

Why did Henry visit The Vyne?

A historic environment
study for A-level



Edwin Castel

Contents

Why did Henry and Anne visit The Vyne in 1535?	3
Royal progresses and The Vyne.....	4
Introduction	5
1. The size and importance of The Vyne in the 1530s	7
2. Summer royal progresses	13
3. William Sandys, soldier and courtier.....	20
4. 1535 and Sandys' loyalty	29
5. Securing loyalty? The visit on 15–19 October 1535.....	35
6. The aftermath of 1535 – loyalty secured?.....	50
7. Conclusion.....	55
8. Bibliography and further reading	56
9. Appendix 1: William Sandys timeline.....	58
10. Appendix 2: Activity: Reasons for the visit	61
11. Appendix 3: Activity: Who benefits?.....	62
12. Appendix 4: Teacher notes	63

Why did Henry and Anne visit The Vyne in 1535?

It is an often-overlooked fact that the Tudor court was rarely stationary for long. It frequently moved, engaging with various regions and localities throughout England, and occasionally beyond.

This booklet's articles, sources and activities focus on a single royal visit to a courtier at a specific place and time. By examining this one event in its local context, readers can explore broader themes such as the nature of the royal court, the mechanisms of royal authority and the roles of courtiers in matters of war, diplomacy and religious reform. At its core, this study highlights the life and career of a seemingly loyal Tudor courtier and the significance of his household.

This resource directly supports the following themes from A-level history Tudor specifications:

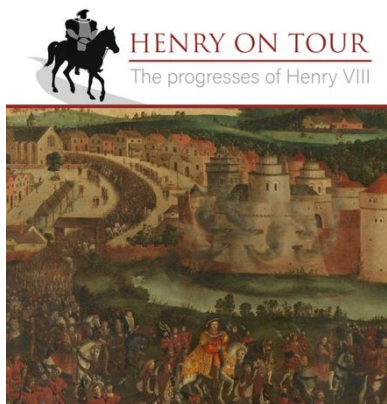
- Central and regional royal authority
- Opposition to the religious changes of the 1530s
- The dissolution of the monasteries
- Diplomacy and relations with France

As well as introducing an historic environment, these resources draw on the latest scholarship and immerse pupils in visual, cultural, architectural and written sources from the Tudor period.

Royal progresses and The Vyne

There has been a recent resurgence of academic interest in the royal progresses of Henry VIII, driven by an Arts and Humanities Research Council-funded project titled Henry On Tour. This initiative brought together a cross-disciplinary team of scholars and heritage professionals to chart the full itineraries of Henry VIII and his queens. It also aimed to explore the logistics, locations and human stories behind these progresses, including the complex relationships between the crown and courtiers, clergy, civic hosts and often-overlooked groups such as servants, suppliers, craftsmen and musicians.

One of the sites included in this project was The Vyne in Hampshire. The resources presented here aim to bring aspects of this wider research to life by focusing on a single royal visit to this location at a specific moment in time. Through this lens, we will



examine the life and career of one of Henry's courtiers and his wife.

This case study provides a valuable opportunity to explore key themes such as royal authority, the crown's relationship with regional localities, diplomacy and foreign policy, and the religious upheaval of the 1530s. All of these elements are examined through the context of a single royal visit made by Henry VIII to one of his courtiers on 15 October 1535.

Introduction

On 15 October 1535, the tracks and roads leading to The Vyne in Hampshire would have been filled with a great procession of travellers. The area would have been alive with noise and activity. Some very special guests were arriving. In the preceding days and weeks, a keen

writing desks, musical instruments, multi-room tents and provisions. The procession may have included mounted household officers, royal councillors, courtiers, clerks of the royal seal and members of the Yeomen of the Guard. A considerable number of servants would also have been part of this moving court.

Glossary:

Harbinger: an officer in the royal household who travelled ahead of the royal entourage to arrange lodging and other accommodation

Progress: a summer royal journey where the court would travel beyond London and the main royal houses along the Thames

observer might have spotted royal messengers and **harbingers** on horseback, orchestrating the immense logistical effort required to prepare for the arrival. Now, on this day in mid October, was the result – perhaps upwards of 700 people approaching. Accompanying them was likely a long baggage train of carts carrying a vast accumulation of goods: expensive tapestries,

As this travelling multitude wound its way through the Hampshire countryside, it would have interacted with local innkeepers, shopkeepers, farriers, watenen and laundresses. Enterprising traders may have followed the procession, hoping to profit from the royal presence. Though it is unlikely that cannons were fired on this occasion, church bells, perhaps from nearby Sherborne St John, might have rung in greeting. Trumpets could have sounded to herald the arrival, as musicians often accompanied such royal progresses. For indeed, a Renaissance Prince was approaching: Henry VIII, famed for his majesty and splendour. At his side was his queen, Anne Boleyn, and together they were arriving at The Vyne in rural north Hampshire for a four-night stay.



