



HOLBEIN AT THE TUDOR COURT

PLAIN ENGLISH TRANSCRIPT

THE QUEEN'S GALLERY, BUCKINGHAM PALACE

10 NOVEMBER 2023 - 14 APRIL 2024

Welcome to The Queen's Gallery and to *Holbein at the Tudor Court*, an exhibition exploring the skill and artistry of Hans Holbein.

These notes contain the same information as the audio-description provided for hearing visitors. They are adapted from a script produced by ATS with information from a number of experts whose names are included at the end of these notes.

I. HANS HOLBEIN THE YOUNGER
***Noli Me Tangere*, 1526-28**
RCIN 40001



When we think about Henry VIII and those around him the images in our minds have come directly from portraits made by Holbein.

The Royal Collection has one of the most important surviving collections of his work. This exhibition looks at Holbein's work at the Tudor court – paintings for Henry VIII and his courtiers, and particularly Holbein's work as a portrait artist.

It's easy to forget that for the ten years or so before he first came to England Holbein had a very successful career as an artist, with portrait painting just a side-line. After leaving his hometown, Augsburg in southern Germany, he went to Basel, in Switzerland, where he painted religious altarpieces and created designs for stained glass windows, for goldsmiths' work, and for prints.

This painting shows the moment that Mary Magdalene meets the risen Christ. She has gone to his tomb but has found it empty. She meets a man she thinks is a gardener but he is, in fact, Christ himself.

The painting is on an oak panel. He did not paint onto oak panels in Switzerland, so experts think that it was painted in England, probably soon after he arrived in 1526.

Not long after arriving in England Holbein's subject matter changed. His side-line of portrait painting was going to take centre stage – as the paintings in these galleries show. The men and women who commissioned these portraits from him saw what he could do.

2. FLEMISH SCHOOL

The Battle of the Spurs, c. 1513
RCIN 406784



Horses charge and swords clash as the combined forces of Henry VIII and the Holy Roman Emperor Maximilian I fight against French soldiers to take the city of Thérrouanne, seen in the background of this work.

Henry is at the heart of the fight, on horseback, with his visor raised. His armour is gilded and engraved, and would have looked magnificent on the battlefield, just like the red, gold and white plumes on his helmet. He is raising his hand, possibly a sign of victory, as the defeated French leader kneels before him.

This painting was rescued from the devastating fire at Hampton Court Palace in 1986 and sent to Royal Collection Trust's conservation studio. But this was not the first time it had been worked on. Tears in the canvas, and areas where the paint was lifting had been treated 300 years earlier, when techniques were very different. Someone had smeared a filler across the uneven paint surface and painted over it, particularly on the left-hand side of the painting. It took a long time to remove the filler from the original paint, working very carefully, just one centimetre at a time, under a microscope. It took ten years of painstaking work to restore colour and movement to the scene.

The gold leads the eye across the chaotic battle scene and gives it some order, using strong touches of yellow. The colours dance across the canvas just as the white horses and the reds in their harnesses do. This gives the painting a sculptural feel, almost dance-like.

Holbein painted another view of the siege of Thérrouanne for Henry VIII as part of a temporary structure built for a meeting in 1527 with visiting French diplomats, at Greenwich. Sadly it has not survived.

The celebrations organised for the visit were known as the Greenwich Revels. As Henry VIII walked his French guests through the building he pointed to an arch, where the painting of the battle had been hung. This was one of the greatest defeats that the French had suffered at Henry's hands. The records tell us that Henry found this very amusing, but we have no indication of what the French response was!

3. The More Family Group



In this section of the exhibition, we are surrounded by members of the family of Sir Thomas More, the lawyer, senior courtier, scholar and author of the social satire *Utopia*. Holbein made these drawings as studies for a group portrait not long after he arrived in England in 1526.

The figures include Sir Thomas's son, John More, reading a book while he is being drawn, and his daughter, Cecily Heron, who had recently got married. She is wearing a maternity dress.

