

TUDOR LONDON



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Thomas Wolsey, then Archbishop of York and Chief Minister to the King, took over the lease in 1514 and rebuilt the 14th century manor house over the next seven years from 1515-1521 to form the nucleus of the present palace. Wolsey spent lavishly to build the finest palace in



England at Hampton Court, which he was later forced to give to Henry as he began to fall from favor.

The palace was appropriated by Wolsey's master and superior, King Henry VIII, in 1525. Henry VIII added the Great Hall, which goes down in history as the last medieval Great Hall built for the English monarchy and the Royal Tennis Court, which was built and is still in use for the game of tennis; though not the version we know today. The court is now the oldest "real" tennis court in the world that is still in use.



Hampton Court is said to be haunted with the spirits of Jane Seymour and Catherine Howard, two of Henry VIII's wives. Queen Jane Seymour gave birth to Prince Edward, the future king following the death of Henry VIII, at Hampton Court in 1537. She died at the palace twelve days later, and her ghost is said to haunt the staircase in the Palace to this day.

Queen Catherine Howard was arrested there in 1542 and is said to have run along the Long Gallery screaming for Henry VIII to save her, before his guards caught her and dragged her away. Her ghost is said to haunt the palace, sometimes screaming in the same hallway where she was arrested. There have also been reports of seeing the ghosts of Henry VIII himself and Anne Boleyn.

Henry VIII had in total six wives throughout his life. A history teacher freshman year of college taught me how to remember them: divorced, beheaded, and died, divorced, beheaded, and survived. Henry VIII married his first wife, Catherine of Aragon from Spain following the death of his brother, Arthur, who was Catherine's first husband. Catherine unable to bear a male heir, Henry VIII started pursuing the now infamous, Anne Boleyn. To pursue his desire for a male child, he pushed for divorce from Catherine and it failed. The Catholic Church would not grant the King's wish. With this, Henry VIII broke away from the Catholic Church and created the Church of England, which then granted his divorce. The marriage was later annulled so Henry was free to marry again. Henry remarried to Anne Boleyn.

On May 2, the Queen herself was arrested at Greenwich and was informed of the charges against her: adultery, incest and plotting to murder the King. She was then taken to the Tower by barge along the same path she had traveled to prepare for her coronation just three years earlier. In fact, she was lodged in the same rooms she had held on that occasion. On Monday the 13th, the Queen and her brother were put on trial at the Great



Hall of the Tower of London. It is estimated that some 2000 people attended. Anne conducted herself in a calm and dignified manner, denying all the charges against

her. Her brother was tried next, with his own wife testifying against him. Even though the evidence against them was scant, they were both found guilty, with the sentence being read by their uncle, Thomas Howard, the Duke of Norfolk. They were to be either burnt at the stake (which was the punishment for incest) or beheaded, at the discretion of the King.

Interestingly, shortly before her execution on charges of adultery, the Queen's marriage to the King was dissolved and declared invalid. One would wonder then how she could have committed adultery if she had in fact never been married to the King, but this was overlooked, as were so many other lapses of logic in the charges against Anne. They came for Anne on the morning of May 19 to take her to the Tower Green, where she was to be afforded the dignity of a private execution. She wore a red petticoat under a loose, dark grey gown of damask trimmed in fur. Over that she was a mantle of ermine. Her long, dark hair was bound up under a simple white linen coif over which she wore her usual headdress. She made a short speech before kneeling at the block. Her ladies removed the headdress and tied a blindfold over her eyes. The sword itself had been hidden under the straw. The swordsman cut off her head with one swift stroke. Anne's body and head were put into an arrow chest and buried in an unmarked grave in the Chapel of St. Peter ad Vincula which adjoined the Tower Green. Her body was one that was identified in renovations of the chapel under the reign of Queen Victoria, so Anne's final resting place is now marked in the marble floor. "Then King Henry married again. But he did not return the Church to Rome. He liked being the Supreme Head, and besides, the money he was now deriving from the Church was considerable" (Rutherford, 608).