The Vyne – fit for a king?

This raises a key question: why The Vyne? Today, the house has the appearance of a charming English country house, preserved by the National Trust. It does not, however, resemble a grand royal palace fit for a Renaissance monarch and his court. To answer this question, we must consider the world of the Tudor royal summer *progresses*. These were seasonal journeys undertaken by the king and his entourage across the realm.

We will also need to consider why Henry visited north Hampshire.

Who was his host? And how was The Vyne able to accommodate such a prestigious visit?

Each chapter of this study will explore a different aspect of the 1535 visit, from the likely appearance of the house itself to the political, social and religious context of the time. Together, these perspectives will provide a rich, multifaceted understanding of why Henry VIII would visit one of his courtiers and what that visit reveals about the workings of Tudor monarchy.

1

The size and importance of The Vyne in the 1530s

The Vyne is situated in rural North Hampshire, close to the town of Basingstoke and the village of Sherborne St John. The house itself sits beside a small brook, dammed in the eighteenth century to create the lake that remains today.

To Tudor eyes, however, the current appearance of The Vyne would be almost unrecognisable. Only the Tudor chapel and the gallery range might be faintly familiar from the exterior. The elegant country house seen today,



The Vyne – the Tudor house would have stretched into what is now the lake



Hampton Court clock tower

carried out after the estate was sold to Chaloner Chute in 1653.

Clues about The Vyne's original form come from archaeological investigations conducted in the 1990s (see Box 1), as well as a 1640s painting made prior to the remodelling. These sources suggest that the Tudor house was significantly larger than it is now, extending as far as the current lake. In fact, some of the original foundations remain visible beneath the shallow water. At its height, the site would also have been enclosed by a moat and a perimeter wall.

with its classical columns and grand portico, reflects a major remodelling and downsizing

Today, Hampton Court, with its series of courtyards, provides a useful comparison for imagining the scale that The Vyne once aimed



Hampton Court entrance

to achieve. Many of the largest houses built in England during this period followed a similar courtyard design, often with two or more floors. At The Vyne, the core of the original Tudor house still survives, albeit heavily altered. This central block would have contained the principal rooms over two to three floors, with a single-storey range extending outwards to form a courtyard that housed lower-ranking guests, servants, stables and storage.

Tudor **courtiers** of high standing were expected to maintain large households and **affinities**, with staff often dressed in the livery and bearing the crest of the family that they served. In 1535, The Vyne would therefore have been well equipped to accommodate the many members of the King's travelling entourage.

Architectural details added to the grandeur of the site. The tops of buildings were crenellated, and impressive sculptures adorned the building. One such example – a dramatic statue of a lion – has been recovered, offering a glimpse of the rich decorative scheme that once embellished the estate (see 1.2).

Glossary:

Courtier: people of high social standing who were expected to attend the royal court and participate as courtiers in Tudor England

Affinity: a collective name for the retinue of men whom a lord gathered around himself in his service



Hampton Court – Base Court

Key questions: See **Box 1**

1. What are the strengths and weaknesses of documentary sources as opposed to physical sources when studying a period of history? (1.1, 1.2)
2. Based on the physical evidence and Leland's account, why would Henry have wanted to visit The Vyne? (1.3, 1.4)

