

What have we learned about Henry's visits?	Historians – documentary evidence	Quotes CWA – St Laurence churchwarden's accounts L&P – letters and papers of Henry VIII	Archaeology – landscape, buildings and artefacts
Preparation for the visits	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Church swept Candlesticks cleaned Tents tested Lodgings rented in advance of the visit for a fletcher (see who accompanied the king and where did he stay for quotes) 	<p>1525: 'Item for scouring the candlesticks when the king came to town, 5 pence' (CWA)</p> <p>1525: 'Item for sweeping the church ready for the king coming to town, 4 pence' (CWA)</p> <p>1516: 'Expenses paid to the king's painter for a reward for seeing the tabernacle, 6 shillings and 8 pence' (CWA) [A tabernacle was a tent or temporary building.]</p>	
Arrival into/departure from the town	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Bells rung Bells not rung for Katherine of Aragon in 1529 	<p>1534: 'Paid for ringing at the king's coming to town and at his going 8d' (CWA)</p> <p>1529: 'Item – fine to be paid to the queen's almoner servants because the bells were not rung when she came to the town, 8 pence' (CWA)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Inner gateway – Henry would have probably travelled through this upon entering the Abbey Speed map, road names Abbey wharf timber
Food and drink	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Malt bought to make ale 	<p>1516 : 'Receipts – Of the young men for the king's play at Whitsuntide with a quarter of malt given by Roger Johnson priced at 4 shillings. Total 31 shillings/ £2 and 11 shillings.' (CWA)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Pot/cup
Who accompanied Henry and where did he stay?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Tents Fletcher (lodgings rented for him in Market Place) Henry brought his own sewer (tailor/seamster) with him in 1510, as well as personal bodyguards and stable masters Key privy councillors (key advisors) came with him (see economy for quotes) 	<p>1516: 'Expenses paid to the king's painter for a reward for seeing the tabernacle 6 shillings and 8 pence' (CWA) [A tabernacle was a tent or temporary building.]</p> <p>1525: 'Receipt of Richard Turner for the house in the market place where the fletcher stayed for the time of the king being here. 2 shillings' (CWA) [A fletcher makes arrows. Did the town get someone or did the King bring this fletcher with him? Either way, the town found temporary accommodation for him.]</p> <p>1510: 'Warrant to the Great Wardrobe to deliver Sir Th. Knevet, knight for the Body, master of the Horse, or George Lovekyn, clerk of the Stable, horse harness, &c. Reading Abbey, 26 July 2 Hen. VIII. <i>Signed.</i> A directive to the Great Wardrobe to deliver a horse harness to Reading Abbey. To be handed to either Sir Thomas Knevet, knight for the body (personal attendant to the king) or George Lovekyn, clerk of the Stable.' (L&P)</p> <p>1510: 'Warrant to the Great Wardrobe to deliver Nic. Lode, one of the sewers of the Chamber, materials for coat', Reading Abbey, 31 July 2 Hen. VIII. (L&P)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Speed map – suggests stay at the Abbey, 30 acres for the tents Hospitium – could house 400 Perhaps Henry stayed in the Abbey himself? The stonework, tiling and stained glass certainly demonstrate its grandeur.
Entertainment and gifts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A 'great present of fish' given in 1520 Plays put on – some paid for by King, some put on for King and paid for by the town Included a drum player (taborer) Good relationship established with the Abbot, whom Henry praised for his kind and loving cheer Abbot took Henry shooting – probably in his deer park at Whitley The patronage of the King made the Abbot very wealthy – he received generous gifts from the King The Abbot gave the King generous gifts 	<p>1520: 'Item – paid Thomas Taberer for the king's play at Whitsuntide, 10 shillings' (CWA) [Taberer probably refers to tabor – a drum – so this was probably payment for a musician. Paid means that the town paid for this.]</p> <p>1529: 'Receipts – Item of the king's game at Whitsuntide, 20 shillings' (CWA) [Receipt means that the King paid for this himself.]</p> <p>1520 'The King is contented with the new abbot here, and all we courtiers have cause to praise him for his kind and loving cheer' (L&P)</p> <p>1539: Cromwell describes the Abbot of Reading as 'the meanest monk in Reading to be a governor of 3,000 marks a year and suffered him to pass the time in his Grace's company at shooting, and used to call him his own abbot' (L&P)</p> <p>1523: 'January 1532 – The King's New Years Gifts To the abbot of Reading... gilt cruces, cups, a goblet, and a bowl, 11 oz. to 30 oz. From the abbot of Reading... £20 in a white leather purse' (L&P)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Henry would have attended church services in the magnificent church in the Abbey, which had richly decorated floor tiles and beautiful stained-glass windows Did Henry have a particular affinity for the hand of St James, believed to have led to miracles?

		1520: 2 October, letter from John Clerk (priest) to Thomas Wolsey (the King's chief advisor) commenting on Henry's visit to Reading – 'On Friday the King came there, and was presented with a great present of fish' (L&P)	
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Economy, politics and patronage – what business was conducted?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Privy council meetings happened here • Individuals of the town able to petition the King, e.g. over the fulling mill and leadership of the town in 1540 • In 1520, Henry VIII oversaw an agreement regulating clothmaking in Reading during his visit; clothmaking was one of the key sources of income for the town • Work was provided for the townspeople, such as ringing the bells, cleaning the candlesticks, sweeping the church, performing the plays and playing the music (see preparation for visits, entertainment and gifts for quotes) • The patronage of the King made the Abbot very wealthy (see entertainment and gifts for quotes) • The Abbot possibly feared Cromwell and the dissolution of his abbey, as around the King's visit in 1535, he started bribing Cromwell with gifts (see entertainment and gifts for quotes) • The town seemed loyal to the King during his attempts to divorce Katherine of Aragon, accepting a fine for failing to ring the bells upon her arrival (see arrival into/departure from the town for quotes) 	<p>1529: 'Item – fine to be paid to the queen's almoner servants because the bells were not rung when she came to the town, 8 pence' (CWA)</p> <p>1520: The Inspeximus document provides evidence of the clothmaking agreement that Henry oversaw in 1520</p> <p>1540: 22 August, privy council meeting minutes – 'Upon a bill put to the King on the 21st, at his entering Reading, by the mayor and burgesses... their suit for a fulling mill granted' (L&P)</p> <p>1539: Cromwell describes the Abbot of Reading as 'the meanest monk in Reading to be a governor of 3,000 marks a year and suffered him to pass the time in his Grace's company at shooting, and used to call him his own abbot' (L&P)</p> <p>1535: 15 December, Hugh Abbot of Reading to Thomas Cromwell (chief advisor to Henry VIII and key figure behind the idea of the dissolution of the monasteries) – 'We have sent you by the bearer an annuity of 20 marks, to be taken in our manor of Aston, Hertfordshire' (L&P)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Description of privy council meeting, possibly conducted in inner gateway • Leather shoe