land. In many cases this led to civil unrest and open rebellion from the peasants.

1489

● The English Reformation

Henry VIII's dissolution of the monasteries had a profound effect on the way the country operated – the lands and schools that had belonged to the monasteries were seized and turned over to noble families to administer, with their associated incomes going to the crown's coffers rather than the Catholic Church.

1536-1541

● Education for the masses

Edward VI's policy of founding grammar schools that allowed children to study without paying traditional attendance fees provided a huge boost to the nation's levels of education, with learning now freely available to all children and no longer just the preserve of the wealthy and privileged.

1547-1553

● Revival of the Heresy Acts

Mary I's reign proved a dangerous period for Protestants, as her desire to see the Catholic Church reinstated as England's foremost religion prompted the return of the Heresy Acts and the subsequent persecution and execution of many of England's Protestants, with many so-called heretics burnt at the stake.

1553-1558



Shrewsbury's High Street in Tudor times; some of the half-timbered houses survive today

Shrewsbury's markets led to local complaints at the wear and tear on nearby roads caused by the ever-increasing number of visiting market-goers.

Town residents made their livings by opening shops that sold goods from the ground-floor windows of their houses, while inns provided bed and board to those who travelled from afar, as well as a place to relax, socialise and conduct business meetings. Entertainment became important, with the popularity of plays held in the street leading to the construction of the first purpose-built theatre in London in 1576 and heralding an era where attending performances would become a popular pastime for rich and poor alike.

The rural crook house evolved further in the towns and cities into the iconic 'half-timbered' Tudor houses. The box frames allowed construction of two or three storeys, vastly increasing the available living space - a desirable feature in the cramped urban streets where ground-floor space was limited and costly. Better-quality furnishings were more apparent, with four-poster beds becoming as much a status symbol as a comfortable place to sleep.

Thatching was replaced by clay or stone tiles, which lowered the risk of widespread damage in the event of fire; glass windows, though expensive, became more popular as the period wore on. The towns and cities were busy, thriving places, drawing people from rural communities and abroad

with the promise of an affluent lifestyle, though the increased population also brought the classic problems of overcrowding; disease, squalor, poor sanitation and increased crime.

While the market towns represented a large step in the country's economic progress, its apex lay with the major ports. In the early 1500s, almost half of England's wool, and most of its cloth, passed through London's docks, shipped to the Low Countries where an abundance of cloth-finishing industries would refine it before it

returned to England to be sold for a higher price. The relocation of the navy from Portsmouth to the capital saw an explosion in shipbuilding, along with the associated suppliers and trades. Larger ships were built and trade beyond the traditional trading partners of Western Europe became possible, increasing the flow of money into the city. By 1603, England's international reputation as a major cultural, industrial and economic power was well established; a reputation only made possible by the combined efforts of its people.

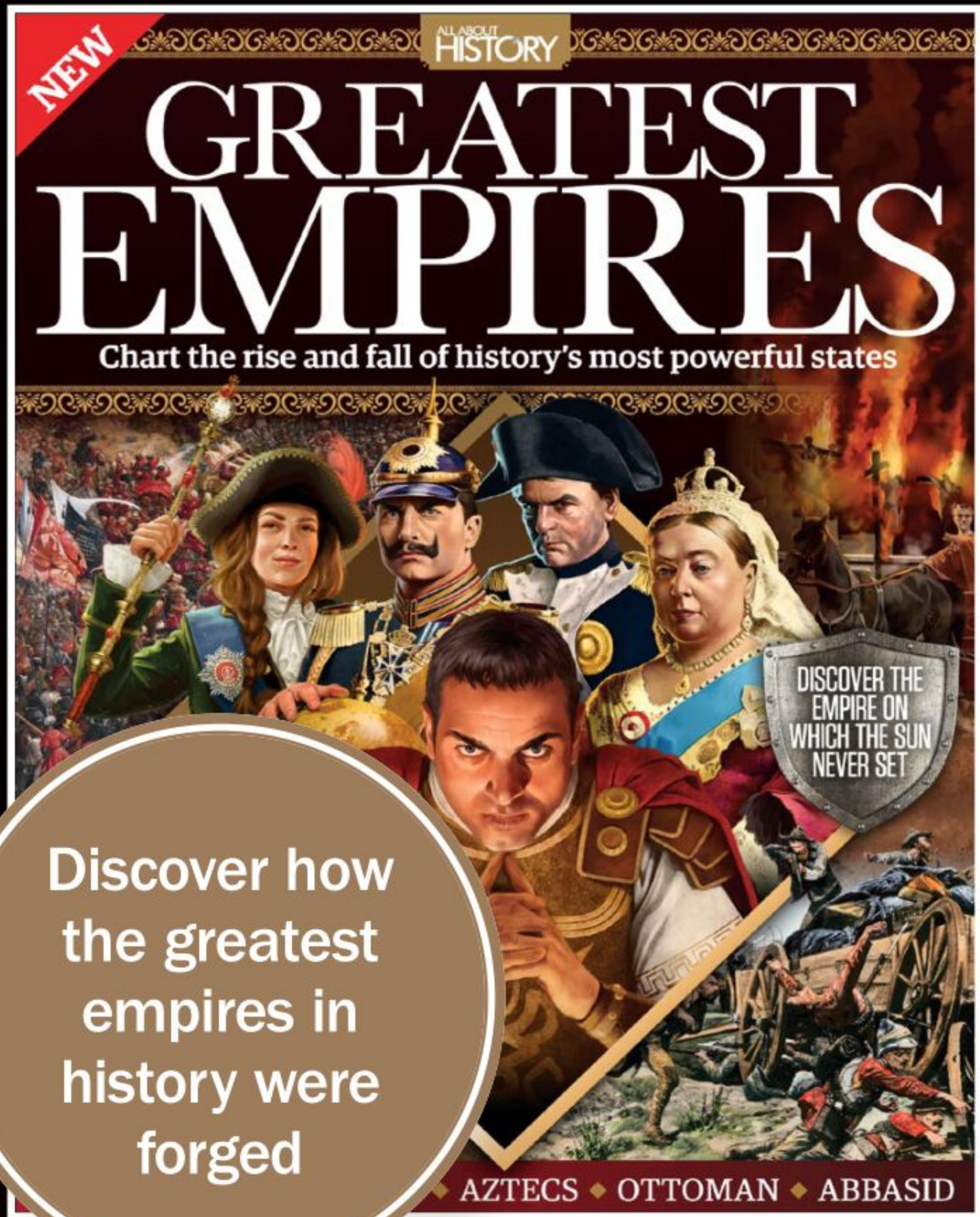
Tudor education

Access to education, although intended more for boys than girls, was much more available in Tudor times than it had been during previous periods. Villages and small towns often had a local parish school where children could be taught to read and write, while the sons of the middle and upper classes were able to attend, for a fee, 'Petty' (for children aged four to seven) and grammar schools, and perhaps go on to attend university at Oxford or Cambridge. Schools opened six days a week, often from 7am until 5pm, and taught a range of subjects including Latin, Greek, religious doctrine and arithmetic.