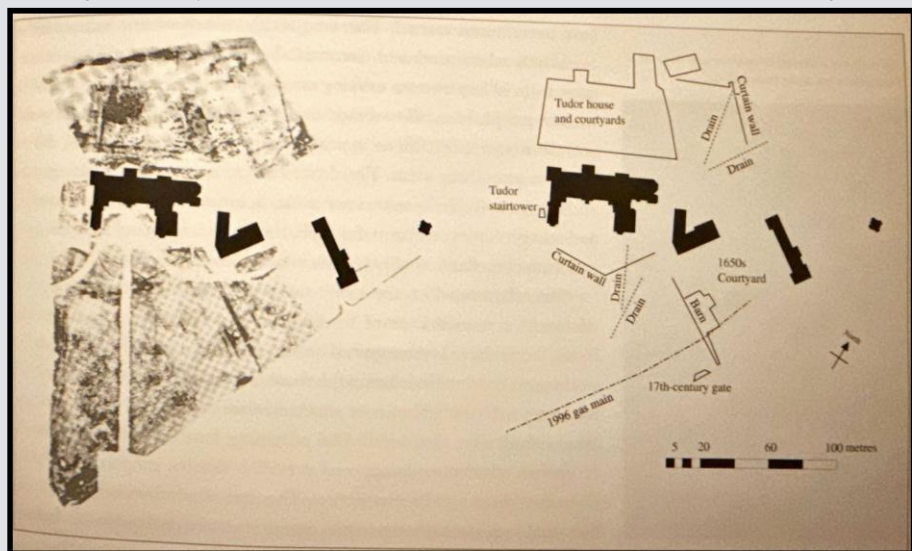
Box 1 Buildings and archaeology

It is easy to forget that historic buildings rarely remain unchanged from the time at which they were built. Each generation alters, repairs or adds to them to suit their needs, and The Vyne is no exception. To recreate what the Tudor-era Vyne may have looked like, researchers had to combine documentary sources, such as inventories, written accounts and paintings, with physical evidence. One key source of that evidence is the fabric of the building itself; differences in brickwork, cellars, foundations and blocked doorways can all hint at earlier layouts.

Beyond the building itself, archaeology has also provided valuable clues. By 1996, The Vyne required major restoration to prevent further decay. This created an opportunity for a team of eight archaeologists and 22 volunteers to work alongside electricians, carpenters, bricklayers, plumbers and groundskeepers over two years. Their investigations included excavation trenches, a 1998 geophysical survey to reveal earlier structures, and dendrochronology (tree-ring dating) to determine timber ages. Together, these methods offered new insights into the size and likely layout of the original Tudor house.

1.1 Map

Image from *The Vyne: a Tudor house revealed*, National Trust Books (2006) © National Trust Images



1.2 'The Rampant Lion'

This lion was found in the grounds of The Vyne in the nineteenth century. It would have originally been on the outside of the building in the 1500s. Some of the intricate detail is still visible.



1.3 John Leland

When, in the 1540s, the great antiquarian John Leland visited Hampshire in his travels around England and Wales, he commented on the size and scale of the property.

'The Vine by Basingstoke was also of the Ancient Landes of the Sannes but was given out in Marriage to one of the Brokesses; and so remained until the late Lord Sannes afore he was made Baron recoverid it into his possession; at the tyme ther was no great of sumptuous Maner Place, and was only conteinid within the mote. But he after so translatid and augmentid yt, and beside buildid a fair Base Court that at this time is one of the Principale Houses in all Hamptonshire.'

1.4 A reconstruction of the Tudor Vyne

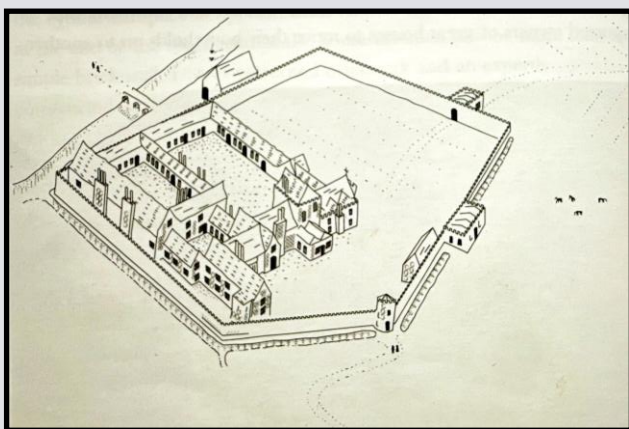


Image from *The Vyne: a Tudor house revealed*, National Trust Books (2006) © National Trust Images

2

Summer royal progresses

In Tudor times, the king and his court were rarely stationary for long. In winter times, the court would **remove** itself from one royal palace to another along the Thames – palaces such as Richmond, Greenwich, Hampton Court and Whitehall. This allowed for deep cleaning of the palaces; a court of some 1,500 people created human and animal waste, as well as eating up all the local livestock and resources. In the summer months, it was usual for Henry to go on a summer progress. These journeys not only allowed further cleaning and an escape from London's summer diseases, but also followed a long royal tradition of summer hunting, practised since the Saxon kings of Wessex.

The court would move from one hunting ground to another, exhausting the local game. Henry had visited The Vyne before, in 1510, possibly in 1527 and also in 1531. Hunting clearly featured in these progresses. In 1531 (**see Box 2**), the Privy Purse expenses record payments made to a servant of

Sandys for bringing a stag to the Vyne 'which the King had stricken before in Wolmer forest'. Hunting was not just a leisure activity; it played a political role, giving local gentry and officials a chance to petition the king in a more relaxed, informal setting.