The finished painting no longer survives but the image below shows how Holbein planned to arrange the individual figures in a room at their home in Chelsea, to the west of London. The painting makes a particular point that books are central to the family's life, showing them reading and discussing what they've read. Sir Thomas More is at the centre, John More is to his left and Cecily Heron is in front of him, one of three women kneeling on the floor.



Holbein's was introduced to More and his family by a letter from the philosopher and writer Erasmus, whose portrait Holbein had painted. More and Erasmus were part of an international network of humanist scholars. Humanism is a term used by historians in the 19th century to describe how the Renaissance – the rebirth of classical culture – applied to the arts of language and literature. The word today is used for a way of life which rejects religious beliefs, but in a 16th century context it had a completely different meaning. At that time humanists were editors of texts, including new translations of the Bible, and also Ancient Greek and Roman texts.

Commissions from prominent courtiers gave Holbein a good start to his career as a portrait artist in England, but Sir Thomas More's position was soon on shaky ground – he suffered a dramatic fall from favour in Henry's court because of reform of the Church in Tudor England.

3a. Reformation

HANS HOLBEIN THE YOUNGER

Sir Thomas More (1478-1535), c.1526-7

RCIN 912225



When Holbein arrived in England in 1526, Thomas More was a rising star at court. Less than ten years later, he had become a victim of Henry's reform of the English Church. Henry's motive for its reform was not to introduce Protestant thought and theology. Rather he wanted to sort out what was known as the "King's Great Matter" – finding a way to put aside his wife Catherine of Aragon so he could marry Anne Boleyn instead. When the Pope objected, Henry insisted that Parliament pass the Act of Supremacy 1534. It made him the Supreme Head of the English Church and cut off ties with the Pope.

Sir Thomas More was quite willing to agree that the Church was in need of change and reform, but not as much change as Henry VIII was making by breaking away from the Roman Catholic Church and the Pope. He saw that it would lead to the Church breaking apart across Europe, which was something his conscience could not accept. He was, in effect, forced to oppose Henry's Act of Supremacy. More was charged with treason and imprisoned in the Tower of London.

At his trial he was betrayed by Sir Richard Southwell who lied about him – Southwell was a particularly nasty individual. He is illustrated in the exhibition, in a wonderful portrait drawing by Holbein. But it was because of his false testimony that Sir Thomas More was found guilty and

executed for treason in 1535. It seems that it was not enough for Henry VIII for More simply to withdraw from public life and remain quiet.

4. HANS HOLBEIN THE YOUNGER
Sir Henry Guildford (1489-1532), 1527
Black and coloured chalks, and pen and ink
RCIN 912266

HANS HOLBEIN THE YOUNGER
Sir Henry Guildford (1489-1532), dated 1527
RCIN 400046



Here we can compare Holbein's preparatory drawing of Henry Guildford with the finished painting. It reveals a lot about the way in which Holbein worked. The drawing shows that he is most interested in how the face is modelled. He has sketched out the outfit, but it is not his main concern here. However, in the painting the face looks a little different – it is longer and thinner. Holbein did this by moving his pattern down as he traced it onto the panel.

Holbein uses different coloured chalks, mainly yellows, reds and browns, to build up the flesh tone of the face. He uses either fine black chalk or black ink for the lip line. A careful look at Guildford's eyeline shows that one of his eyes looks slightly off compared with the other, in terms of the direction he is looking in. This suggests that he may have been moving whilst Holbein was drawing him.

The drawing wasn't intended to be framed and displayed on the wall. It had several purposes. The first was to demonstrate Holbein's skill in capturing a likeness to the sitter, with a tempting promise of a fine portrait to come. It was also a preparatory study for a painting, capturing the features of the sitter. It could also be used as a face pattern for transferring the likeness to a panel.

An indented line on some of the portrait drawings shows us one of Holbein's methods for transferring the contours to a wooden panel in preparation for the painted work. Although there are no indented lines on the drawing of Guildford, it may also have been placed on top of a piece of paper covered in charcoal – like carbon paper – and lightly traced over. This would transfer the lines traced to another piece of paper, or to a panel prepared and ready for painting.

However he did it, Holbein made additions and adjustments to the composition as he went. Paintings are not always a simple replica of drawings. Drawings do not always include the background, or the costume, and the look of the sitter may change slightly.

