

RESEARCH FINDINGS

Note to staff: This was used as a group discussion point to encourage participants to engage with new research and to consider the motivations and preoccupations of the King at this point in his reign. You could use questioning to get students to consider some of these points: royal obsession with security in the later stages of the reign, particularly following rebellion in the North (e.g. Pilgrimage of Grace); royal desire to punish York and other northern towns for their involvement in the Pilgrimage of Grace (note that the wearing of dull-coloured clothes by the citizens of York was designed to show penitence); the fact that the King was obsessed during the 1530s and 1540s with fear of infectious disease, often diverting his progresses because of concerns about epidemic outbreaks in certain areas; diversions in progresses for queens if it was thought that they might be pregnant, so that they did not travel far (fears about possible miscarriage); fraught relations with Scotland in the 1540s; and the fact that Henry used this northern progress as a display of royal military power, presumably both to instil fear in the North and as a show of strength to James of Scotland.

These are some research findings from the project about Henry VIII's visit to York in 1541. What do they indicate to you about the purpose of his visit?

- A progress north in the late 1530s was suggested on a number of occasions, but the death of Jane Seymour in 1537, health considerations, royal pregnancies and security concerns had delayed it.
- There was an attempted uprising at Pontefract Castle in 1541.
- Henry planned to meet King James of Scotland in York, but the Scottish king never turned up.
- During the progress north, the amount of game hunted was enormous, even by Tudor royal standards, with the royal court killing vast quantities of animals (e.g. deer) as they moved to the area and then dining on their kills.
- The city of York planned elaborate pageants to celebrate the King coming, and took advice from the city of Lincoln, who had had a recent royal visit, about how best to

please the King. They also sought advice from the Archbishop of York and the Duke of Norfolk. York's civic officials all agreed to wear plain-coloured clothes and not colourful garments.

- The King and his closest courtiers were probably housed in the Hospitium (the Abbey's guest house), while Queen Katherine and her ladies-in-waiting were housed in the former dormitory. Both areas were expensively refurbished for the occasion. After the visit, however, they fell into disrepair and lacked some roofing by 1545.
- The buildings used for the visit from the former abbey became known as the 'King's Manor' and became the headquarters of the Council of the North, being used as a centre for royal administration in the area.