The historians J. P. D. Cooper and Keely Hayes-Davies describe a progress as a summer journey that went beyond the king's **standing houses**, and mixed business with pleasure. It included hunting, gift-giving, addressing grievances, dispensing alms and holding religious services. Other functions could involve royal justice, diplomacy (as during the 1520 Field of the Cloth of Gold or the 1522 joint progress with Charles V), visits to religious shrines, plague avoidance, rebellion prevention and military planning. Tudor queens, unlike most women of the time, held property and their own affinities, allowing them to lead their own progresses or

accompany the king. These journeys were important for estate management and resolving local disputes.

A progress gave the opportunity for the monarch to display good kingship and court regional elites. The king was temporarily on display to the whole population. It was essential for the monarch to display, in the words of the historian N. Samman, 'ritualised splendour'¹ – symbolic performances of power and majesty. Even the Chapel Royal travelled in a reduced form, maintaining the presence of religious ceremony with six men and six boy choristers.

When on progress, the court would reorder itself into a smaller form, although it could still include some 750 people. Organising these journeys was a complex logistical enterprise involving thousands of people. Royal harbingers would communicate with the localities to ensure the purveyance of supplies and accommodation. There were also activities to arrange, including

hunting, plays, tournaments, liturgies and dispensing royal justice. The maintenance of splendour, as well as the comfort of the royal party, would involve bringing ornate plates, tapestries, instruments, beds and multi-room tents.

Glossary:

Removing: the 'removal' of the court from one royal residence to another in winter

Standing house: a royal residence with permanent furniture kept in a state of readiness

The baggage train itself was grand, painted in gilded livery and bearing royal shields, the Garter and imperial crowns.

This all demanded intricate planning and substantial investment of time, money and effort.

¹ Samman, N. (1995) 'The Progresses of Henry VIII, 1509–1529' in MacCulloch, D. (ed) *The Reign of Henry VIII*, London: Palgrave, p. 59

Key question:

1. When studying the reign of Henry VIII, the historian Susan Wabuda argues that progresses 'displayed his fitness to rule'². What do you think that she means by this?

The 1535 progress

A few progresses stand out for their political significance. In 1520, the Field of the Cloth of Gold brought together the French and English courts; in 1522, Henry VIII and Charles V undertook a joint progress through southern England; and in 1541, a major semi-militarised progress to the North followed the 1536 Pilgrimage of Grace, aimed at reasserting royal authority and conducting diplomacy with James V of Scotland.

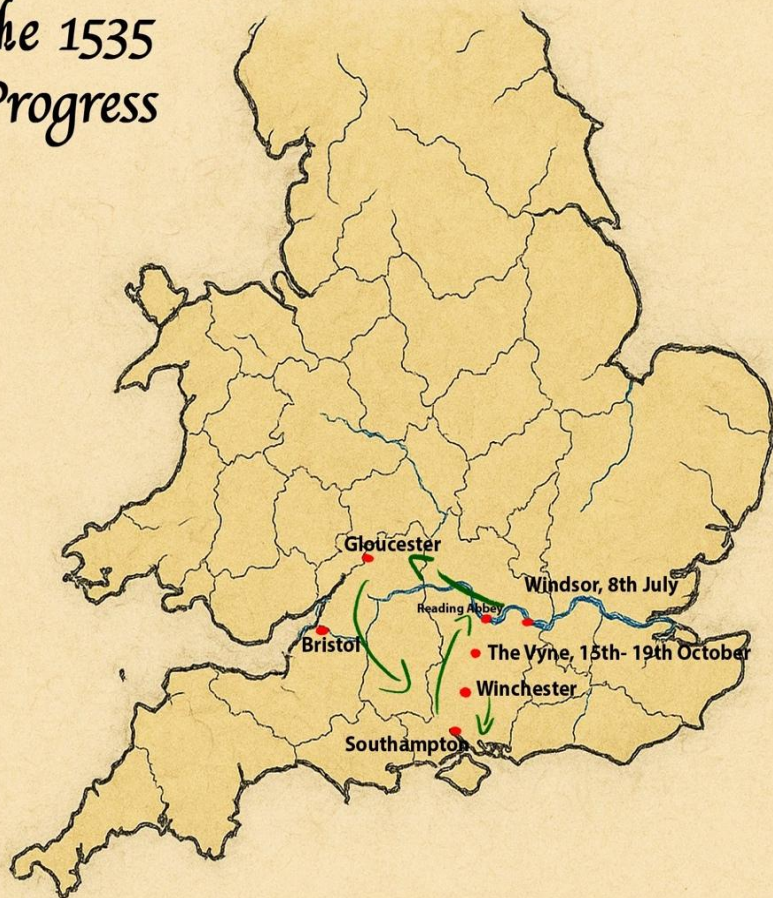
Glossary:

Royal supremacy:- The name given to the legal authority of the monarch over the Church of England, established by a series of Acts of Parliament, notably the Act of Supremacy in 1534.