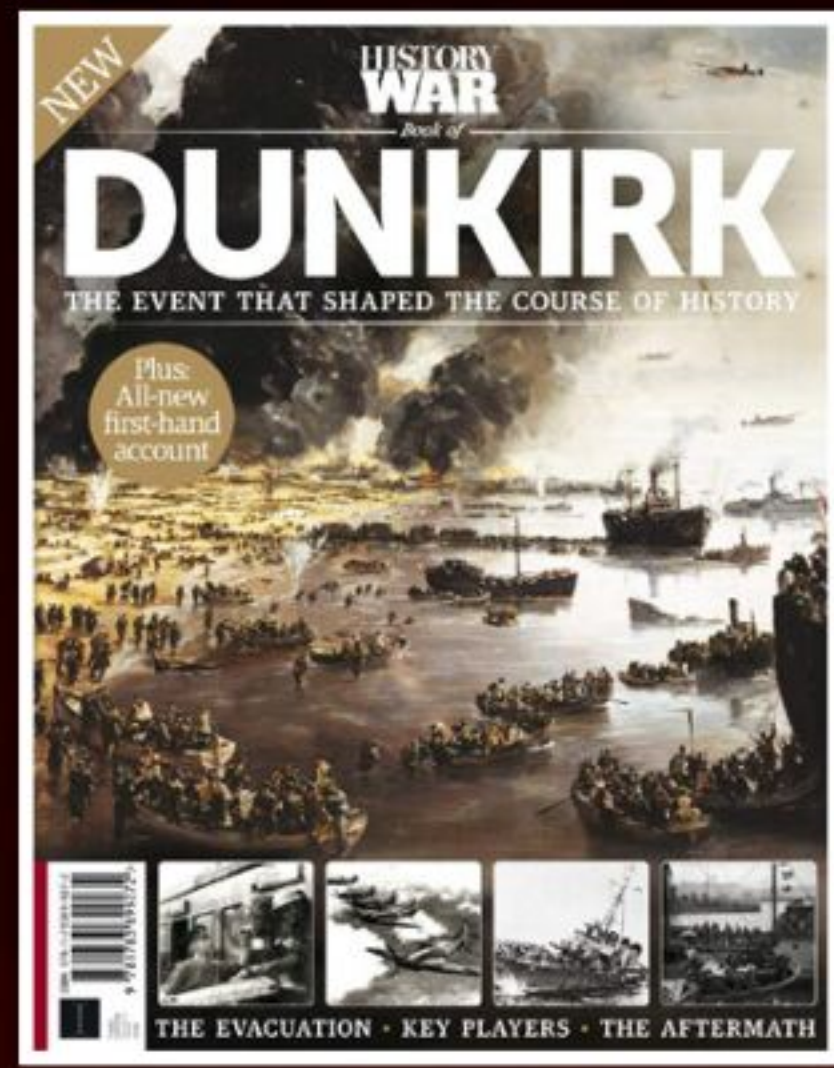
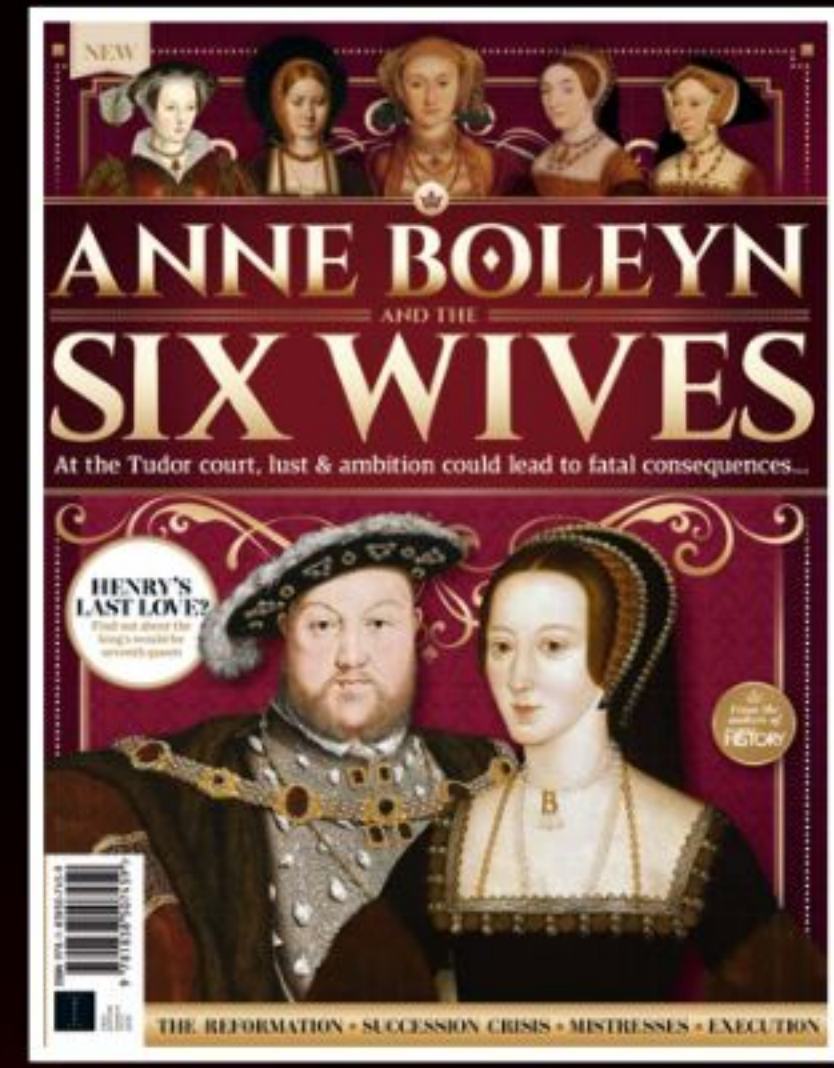
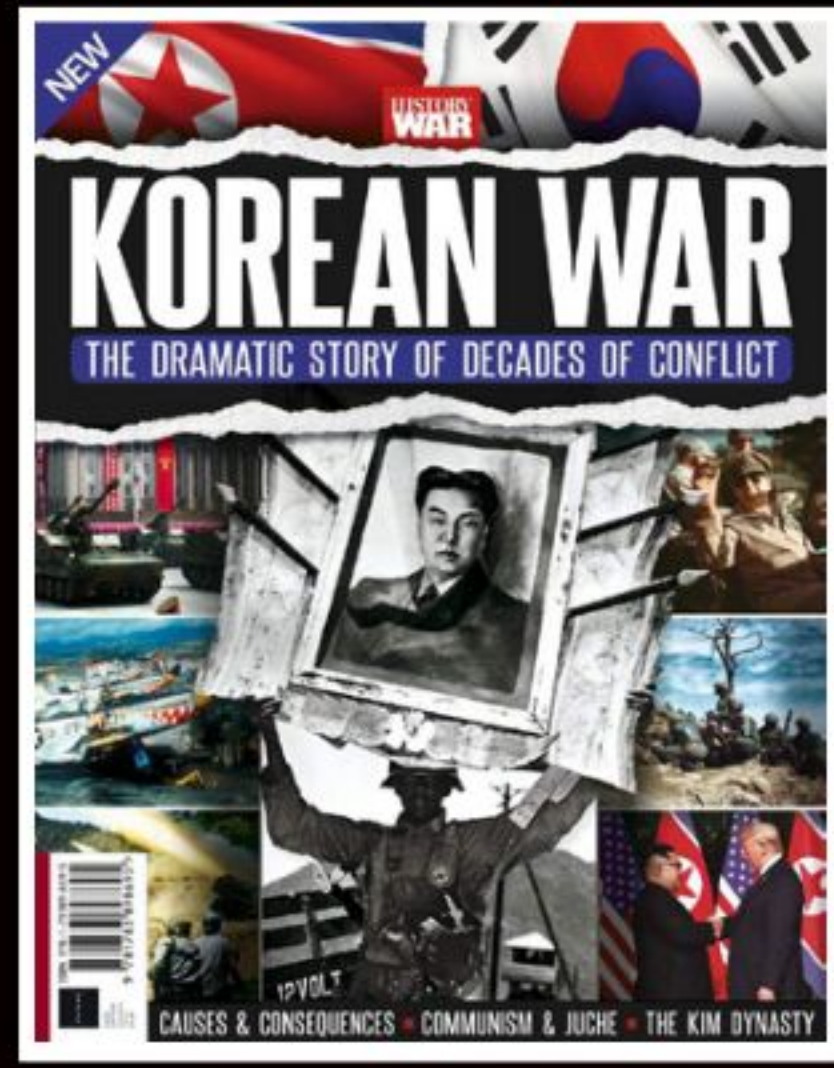
The daughters of middle and upper class families usually received private tuition, while the majority of lower-class girls had a more practical education

at home, teaching them skills that would aid them in running a household once they got married. Any scholarly education they received would likely have been passed on to them by their parents or their male siblings.

Education suffered during Henry VIII's closure of the monasteries and the schools that were often attached to them, but realising the value of an educated populace, Henry refounded many of the closed institutions as 'King's Schools'. Accessible education received another boost during Edward VI's reign with the founding of free grammar schools, raising the standard of learning available to those who had previously found the fees required to send their sons to school too prohibitive.