Setting Holbein's drawings alongside his paintings allows us to see him constantly adjusting and refining his work. In doing so he created portraits that would not only appeal to his sitters, but would also demonstrate his talent as a master draughtsman and painter.

Guildford was part of the circle that Holbein was introduced to when he arrived in England. His finished painted portrait shows off Guildford's status. He is wearing a rich outfit and the chain of the Order of the Garter, and is holding the white staff of office of the Comptroller of the Household, being one of Henry VIII's most senior courtiers. He had a wonderful role at court – basically he organised the parties.

These included the Greenwich Revels of 1527 held in the expensively decorated temporary structure where Holbein painted the king's victory at the Siege of Thérrouanne. He also painted a spectacular ceiling with a map of the world. Guildford must have been impressed. He commissioned this portrait of himself, and one of his wife, which is now in the Saint Louis Art Museum in Missouri.

With important patrons like Guildford and Sir Thomas More, word about the talented Hans Holbein started to spread at the Tudor court. But the following year, having spent two years in England, Holbein returned to Basel. He was at risk of losing his citizenship if he stayed away from Basel for too long, and his wife and children were still there.

But the lure of the Tudor court became too much for him and in 1532 he packed up his things and came back to England. He spent the rest of his career in England as a very successful artist, occasionally travelling on the Continent, but largely drawing sitters in and around England.

5. HANS HOLBEIN THE YOUNGER
***Mistress Zouch (?)*, c.1532-43**
RCIN 912252



When these drawings were in the collection of Edward VI they were bound into a book, which probably started life in Holbein's studio. It was known as the Great Book from quite early on. There were inscriptions naming a number of the sitters written by Sir John Cheke, Edward VI's tutor, who would have known many of the men and women in them.

In the 18th century the drawings were removed from the Great Book so that Queen Caroline could hang them on the walls of her residence in Richmond and then in her closet in Kensington Palace.

The names Sir John Cheke had written were then copied onto the individual drawings – like the ‘M.Zouch’ at the top of this work.

It is not known who this sitter is, which makes it a fascinating drawing. There were a number of women known as Mistress Zouch at court, but who this one was remains a mystery.

Her jewellery may tell us something about her, but that is also unclear. She is wearing a medallion, which Holbein has not sketched in detail – rather he has recorded the impression of a figure rising into the air. And it is suggested it may be the figure of Fortune.

The handwriting on her bodice just below is Holbein’s. He has written ‘black felbet’ which is his interpretation of the English words, ‘black velvet’. This is so that when he is making his finished painting, he reproduces the fine texture of the velvet.

To modern viewers these drawings are beautiful works of art – to Holbein they were just tools for recording what he needed for the finished work. He uses whatever he can in order to do that – chalks and watercolours and inks, and also words.

5a. Holbein’s Materials

Almost as soon as Holbein returned to London in 1532 commissions for his portraits poured in, and around this time he adopted a plan for saving time. He used a pink preparation applied to the paper to give him a base colour and a facial tone for the complexion that he could start with. The works in the exhibition include all types of pinks, suggesting that Holbein took care to select the colour which suited that particular sitter. For example, adding more yellow ochre to the mix resulted in a colour closer to salmon.

Holbein was then ready to begin drawing. He mainly used faint black chalk to start the outline, emphasising it more as he became more confident about where he wanted the line to finish.

In this drawing of Mistress Zouch he captures the particular shade of her hair by combining coloured chalks. Close inspection sometimes reveals the sequence in which he applied the media. Her hair is a good example of the use of layers of reds, browns and yellows. Holbein defines the shape of her eyes using red chalk then adds blue watercolour for the irises and black ink or watercolour for the pupil. He defines where the lower eyelid starts and stops just by adding the eyelashes, their size and depth shown simply by the way they sit together.

Sometimes Holbein gives himself a tiny indication of detail to work up in the painted portrait.

For example, he has only drawn the detail of her headdress on one side, because he knows that the other side will be exactly the same so he has no need to repeat it.