The summer of 1535 marked another politically notable progress, unusual for two reasons.

² Wabuda, S. (2016) 'Receiving the King: Henry VIII at Cambridge' in Betteridge T. and Lipscomb S. (eds), *Henry VIII and the Court: Art, Politics and Performance*, Abingdon: Ashgate, p. 164

The 1535 Progress



Firstly, it lasted longer than most. Beginning on 8 July, Henry and his pregnant wife, Anne Boleyn, departed Windsor for Reading Abbey and travelled through Gloucester, Winchester and Southampton, while changing the itinerary to avoid plague-stricken Bristol. Typically, the King visited religious houses, monasteries and his own residences; he had amassed considerable property throughout his reign. This time,

however, he also visited several of his courtiers, including Nicholas Poyntz at Acton Court, and other houses near The Vyne, such as Old Basing and Bramshill, owned by prominent courtiers.

Secondly, Thomas Cromwell and his commissioners shadowed the progress, investigating and reporting alleged abuses, vice and 'abomination of living' in monasteries at Bath, Keynsham,

Maiden Bradley and Glastonbury. This occurred during the height of the religious upheaval caused by Henry's break with the Roman Catholic Church, a split that allowed him to divorce Katherine of Aragon and marry Anne Boleyn. These monastic investigations laid the groundwork for the dissolution of the monasteries, which would radically alter England's religious and architectural landscape.

The 1535 progress therefore served to reinforce loyalty among Henry's leading courtiers. For example, the progress included a visit to

Stephen Gardiner, Bishop of Winchester, a religious conservative who, despite his views, remained loyal to the royal supremacy over the Church. Securing the continued allegiance of such influential figures was crucial to advancing the religious reforms envisaged by Henry and Thomas Cromwell. Preachers accompanied the progress, delivering sermons that framed Henry's marriage to Anne and his break with Rome as divinely ordained.

Key questions: See **Box 2**

1. In what ways could hunting mask high politics? (2.1)
2. What do these expenses tell us about who covered the costs of royal progresses? How much does hunting feature in this list of expenses? (2.2)

Box 2 Royal hunting

Henry visited The Vyne in 1510, possibly in 1527, in 1531 and in 1535. The following sources relate to hunting and these progresses.

2.1 Edward Hall's *Chronicle*

Published in 1548, *Hall's Chronicle* describes the 1510 progress:

From thence the whole Courte remoued to Wyndesore, than begynnyng his progresse, exercising hym self daily in shotyng, singing dausyng, wrastelyng, casting of the barre, plaiyng at the recorders, flute, virginals, and in setting of songes, makyng of balettes, & set goodly -masses, euery of them fyue partes, whiche were songe oftentimes in hys chapel, and afterwarde in diuerse other places. And whan he came to Okyng, there were kept both lustes and Turncys: the rest of thys progresse was spent in huntynge, hawkyng and shotyng.

The kynge beyng thus in hys progresse harde euery daye more and more complayntes of Eynson and Dudley, wherfore he sent wryttes to the Shynfes of London, to put them in ex-ecucion, and so the xvii. day of August, they were both beheaded at the Towre hyl, and their bodies buryed and their heades.

2.2 Privy Purse accounts

The following extract is taken from the Privy Purse accounts for August 1531 (Henry visited The Vyne from 4–6 August).

August.

The King at Esthampstede, 10th.

2nd. Rewards to the keepers of the 2 parks at Farnham, to the deputies and keepers of Holte and Wolmer, and to the keeper of the place of Farnham, 4l. 3s. 4d. 4th.

Reward to the keeper of Odyam, 7s. 6d. To one who brought a screen to the Vine from Pexhalle's house, 40s.

5th. To the keeper of Baroper park, 6s. 8d.

6th. To the keeper of Mr. Pawlet's and lord Sandes' parks, 13s. 4d. To a servant of the Lord Chamberlain's, for bringing a stag to the Vyne, which the King had stricken before in Wolmer forest, 10s.

10th. To the keeper of Bagshot park, 6s. 8d.

11th. To John Thomas, serjeant-at-arms, and 2 of Sir Piers Edgcombe's servants, for bringing up prisoners, 11l. 15s. To the keeper of Esthampstede park, 6s. 8d.

12th. To Candishe, my lord of Suffolk's servant, for bringing a hound to the King, 40s.

13th. To the ranger of Barnewod, 10s.

14th. To Basing, for provision of the King's wines, 1,000l. 18th. To Carter, for dressing a new barge, 12l. 10s.