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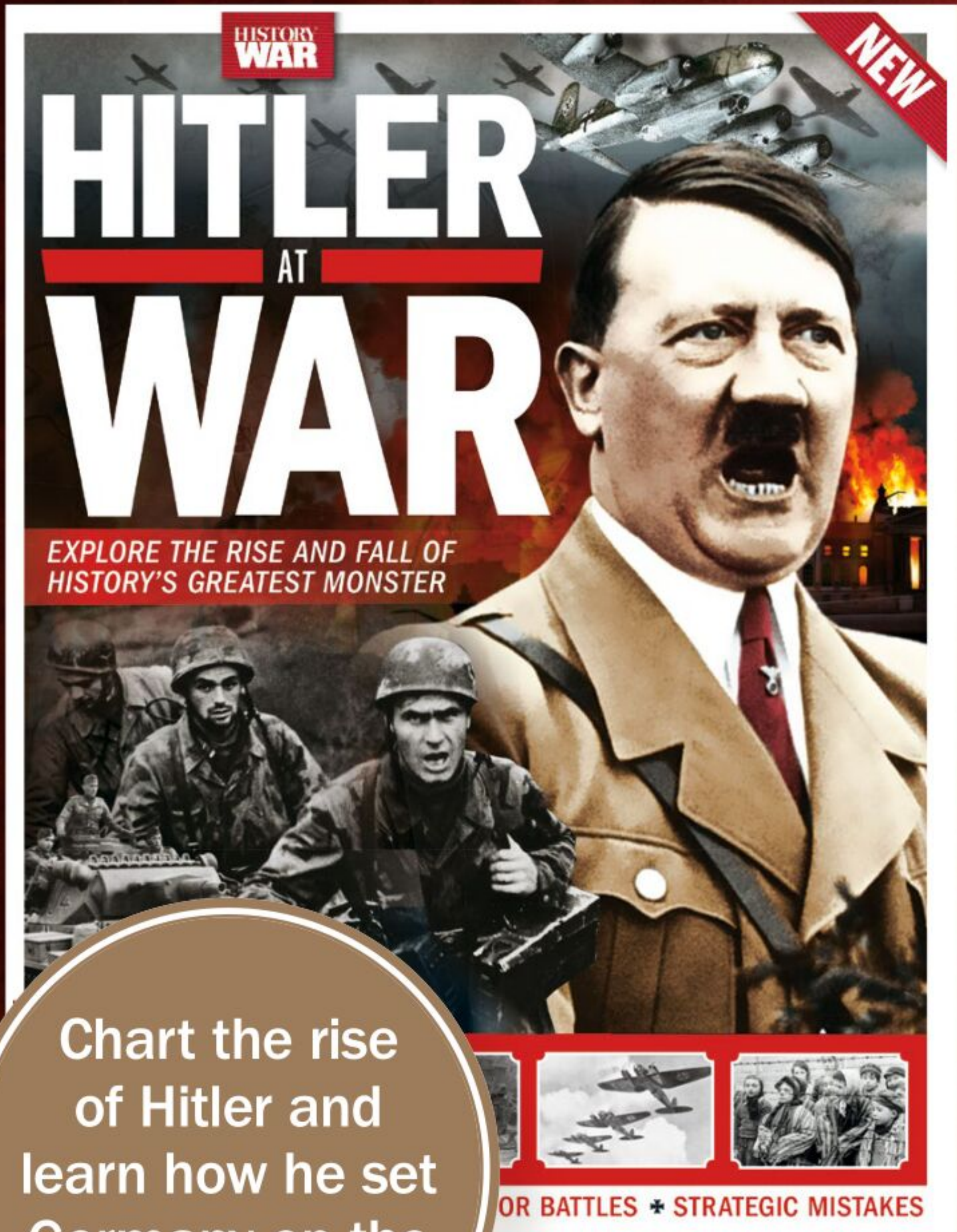
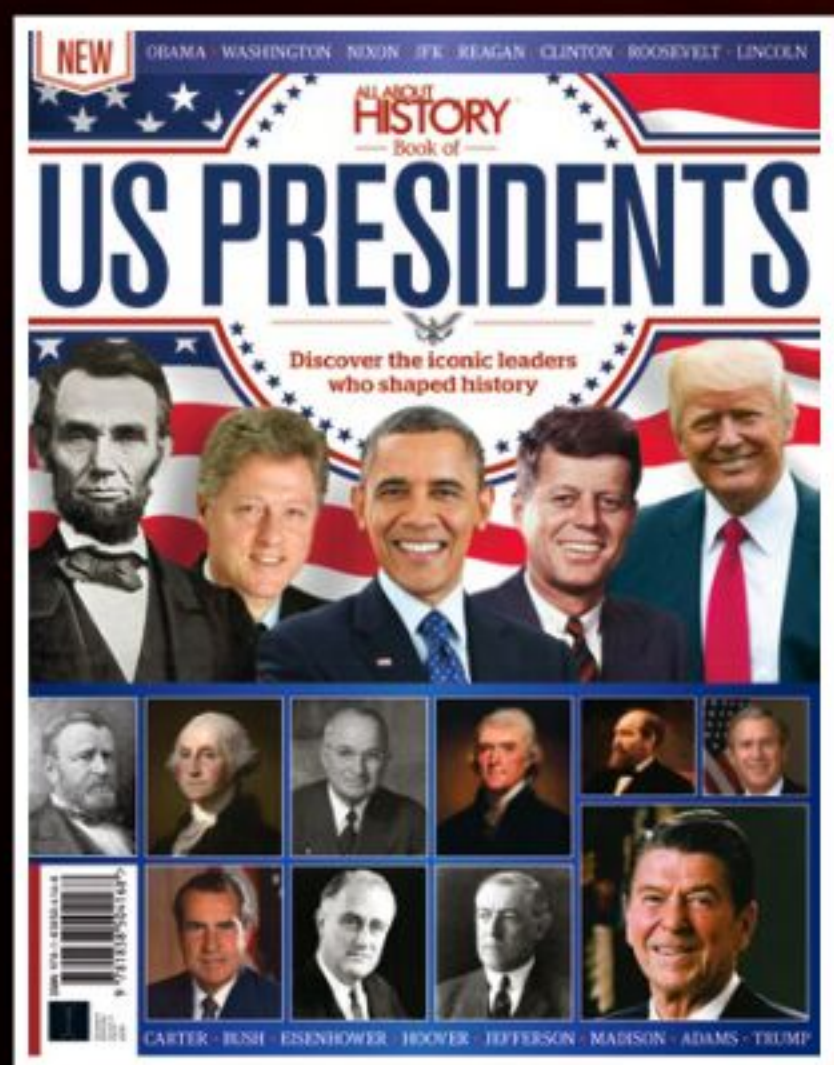