HANS HOLBEIN THE YOUNGER
Sir Thomas Lestrangle (c. 1490-1545), c. 1536
RCIN 912244



This is Thomas Lestrangle, a mid-ranking courtier trusted to carry out business on the King's behalf. It is a wonderful use of chalk – mainly black chalk which Holbein has smudged, hatched and scribbled, sharpening it to get these really clear lines. He has left sections of Thomas Lestrangle's black hair blank, to suggest the shine on the hair, and has used red chalk to catch the tone of his moustache. He has also used a touch of blue watercolour to indicate his bluish-grey eyes.

Sir Thomas and Lady Lestrangle lived at Hunstanton Hall in north Norfolk. Meticulous household accounts reveal much about their lively social life. They record the visitors who came to Hunstanton Hall every week, the food they bought to feed them, and the entertainments they provided, including jugglers and trumpeters. There is a record of Thomas Lestrangle buying a black velvet hat – perhaps even the one worn in this portrait?

Many of the men and women in this room belonged to the Lestrangle's family network and close-knit East Anglian social circle. On the wall to the right are Richard Southwell, a close neighbour, and William Parr, Lady Lestrangle's nephew. In front are Mary Shelton, another neighbour, Lady Lestrangle's brother Sir Thomas Vaux and his wife Elizabeth, Lady Vaux.

The drawings give rise to questions about how the commissions happened. Was it a dinner party? Did the Vauxs sit down with Lestranges and say, 'This painter's just painting our portraits,' so that Lestrangle thinks, 'I want one of those.' This may well have been one way in which Holbein's reputation might have spread.

6. HANS HOLBEIN THE YOUNGER
Mary, Lady Heveningham (1510/15-1570/71), c.1532-43
RCIN 912227



This woman, with her gable headdress and steadfast gaze, is Mary Shelton, poet, cousin of Anne Boleyn and a member of a prominent East Anglian family. The name on the drawing – Lady Henegham – was her later married name.

Holbein must have spent some time on this drawing to capture what she is wearing. There is yellow and red chalk in her headdress, but also quite a large quantity of black ink, to show the black velvet of her headdress and of the border of her bodice. He has used white paint for the border of her bodice with the little white flowers on it.

Together with Mary, Duchess of Richmond and Somerset (whose portrait is in the final gallery) and Lady Margaret Douglas, Shelton put together a volume of poetry known as the Devonshire Manuscript. It includes works by Thomas Wyatt and Henry Howard, Earl of Surrey. She included handwritten notes setting out her understanding of the poems, which were sometimes quite witty.

For example, the poem 'Suffering in sorrow in hope to attain' is a love poem written to Mary herself. The first letter of each the verses is one of the letters of her name, and each of those verses ends 'To serve and suffer still I must'. Who wrote it is not known, but the author talks about how he is waiting for Mary Shelton to fall in love with him. At the end of the poem Mary Shelton herself has written 'Undesired service, require no hire'.

The poem *Suffering in sorrow* is below.

7a. *Suffering in sorrow in hope to attain*

Suffering in sorrow, in hope to attain,
Desiring in fear and dare not complain,
True of belief in whom is all my trust,
Do thou apply to ease me of my pain,
Else thus to serve and suffer still I must.

Encrease of care I find both day and night.
I hate that was sometime all my delight.
The cause thereof ye know I have discussed
And yet to refrain it passeth my might;
Wherefore to serve and suffer still I must.

Never to cease nor yet like to attain
As long as I in fear dare not complain.
True of belief hath always been my trust
And, till she knoweth the cause of all my pain,
Content to serve and suffer still I must.

7. HANS HOLBEIN THE YOUNGER

James Butler, later 9th Earl of Ormond and 2nd Earl of Ossory (c.1496-1546), c.1537

RCIN 912263



Historians are confident about the date when Holbein made this portrait of James Butler, later the Earl of Ormond. At one time he was considered a possible husband for Anne Boleyn. Butler was usually based in Ireland, but in late 1537 he travelled to London to attend the christening of Edward VI. It seems very likely that he sat for Holbein during that visit.