21st. To the armourer at Windsor, for keeping clean the King's harness, 3l. 2s. 4d.

22nd. To a poor labouring man in the harvest at Woodstock, by the King's command, 4s. 8d.

24th. A cart for the King's hounds from Newelme to Wodstok.

26th. To my lord of Norfolk, that he laid out by the King's command, 78l. 6s. 8d. To my lord of Rocheford, for shooting money, 6 ryalles = 3l. 7s. 6d.

27th. To the office of buckhounds, for killing the first buck, 7s. 6d. To Mark Anthony, a Venetian, 22l. 10s.

28th. To Guilliame Otner, the jeweller, for jewels bought at Woodstock, 156l. 12s.

29th. To Guilliame Bagot, for 8,000 pellets 26s. 8d. To Mr. Hennage, for money paid by him to 2 scholars of Oxford, 3l. To the keeper of Mr. Spenser's park, 7s. 6d. 31st.

To the abbot of Reading's servant, for bringing wood knives, 13s. 4d. Total, 1,554l.

3

William Sandys, soldier and courtier

During this period, The Vyne was owned by William, Lord Sandys, and his wife, Margery. Sandys was a powerful and influential courtier. Courtiers held a complex range of responsibilities,



Sandys

Glossary:

Justices of the Peace: a crucial part of local government, responsible for maintaining law and order, implementing laws and enforcing government policies – typically wealthy landowners

Field of the Cloth of Gold: a diplomatic triumph organised by Wolsey in 1520. There would be a joint progress in the Pas-de-Calais region between the French and English kings. They would meet on equal terms. However, although Wolsey was the mastermind behind the encounter, this lavish spectacle took a huge amount of organising. Sandys played an important role in organising the event.



The Field of the Cloth of Gold painting, Hampton Court (© Royal Collection Trust)
Detail showing the temporary palace. Other details that can be observed in this section of the painting include a wrestling match (top left), jousting (top right) and a wine fountain, complete with drunken revelry and fighting (front).

both locally and nationally. In Sandys' case, his local duties in Hampshire included serving as a **Justice of the Peace** and settling land disputes, while nationally he attended the royal court and served the King directly.

Under Henry VII, Sandys had established himself as a capable, though relatively minor, courtier. Following the death of his father in 1497, he was appointed a Knight of the Body and joined the retinue of knights who received Katherine of Aragon upon her arrival in England in 1501. He also accompanied the King's daughter,

Margaret, on her journey in 1503 to marry James IV of Scotland. That same year, he fought at the Battle of Blackheath, helping to defeat the Cornish rebels. By the end of Henry VII's reign, he had been appointed Constable of Southampton Castle (in January 1509).

At the start of Henry VIII's reign, Sandys was not part of the youthful inner circle with which the King surrounded himself for entertainment and companionship. Instead, he was a seasoned military man, two decades older than Henry, whose

experience was quickly put to use. In 1512, he served as Treasurer for War during an expedition to France led by the Marquis of Dorset. He was appointed a Knight of the Garter – a prestigious order of knights – in 1518, and frequently attended Garter ceremonies, particularly on St George’s Day, 23 April.

In 1520, Sandys was one of three commissioners tasked with constructing a grand temporary palace at Guisnes for the **Field of the Cloth of Gold**, a famous meeting between the courts of Henry VIII and Francis I of France. The palace, named after the shimmering fabric used in its tents, was a spectacular wooden structure painted to resemble stone and designed to awe and impress. (See **Box 3**.)

Sandys’ military expertise and familiarity with France made him a valuable asset, and in 1517 he was appointed Treasurer of Calais, a post that he held until 1526. Numerous letters in the State Papers of Henry VIII from this period show Sandys grappling with financial shortages for paying troops, overseeing defensive works and fortifications, and conducting delicate diplomacy with both the surrounding French and the Hapsburgs to the north in Flanders. In 1526, he was made Lieutenant of Guisnes, the key English stronghold in the region, a position that he held until his death. While much of the day-to-day management was handled by a deputy, Sandys remained closely involved in the region’s affairs.

Rewards for service

This loyal service did not go unrewarded. In 1523, William Sandys was elevated to the peerage as Baron Sandys of The Vyne. Just three years later, in 1526, he was appointed as the King's Chamberlain, also known as the Lord Chamberlain of the Household, one of the most prestigious positions at court. As the King's Chamberlain, Sandys

was officially responsible for overseeing the royal chambers, the upper private rooms of the palace. Although by this time the role had become largely ceremonial, with real influence increasingly concentrated in the more intimate Privy Chamber, the office still carried considerable status.



A section of the *Black Book of the Garter* (College of St George, Windsor) depicting the Garter ceremony. William Sandys is on the top right.