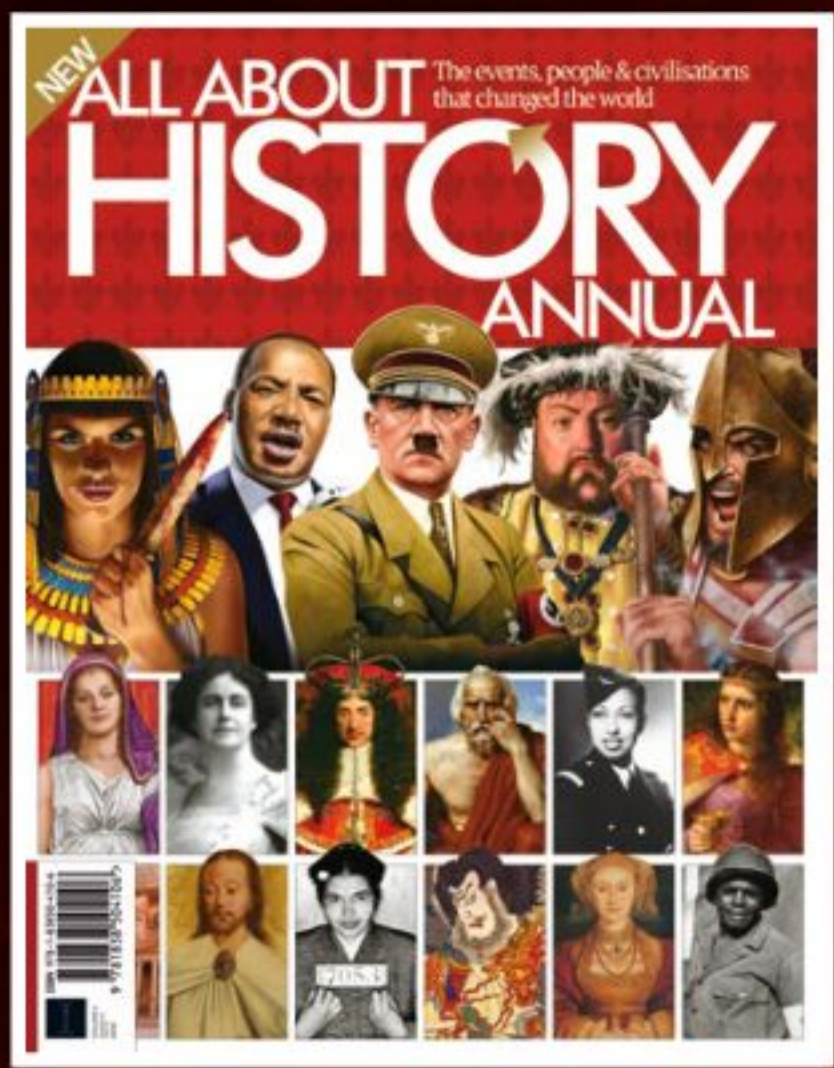
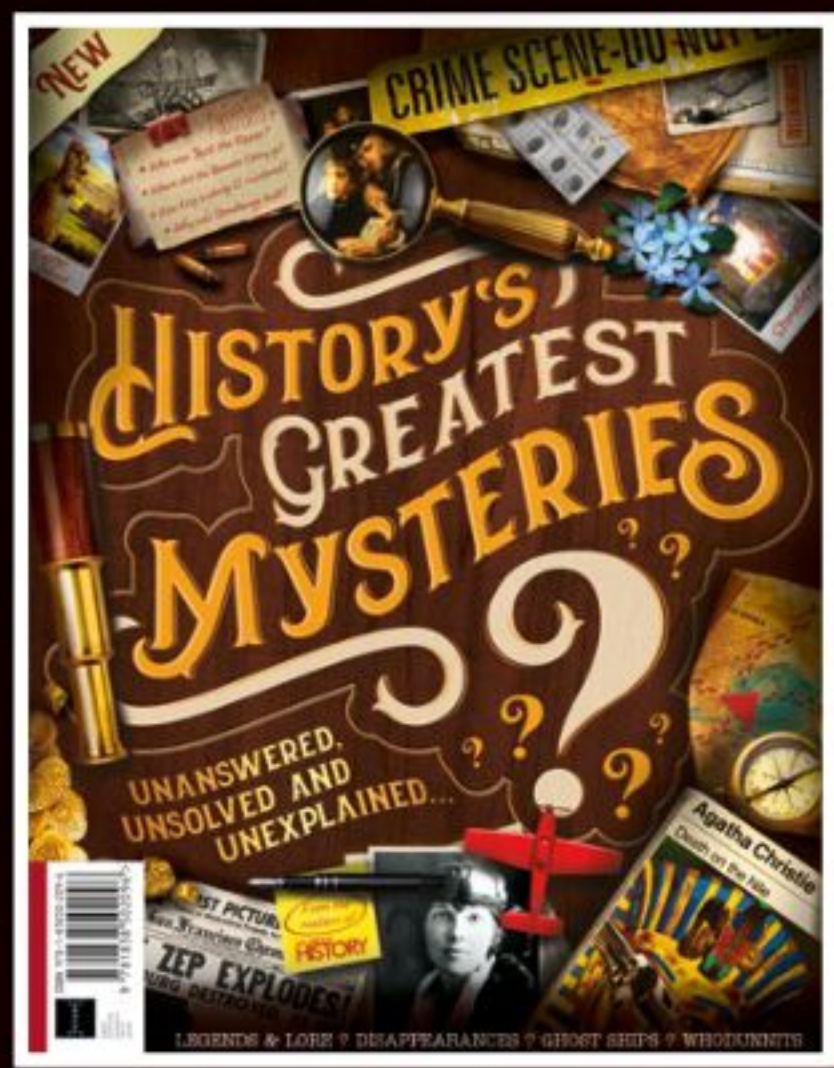
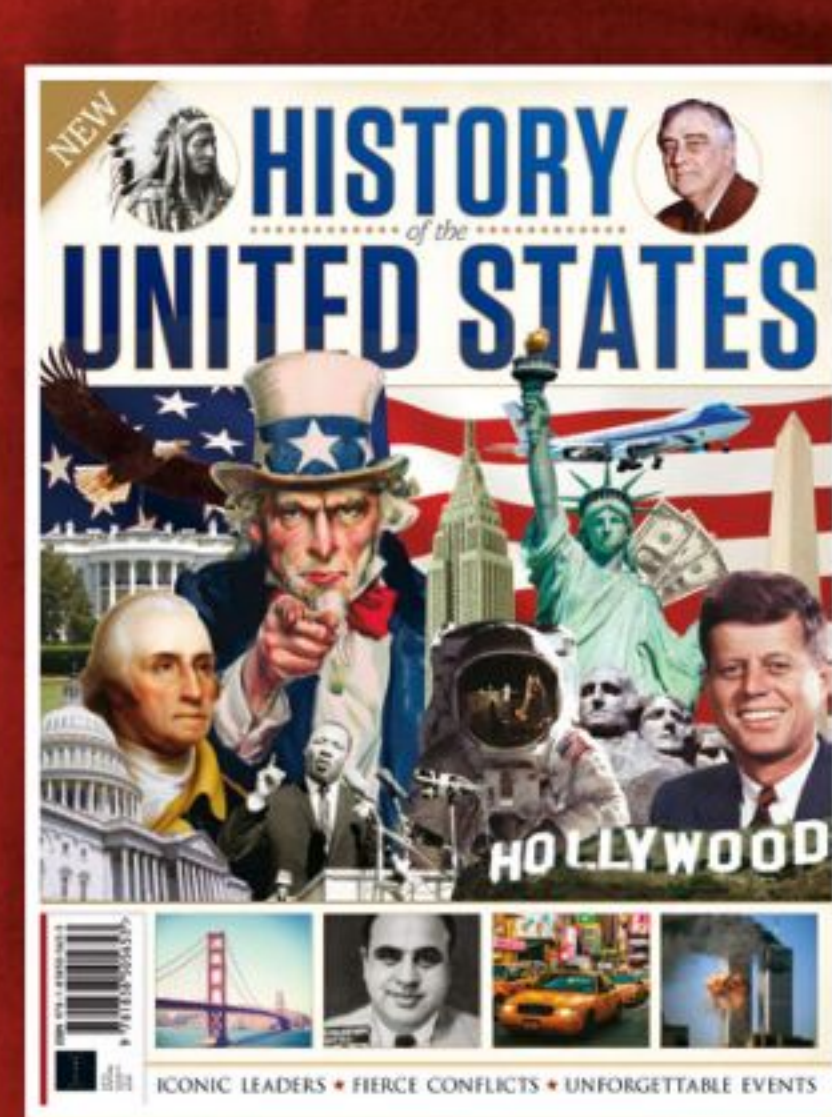
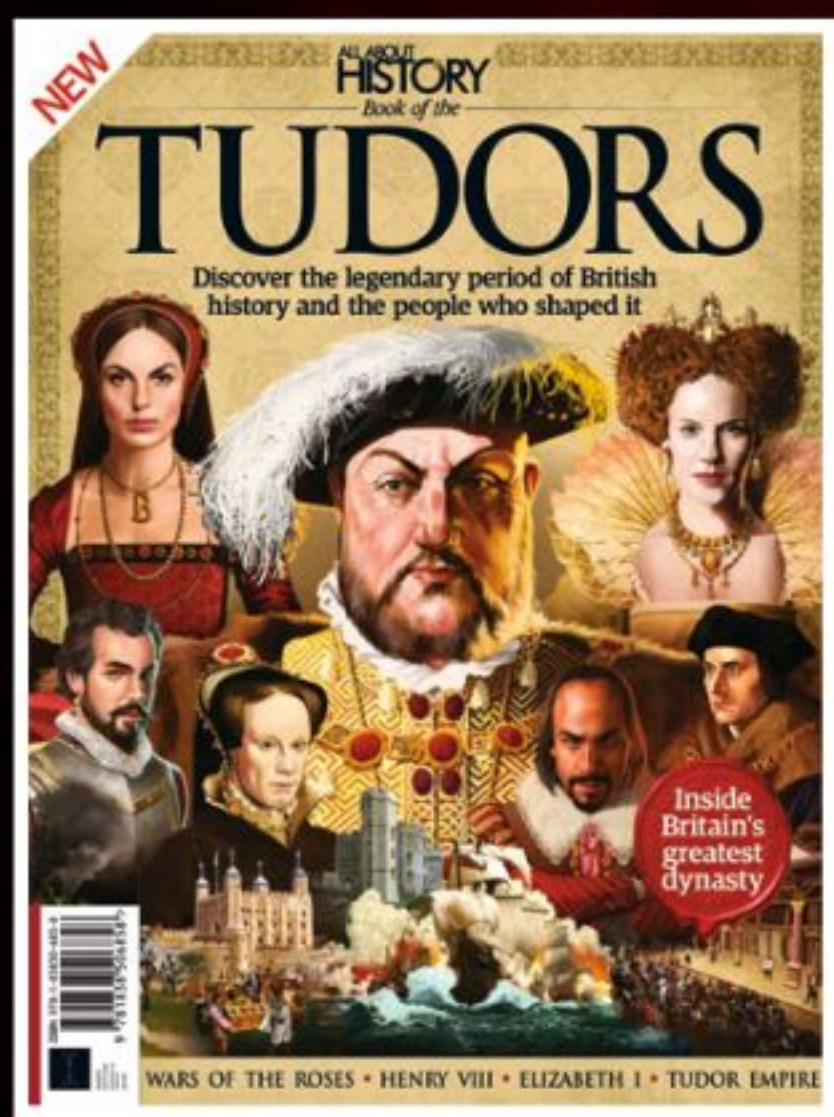