Being able to date the drawing of Butler is very helpful because the paper has the same watermark as the paper used for the man on display next to him whose identity is not known. Although we know nothing about this man – who he was, where he came from, why he had a portrait made – the rough date when his portrait was being made is known, because Holbein was using a very similar technique on the same batch of paper.

Both portraits include curled strands of hair from the men's beards overlapping the necklines of their jackets. Holbein used the same delicate lines to create fine detail in painted portrait miniatures to be held in the hand.

There are miniatures of two little boys on this same wall. Holbein had fairly recently learnt the art of miniature painting from a Flemish artist who was also working for Henry VIII, Lucas Horenbout.

8. HANS HOLBEIN THE YOUNGER
Sir John Godsalue (c. 1505-1556), c.1532-4
RCIN 912265



This drawing stands out because it is much more highly and comprehensively coloured than the others. Holbein started with a drawing on pink paper, as he did with many of his other drawings, but has worked it up in inks, watercolours and chalks to create what looks more like a finished painting. It is thought he was making it to attach to a panel so it could be hung on the wall as if it was an oil painting.

This is John Godsalue whose official title was Clerk of the Signet, a senior administrator who prepared documents for the king's signet, or seal. His duties included handing out Letters Patent, which were grants of citizenship or grants for payment. It is clear, therefore, that he had contact with merchants and craftsmen, including Holbein himself.

For some reason Holbein appears not to have finished this portrait. He was usually very precise about painting the details of fabric, but here he still has to work up the texture of Godsalve's sleeves and fill in the detail on his hat badge and on the letter. Unusually though, he has shown Godsalve's hands. Most of the sitters in Holbein's painted portraits have their hands included, but that is not the case in the drawings. Only eleven out of the surviving drawings – of which there are about a hundred – include hands in any form.

**9. DIEGO DE ÇAIAS (active c.1530-52)
Hunting sword, by-knife and scabbard, 1544
RCIN 61316**



This is a kit for hunting: a sword and a smaller, finer knife that fits into a specially designed pocket on the scabbard. The fine decoration on the sword's handle and blade is made using an overlay technique called 'damascening', which involves scoring the surface of the steel very finely with crosshatched lines and then getting very fine gold wire and hammering it onto the surface. The steel is then made black or blue by heating it up, which gives a dark black background with the gold standing out.

There is a tiny wild boar and a leaf-pattern on the handle, an *arabesque* pattern inspired by Islamic art that was at the height of fashion in the mid-16th century. The top third of the blade shows rows of tiny cannons pointing towards a citadel during the 1544 Siege of Boulogne led by Henry VIII.

Holbein has picked up all the details of what was there and put them in gold on the sword. This is not simply any old town and soldiers, it is the Siege of Boulogne. A long Latin inscription commemorating the siege is on the other side of the blade. It is probably one of the knives recorded in the inventory of 1547, made when Henry died, where it is listed as 'a long wood knife of Diego's making'.

Diego was the Spanish swordsmith Diego de Çaias. He was one of the leading European craftsmen that Henry encouraged to come to his court. He arrived in England in 1542, and must have known about Holbein's reputation and work, as Holbein had been appointed King's Painter at some point before September 1536. This was a role that involved commissions for metalwork, daggers and jewellery as well as for painted portraits.

Being King's Painter was not an exclusive position – there were a number of King's Painters in Tudor England working alongside each other. A King's Painter was given a salary, being paid £30 a year, but he was also given status. King's Painter was a senior appointment in England.

10. ERASMUS KYRKENAR (c.1495-1567)
Armour garniture of Henry VIII for the field and tilt, probably about 1540
RCIN 72834



Henry VIII was a tall and imposing figure – about 6 ft 1 in tall (1.85m). He was athletic as a young man but he was 50 years old when Erasmus Kyrkenar made this armour for him. Kyrkenar made allowances for the king's expanding waistline by extending the back plate and making three holes in the *hasps* – the hinges fastening it to the breastplate. With this adjustable setting, the pin securing the hasps could be let out like a belt.