The importance of the King's Chamberlain role was reinforced by the Eltham Ordinances of 1526, a set of reforms introduced by Cardinal Wolsey. These ordinances aimed at improving efficiency and discipline within the royal household by limiting access to the King and curbing courtly excess. They sought 'the establishment of good order and reformation of sundry errors and misuses in his most honourable

household and chamber'. Under these new rules, access to Henry VIII became tightly controlled, and the King's Chamberlain played a key part in upholding this system of court order and etiquette.

As a result, Sandys retained proximity to the King and was expected to attend major state occasions. He was present, for instance, at the coronation of Anne Boleyn in 1533.

Key questions: See **Box 3**

1. What do these sources (3.1, 3.2) suggest about Sandys' usefulness in fighting and keeping order?
2. What do these sources (3.3, 3.4) suggest about the scale of the Field of the Cloth of Gold and the role that Sandys played?
3. Why might Henry want to show favour by personally visiting a man like Sandys?

Box 3 France, wars and diplomacy

The Pas De Calais region was the last slither of the once-great English territorial holdings on the European continent. Protecting and sometimes expanding this territory was key to Henry's image as a great warrior king. It gave him prestige and a small but tangible stake in his dealings with the two great monarchs of the age, Francis I, king of France, and Charles V, the Hapsburg Holy Roman Emperor.

In 1513, Henry put into effect his long-held ambition to wage war against France and put forward his claim to the French throne. At huge expense, he was able to capture Thérouanne and Tournai. Sandys was involved in this military campaign.

"Scorours," to be appointed by the knight marshal.

Sir Ric. Wingfield, as knight marshall, with the provost marshall, the knight harbiger and other harbigers, and the retinue of spears of Calais. The lord captain of the Spears and his lieutenant to accompany the said Knight Marshal, with 40 men at arms, 300 demilances and 200 archers on horseback as contained in a bill signed by the King.

To accompany the great ordnance:—Sir Ric. Carew, master of the ordnance, with 1,000.

The avauntgarde:—Lord Lysle lord marshal, 1,800; Sir Nich. Vaus, 300; Lord Willoughby, 200; [Sir] Thos. Pa[rre], 200; Sir Thos. Boleyn, 100; Edw. Belknap, 200; Sir John Seymour, 100; Edw. Hungerford, 100; Egerton the standard bearer, 100; Pole, 100: in all, 3,200. Right wing, with ordnance: Lord Darcy, chieftain, 400; Mainwaryng, 100; Ascue and Hansard, 100; the Duke's company [of Buckingham], 400; the Marquis [of Dorset], 300; Sir Hen. Wyot, 100; Master Dalby, 20; Sir Thos. Lucy, 66; John Nevell, 30: in all, 1,516. Left wing, with light artillery: Sir Will. **Sandys, chieftain, 100**; Sir Morice Berkeley, 100; the Almayns [700]; Spears, comprised in a bill signed by the King, 600; in all, 1,500.

The King's ward:—the King with his guard, 600; Banner of the household, esquires for the body, sewers, gentlemen ushers, grooms and pages of the Chamber, 800; Bishops of Winchester and Durham, 100 each; Master Almoner, 200; the Duke [of Buckingham], 100; Lord Roos, 100; Sir Hen. Guldeford, 100; Will. Compton, 400; Master Porynges, 500; Lord Barners, 50; Sir Adrian Fortescue, 50. Total, 3,100. The right wing:—Lord Burgeveny, chieftain, 500; Edw. Ferrers, 100; Lord Daubeney, 100; Sir Andrew Wynsore, 100; Spears, 700; total, 1,500. The left wing:—Sir Hen. Marney, chieftain, 800; servants of petty captains and of the King's guard, 400; Sir John Reynsford, 100; Geoffrey (*sic*) Fulchambe, 100; John Veer, 100; total, 1,500. Bands of artillery in the rear. Sir Anth. Ughtred, captain for the time, with a suite named in a bill signed by the King.

3.3 Extracts from the preparations: Field of the Cloth of Gold

From the 'memorial of things necessary for the transporting of the King for the interview between him, the French king, their queens, queen Mary dowager of France, and the mother of the French king'

'No man could have been more fit to order the matter than Sands who is among them mayor, bailiff and entire ruler of the town. With his authority from the King and the love he has among the people he can do more than the mayor and all the officers of the town and port.'