Chart the rise of Hitler and learn how he set Germany on the path to war



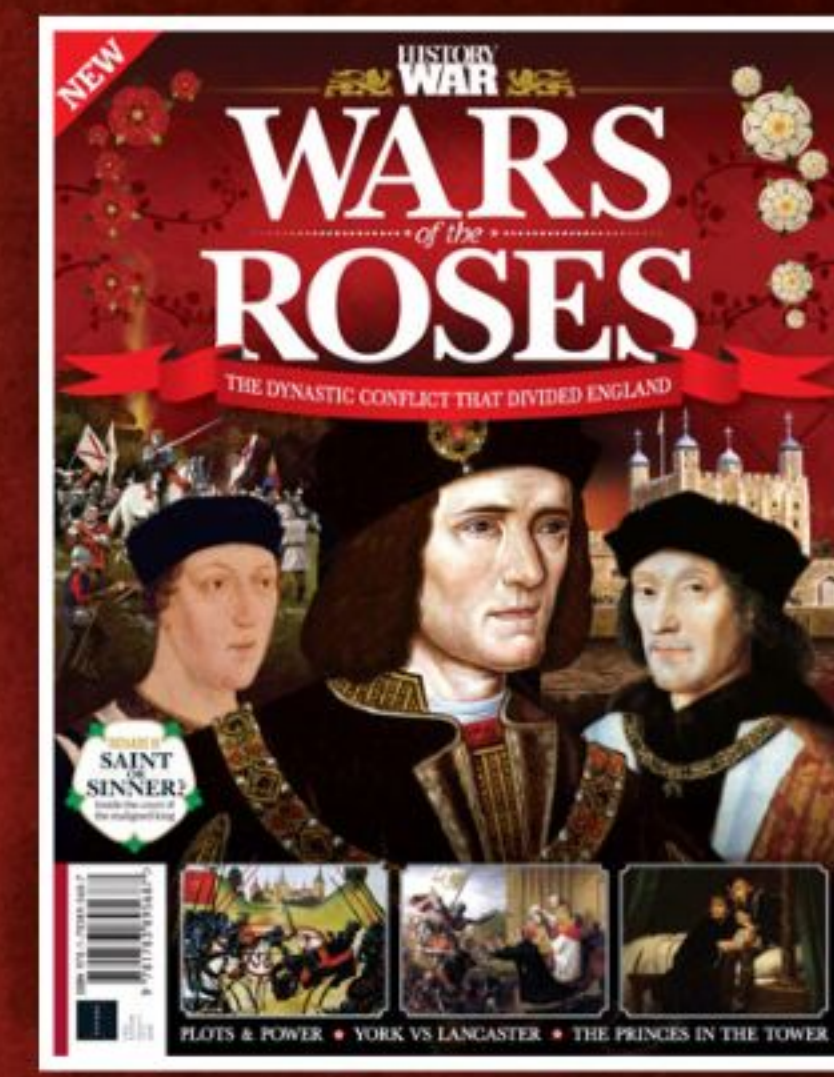
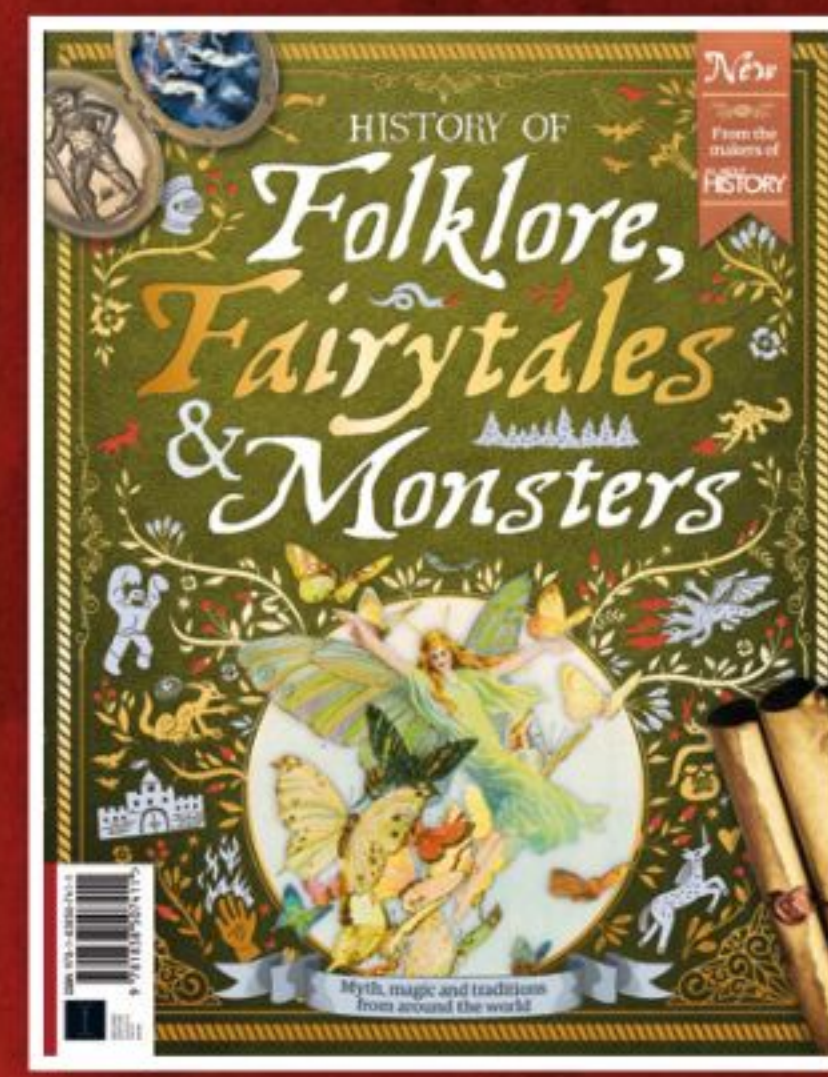