Armour is always a trade-off between mobility and protection - the more pieces of armour the safer the person inside, but more pieces make the suit of armour heavier. Armour was originally made just for fighting on the battlefield, but by the 16th century the 'tournament', which is basically a sport, had become popular. For jousting – also known as the 'tilt' – Henry would have worn the extra pieces displayed here.

The rules of jousting mean that jousters are struck on the left side. So, tournament pieces are completely plain on the left side, with no holes or gaps. All the breathing and sight slots are on the right.

At first Henry wore armour imported from northern Italy and Germany but later on he established his own school of armour-making at Greenwich on the south bank of the River Thames.

This was one way of showing his political power and status when meeting other rulers. It also showed Henry's interest in science and technology. Making armour also involves art, by using the best artists like Holbein to decorate and design it - all the edges of the armour have an etched design on them. Originally this would have been bright, with a black background, but the armour has become very worn over time. It is not possible to say definitely that Holbein did all the work on Henry's armours. Some of his designs appear on the armour, but this does not mean he put them there himself.

II. BRITISH SCHOOL
The Field of the Cloth of Gold, c. 1545
RCIN 405794



You can almost hear the sound of horses' hooves and marching feet as the long procession winds its way into Guisnes. Today it is part of northern France, but it was English territory in June 1520. An alliance between Henry VIII and Francis I of France was celebrated there with eighteen days of meetings, feasts and tournaments. The celebration became known as 'the Field of the Cloth of Gold' because tents and clothing, made from rich fabrics, sparkled in the summer sun.

This was a political meeting between the King of France and the King of England but it was not a meeting between equals. François I, King of France, ruled over a country that was far bigger than England, with a bigger population, and with superior military forces.

Henry made up for this with a show of magnificence, arriving on horseback wearing red and gold. This large canvas records events held at different times during the eighteen days, so he also appears in the top centre of the canvas meeting Francis in a tent and again in the top right-hand corner watching jousting from the royal box.

To the observer, it suggested that the two monarchs were equal, but Henry outdid the King of France with the richness of the display that he organised. His spectacular temporary palace is in the foreground – it was made of timber and covered in canvas painted to look like bricks, but had real glass windows. The structure included a banqueting hall and a chapel. Outside, fountains flowed with wine and beer. As the meeting drew to a close, a firework in the shape of a dragon shot across the sky, shown here in the top left corner.

Such a large canvas would have been painted by several artists, each with their own section. In the foreground figures around the beer fountain – several a bit the worse for wear – are painted with loose brushstrokes. This section was probably painted by a Flemish artist but the section over to the left, where a row of figures look over to the procession, was probably painted by an artist whose speciality was figures and costume and the fashions of the time.

Conservation of this painting required careful removal of three different layers of varnish which were distorting the painting's original colour scheme of rich reds, greens and purples. This revealed some areas intended to be yellow – along with some that were not. For example, the tent on the right looked quite yellow before conservation but is now closer to its original white.

Varnish is not completely see-through and sometimes covers up very fine details in a painting. As the conservation team worked fresh details emerged – as shown by this close up of a section from the far right of the painting.



Long-handled tools for sliding out freshly baked loaves from the oven can be seen on the round oven's roof. In the dining tent in front there are tiny dishes on the table, and a golden yellow custard tart being carried in by a page dressed in green.

Towards the left-hand side of the canvas, part of the painting has been removed completely – but this was not done by the conservators. The main portrait of Henry VIII on the horse has a distinct oval shape, which is where his original image was cut out. The portrait in the painting now is a later piece of canvas. It is very much in the style of the miniatures and portraits of Henry VIII by Holbein.

12. HANS HOLBEIN THE YOUNGER

**Queen Anne Boleyn (c.1500-1536). On the verso, a coat of arms of the Wyatt family, and other heraldic sketches, c.1533-6
RCIN 912189**



The identity of the sitter for this portrait has been the subject of much debate. The inscription, added in the eighteenth-century, names her as Anne Boleyn, Henry VIII's second wife. And there are other clues - she has brown eyes and Anne Boleyn is recorded as having brown eyes, and the nightgown she is wearing has been connected to a nightgown which Henry VIII gave to Anne Boleyn.

This might seem a strange choice of outfit for a portrait of a queen. Perhaps she dressed like this for the sitting with Holbein but they had agreed he would paint her in formal clothes in the finished portrait? Or it might have been an outfit chosen specially for a miniature, which is a more intimate portrait.

There is also another puzzle connected to this portrait. It is the only drawing by Holbein in the exhibition— and in the Royal Collection – which has another drawing on the back: the coat of arms of the Wyatt family.

Why that came about is a really interesting question. It might be something to do with Anne Boleyn's own history – she was executed by Henry VIII in 1536 after being accused of adultery, and it might be that after that no more portraits of her were required. In which case Holbein just turns the sheet of paper over and uses it for something else. And the fact that Henry Wyatt, who bore the Wyatt arms, and was a patron of Holbein, died in November 1536 may not be a coincidence. Perhaps Holbein is drawing the Wyatt arms for a project connected with Henry Wyatt's funeral arrangements? The reason is not known, but it is fascinating to think about what might have been behind it.

13. HANS HOLBEIN THE YOUNGER

Thomas Howard, Third Duke of Norfolk (1473-1554), c. 1539
RCIN 404439



This painting of Thomas Howard, Duke of Norfolk, who was a leading noble and one of the senior figures at Henry VIII's court is a portrait of power.

He is wearing the collar of the Order of the Garter. We know from his own records that the collar was set with diamonds and rubies. He is holding the white baton of the Lord Treasurer in his left hand, and in his right the gold baton of the Earl Marshal. This is because he holds two senior positions.

Just like other painters in the 16th century Holbein would work not only for a hard-line Protestant, but also for traditional supporters of the Catholic religion. He is happy working for different political groups, on different sides of the religious divide.

Howard is a Catholic who opposes religious reform. He is against the introduction of Protestantism into England, and works as hard as he can to encourage Henry VIII to remain as a Catholic king. Two of his nieces became wives of Henry VIII – he was an uncle of Anne Boleyn and also of Catherine Howard. He used both women to put forward his own interests, and raise his popularity at court.

Howard actively encouraged Henry VIII's relationship with Anne Boleyn and their marriage. But then in 1536, he was the one who managed her trial for adultery. Any sympathy or affection for his niece seemed to be overridden by his unswerving loyalty to the king. In fact, he was the one who sentenced her to death, because it suited the king for her to be executed.

14. BRITISH SCHOOL, 16TH CENTURY
The Family of Henry VIII, c. 1545
RCIN 405796

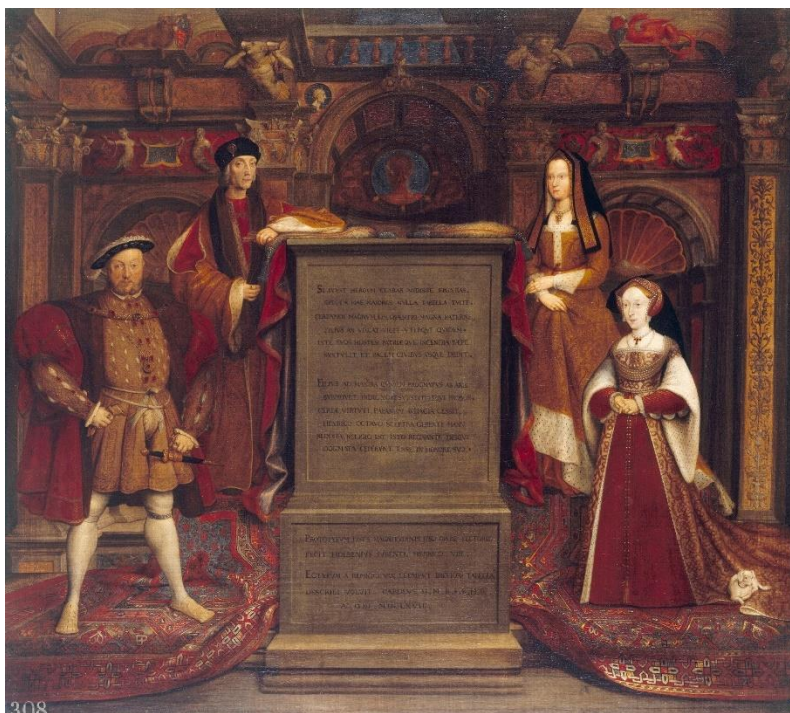


Henry VIII's palaces were filled with paintings and portraits and other celebrations of the greatness and authority of the king – like this work.