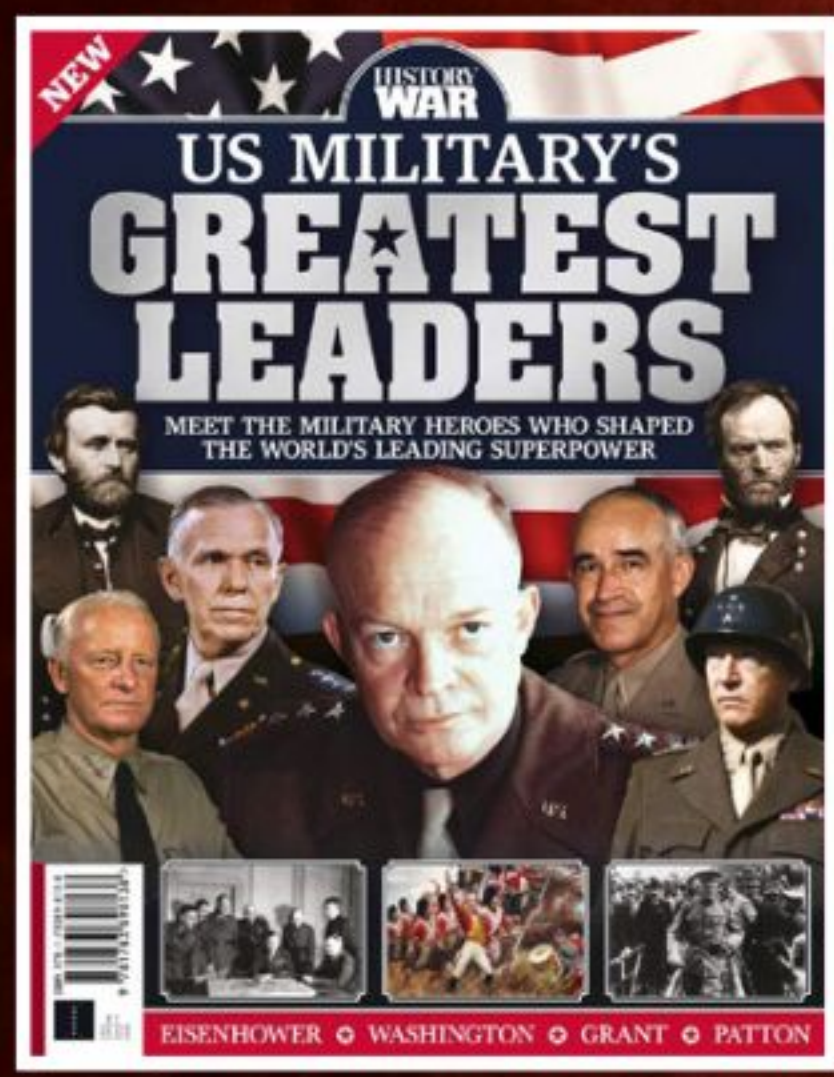
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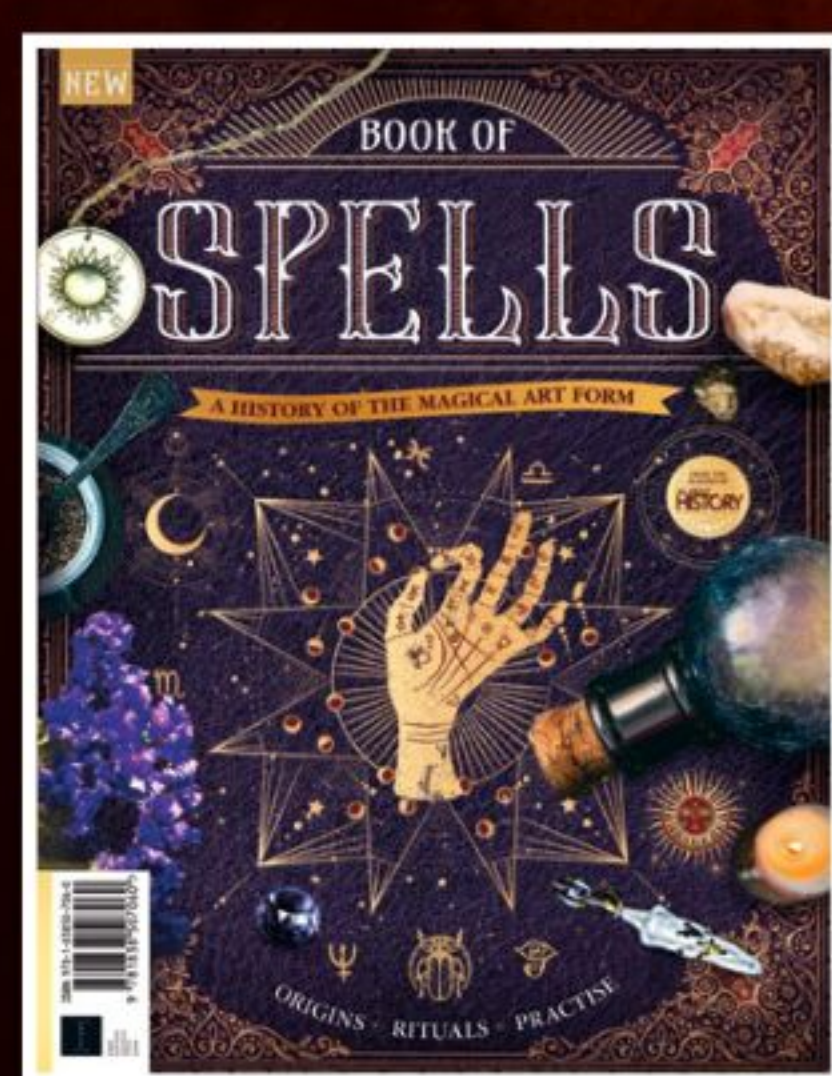
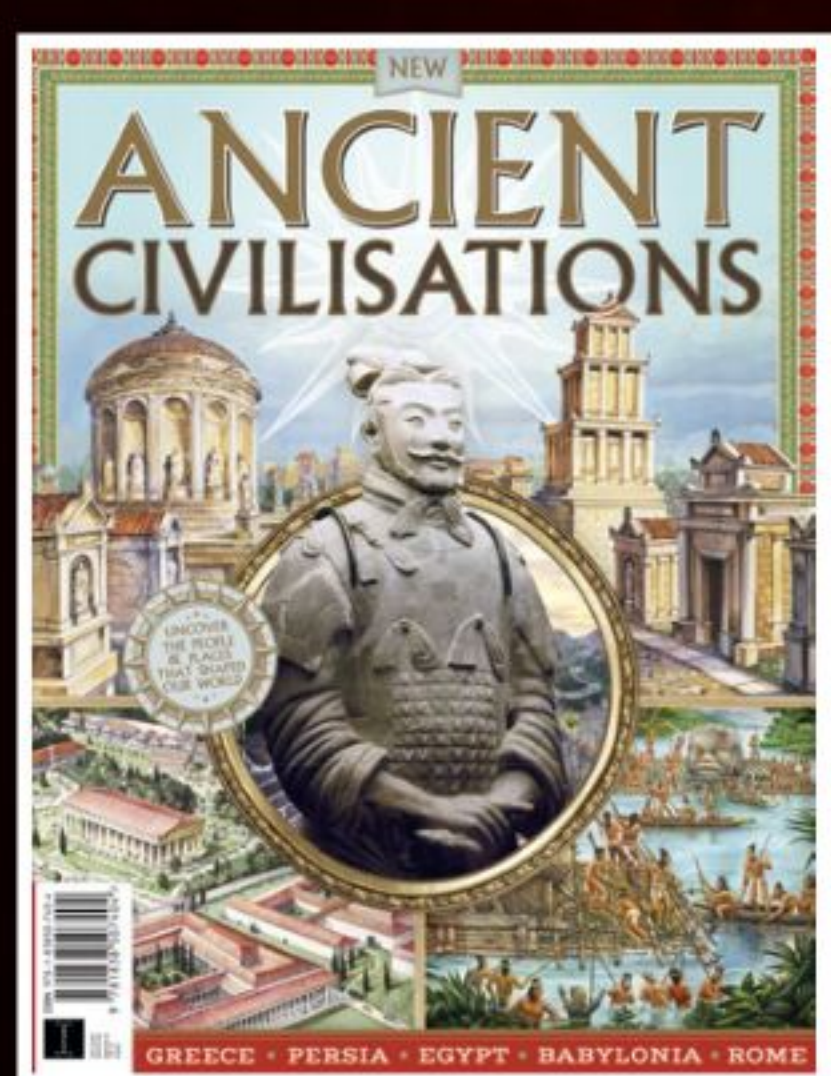
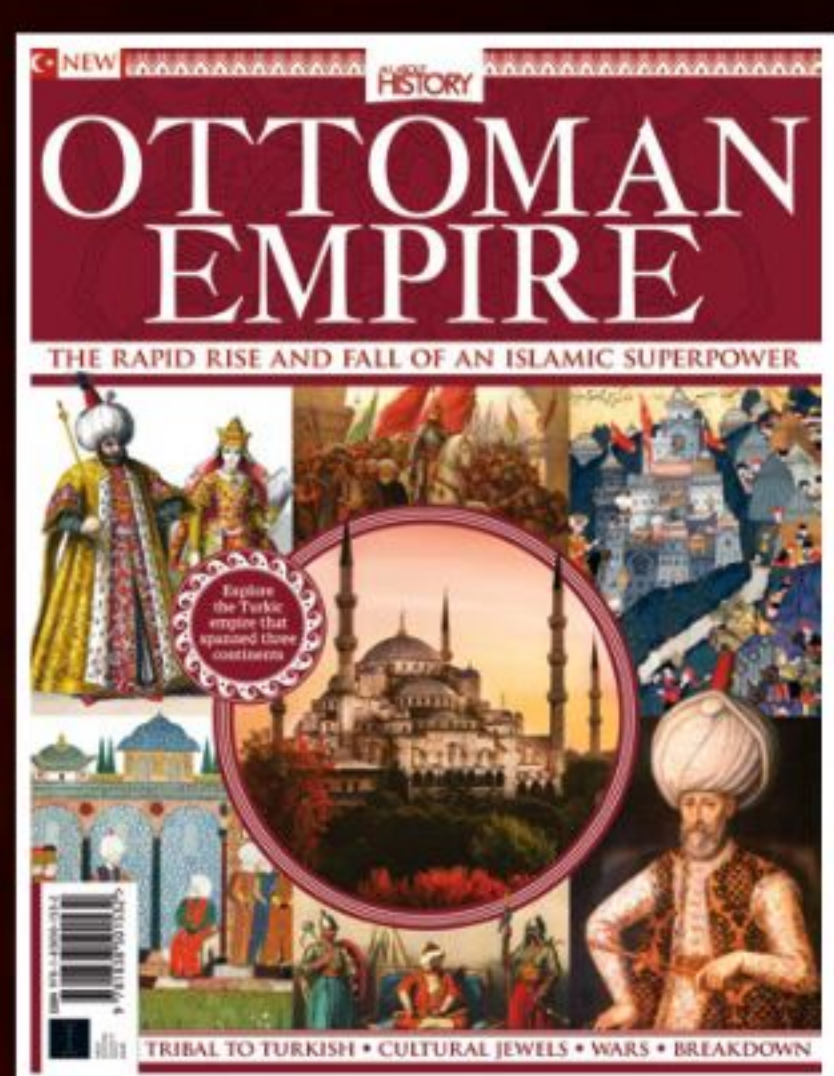
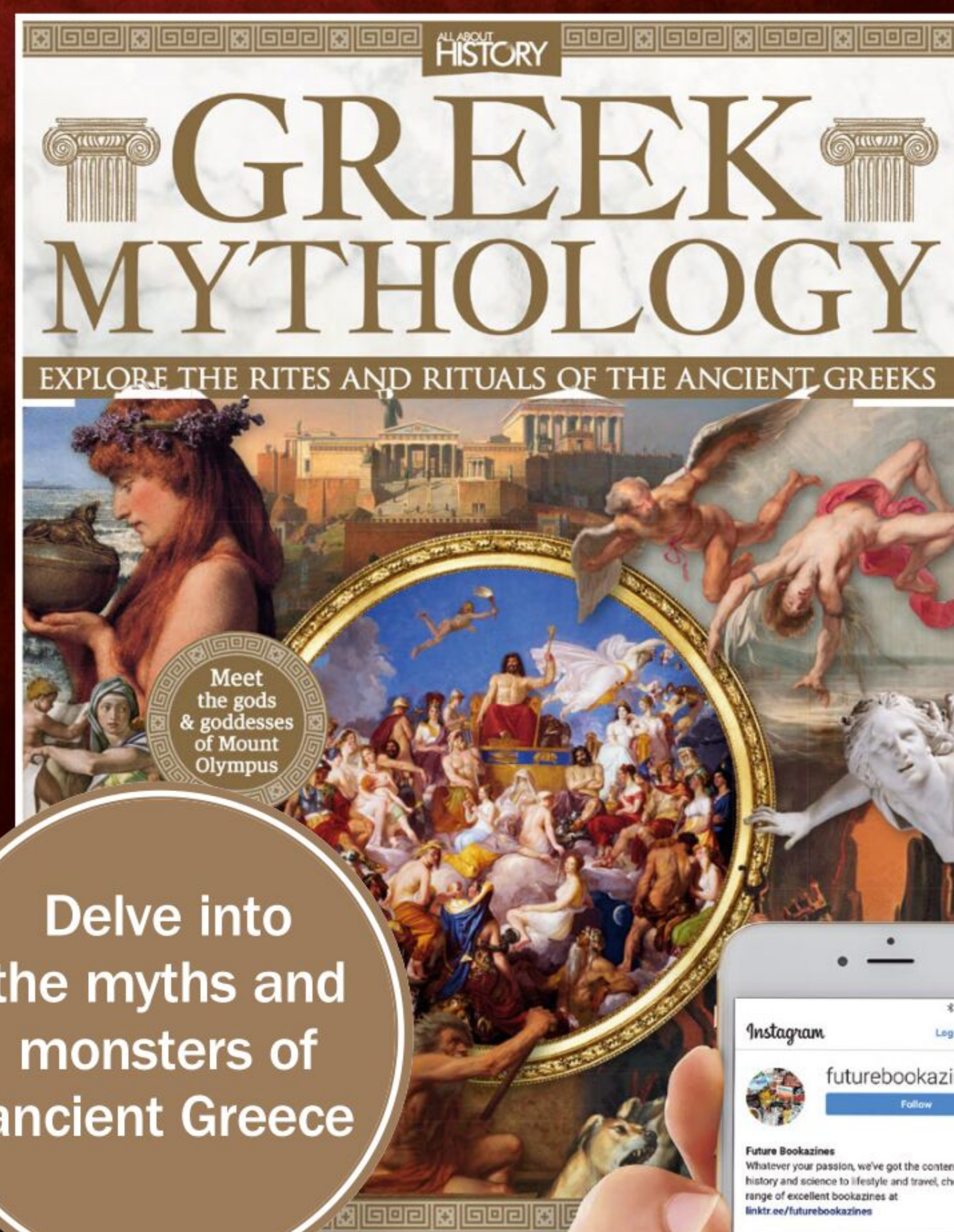
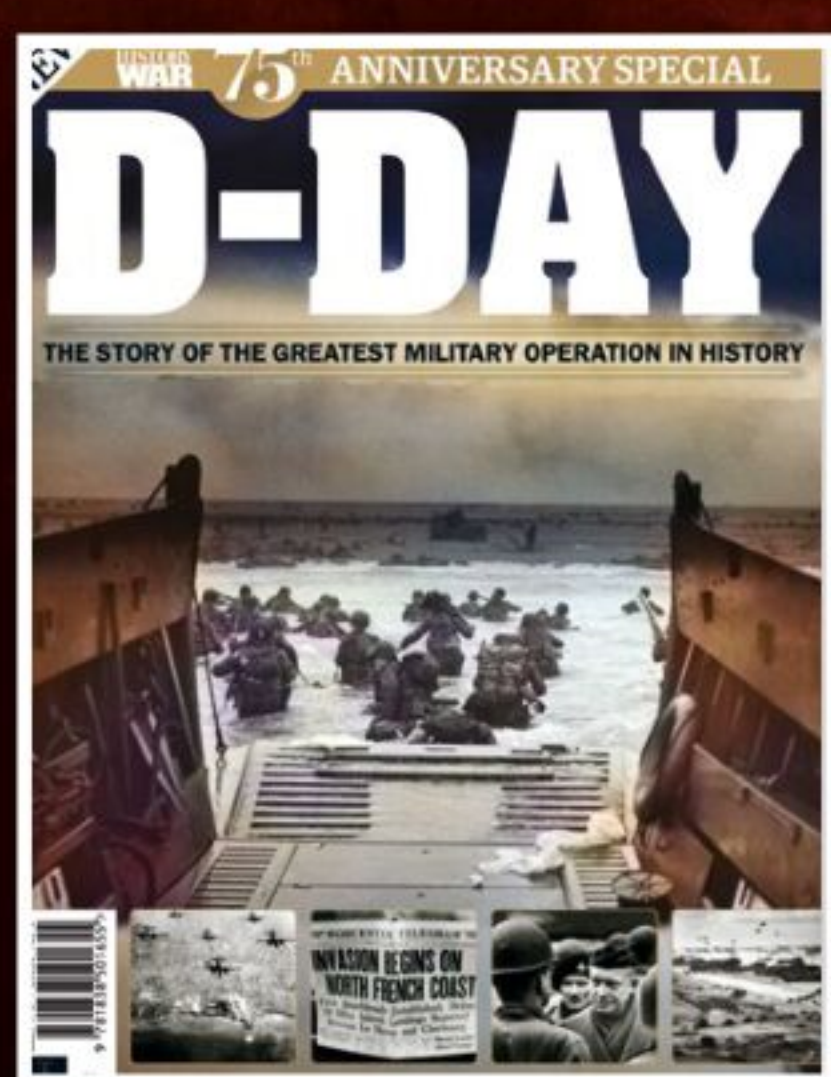
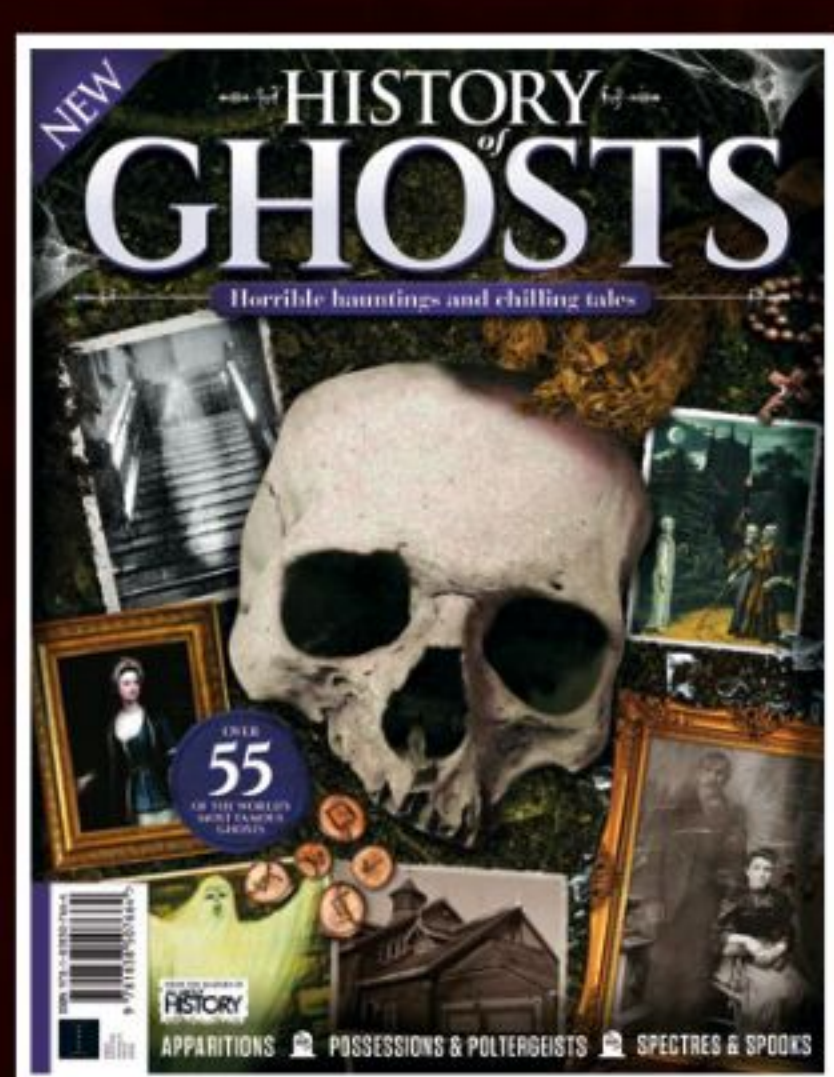