In reality this is an impossible grouping of people. The king himself is centre stage. On his right is his precious son and male heir, Edward, and on his right Edward's mother, Jane Seymour. But she had died due to complications from Edward's birth ten years before this painting was done. Henry, Edward and Jane are being presented to us as if they are a holy family. A 16th century audience seeing this would be reminded of a Renaissance altarpiece.

Henry's daughters by previous marriages are on either side: Mary on the left and Elizabeth on the right. They complete the image of the ruling family.

For some time this painting was in Henry VIII's Whitehall Palace with another work by Holbein in an adjoining room – a life-size wall painting of Henry VIII, Jane Seymour, and Henry's parents, Henry VII and Elizabeth of York, known as the Whitehall Mural. It was destroyed by fire in 1698 but an early copy is on the opposite wall in this gallery and is pictured below. The similarity between the two depictions of Henry VIII is striking.



Holbein established a successful likeness of the King in the 1530s, which was copied and adapted by Holbein himself, by his workshop, and by other artists, for use in a variety of contexts, for example

in his palace chambers when he wasn't actually there, or as an image of a powerful man who was be honoured and obeyed.

It is the image that remains one of the most recognisable aspects of Holbein's artistic legacy, almost 500 years after he died.

Little is known about the circumstances of Holbein's death. It was in the autumn of 1543, when he probably died of the plague. His will simply asked that his belongings be sold to pay for the support of two young children in London. We know nothing beyond that.

15. HANS HOLBEIN THE YOUNGER
Derich Born (1510?->1549), signed and dated 1533
RCIN 405681



This confident young man is Derich Born. He is one of several merchants from the enclosed London trading community known as the Steelyard, who commissioned portraits from Holbein during the

early 1530s. Recent examination of this painting using an infrared camera has revealed Holbein's working methods.

The infrared image shows how Holbein may have mapped out this portrait before he started painting, and as he was painting it. There are three lines around his face in the under-drawing, each one more and more sculpted, slimming his face down.

Holbein seems to have been happy with the portrait he finally came up with. He includes a Latin inscription on the stone balustrade in front of Derich Born. Translated into English it says, 'If you added a voice, this would be Derich, his very self. You would be in doubt whether the painter or his father made him.' This is him saying, "I can make images so lifelike that you only need to add a voice and they will become alive."

This extraordinary artistic skill is as clear to us today as it was to people of his own time. He worked with materials in such a brilliant way, and was so skilled an artist and craftsman that he could create portraits which were completely beautiful and lifelike. It was these wonderful skills which led to him being so highly regarded by contemporaries, to getting all these commissions, and to becoming King's Painter. Holbein's portrait is a sign that Born was a very wealthy man, but it is also Holbein's story in Tudor England – the story of success.

This is the last stop on the tour. We hope you have enjoyed the exhibition. You can find out more about our investigations into Holbein's materials and artistic technique in a display in the Millar Learning Room, which is at the top of the stairs where you entered the exhibition.

When you have finished, please return this guide at the desk. This script has been compiled from a tour produced by ATS with information from the following experts from Royal Collection Trust: Kate Heard, Richard Williams, Simon Metcalf, Victoria Button, Nicola Christie, Rosanna de Sancha, and Brett Dolman, Curator at Historic Royal Palaces.

To find out more about works of art in the Royal Collection please visit our website at www.rct.uk. There you can find out about future exhibitions and keep in touch by signing up to our e-Newsletter

or by following us on Facebook, Twitter and Instagram. Please remember that you can return to The Queen's Gallery, free of charge, for a year, by converting your ticket into a 1-Year Pass. Just sign the back and ask a member of staff to stamp it before you leave.