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EVERYTHING YOU NEED TO KNOW ABOUT

THE TUDORS



HOW LONG DID JANE RULE FOR?

© The Tudors

1457-1509

Henry VII

Meet the king who won his crown through battle and had to fight throughout his reign to keep it, establishing the mighty Tudor dynasty.

A commoner rose to power through military and political skill, Henry VII was the first Tudor monarch. He was crowned in 1485 and ruled until his death in 1509. He was known for his frugal and efficient rule, and for his efforts to restore peace and stability to England after a period of civil war. He was also known for his diplomatic skills, and for his efforts to strengthen England's position in Europe.

Henry and Elizabeth had eight children, but only three survived through to adulthood. Their eldest son, Edward, became King Edward VI in 1547. He was followed by his half-brother, King Philip and Mary II in 1553. Their youngest son, King James I and VI in 1603.

Henry VII

How it all began

Uncover how Henry VII took the throne with his sword and founded a new dynasty

WHERE DID THEY LIVE?

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The Six Wives of Henry VIII

The tales of love, ambition and tragedy of the women whose lives changed forever when they became the subjects of Henry VIII's affections.

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Henry's first wife, Catherine of Aragon, had six children, but only two survived to adulthood. Their eldest son, Edward VI, became King Edward VI in 1547. He was followed by his half-brother, King Philip and Mary II in 1553. Their youngest son, King James I and VI in 1603.

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THE UNCONFIRMED MISTRESSES

MADE POPULAR BY

CATHERINE MIDDLETON

ANNE BASTY

ELIZABETH AMARIS

Divorced, beheaded, died...

Meet the six women who married Henry VIII and find out what happened to them

WHO DIED IN THE TOWER?

WHO WAS PRINCE ARTHUR?

© The Tudors

"The risks were high, but the profits, if successful, were even greater"

The Tudor Empire

In the age of exploration, the fate of nations and the fortunes of men were created, sunk and stolen on the open seas.

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The Tudor Empire was a period of great expansion and discovery. It was a time when Britain's reach was extended across the globe, and when the fortunes of men were made and lost on the open seas. It was a time of great risk and great reward, and it was a time when the Tudor dynasty reached its peak.

The Tudor Empire

A whole new world

Explore the beginnings of Britain's empire as the Tudors set sail

© The Tudors

Tudor Castles

Discover the palatial homes of one of England's most infamous royal dynasties.

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The Tudor Castles were a testament to the power and wealth of the Tudor dynasty. They were grand and opulent structures that were built to impress and to defend. They were the homes of the Tudor monarchs, and they were the centers of power and politics in England.

Hampton Court Palace

The Palace of Whitehall

Live like a king

Take a look inside the opulent palaces and decadent castles that were home to the Tudor monarchs

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