The King, with the Queen and the Queen Dowager of France, shall be at Guisnes Castle on the last of May, and within four days after shall meet the French king within the county of Guisnes, as determined by the treaty. The commissioners for appointing the time and place of meeting to be the lord Chamberlain, earl of Worcester, Sir Nic. Vauxe, Sir Wm. Sandes and Sir Edw. Belknap. The King's apparel is to be ordered according to his own pleasure and device. Vauxe, Sandes and Belknap to be commissioners to visit Guisnes Castle and the neighbourhood, and prepare lodgings according to instructions delivered to them at their departure. The Chamberlain, Vauxe, Sandes and Belknap are to meet the French commissioners, and appoint a place for the jousts halfway between Guisnes and Arde, and to provide for its fortification, and for the construction of lists, galleries, &c. The Chamberlain and the ministers of the wardrobe to provide for the transportation to Calais of Arras tapestry and other necessities for the decoration of the King's house, and to cross the sea forty days before the interview, that all may be ready. The head officers of the household to be warned by the council to attend on the King "in their best manner, apparelled according to their estates and degrees." The other officers and ministers to be furnished with all things necessary....

... The Mary Rose, the King's Greate Barke, the Little Barke, and two other small ships are to scour the seas from time to time during the passage...

...The commissioners to appoint the lodgings at Calais, are Sir John Peché, the marshal, Sir Ric. Carewe, Wotton and Garnishe; for Guisnes, Sir Wm. Sandes, Sir Nic. Vauxe and Sir Edw. Belknap; and the King's harbingers are to attend on both.

A solemn banquet will be held at Guisnes, at which the French King and all his court will be present. The charge of it is committed to the officers of the household, and the arrangement and furnishing of the place to Vaux, Sandes, Belknap and Ric. Gibson. For the banquet a mummery will be prepared, consisting of 50 noble men and women in 5 companies. Their apparel is referred to the King's pleasure. Sir Harry Wyatt is charged to transport gold and silver plate sufficient for the banquet....There being no place within the castle of Guisnes for the lodging of the servants and guard, Gibson will take across the King's halls, tents and pavilions, and a place for them shall be assigned by Sandes and the other commissioners.

3.4 Letter from Sandys, Vaux and Belknap to Wolsey

This letter was signed by the three commissioners appointed to create a giant temporary lodging for Henry. This would be a dazzling temporary palace that would form the centrepiece of the Field of the Cloth of Gold. The three men clearly encountered some difficulties though...

*Have caused Robt. Fowler to make a declaration of the money spent on the castle at Guisnes and the cheker at Calais, from 12 March to 6 May, which was the last day on which any money was paid for wages, except Heron's payments for the garnishing of roofs and presting of artificers. The bearer will give him Fowler's account. The emptions and provisions cannot be given in detail yet, as Lelegrave, who received 2,430*l.*, is still in Flanders. Henry Comptroller, Urmeston, Sadler and Browne, with many others, are still in England, and have not declared. The expense has been great, owing to the distance the stuff had to be carried, and the shortness of the time; but, when finished, Wolsey will think the money well bestowed. The work has been done according to a "platt" devised for the said buildings, and which Wolsey said the King wished to have carried out; and now the King complains they have made more buildings than are mentioned in the "platte," for his houses of office, stables for his coursers and the Queen's palfreys, the armoury and the camp, which will amount to a great charge; and the time is so short, the buildings so great, and the stuff so far off, that they are in doubt how they shall finish before the King's coming. Neither Clement Urmeston, John Rastall, nor Browne, the King's painter, who has to gild the roofs, have come to Calais, and the stuff for the roofs is not sent. Asks Wolsey to send them over. The French king's commissioners work better than they did at the beginning. They seemed doubtful of their master's coming. It is said that artillery is being secretly conveyed to Arde; and they can the more believe it, as Mons. Shatilyon told them he should send for artillery shortly after their last meeting. Advise the King to send the ordnance lying on the Tower wharf and other places. Guysnes, 21 May.*

4

1535 and Sandys' loyalty

Therefore, in 1435, Henry VIII was visiting a long-serving and trusted courtier. This royal progress provided the King with an opportunity to reward loyalty, strengthen personal bonds and reinforce political alliances. For Lord Sandys, the visit offered a chance to display his accomplishments, host the monarch with due magnificence and reaffirm his status within the social and political hierarchy of the time.

Yet beneath the surface, there may have been doubts about Sandys's continued loyalty, doubts rooted in the religious upheavals of the 1530s. Sandys was known to be a religious conservative. According to correspondence from the imperial ambassador Eustace Chapuys to Charles V, the powerful Hapsburg Holy Roman Emperor and Katherine of

Glossary:

Pilgrimage of Grace: a popular uprising in the north of England in 1536–37, sparked by Henry VIII's religious reforms, particularly the dissolution of the monasteries and the declaration of the King as the Supreme Head of the Church of England. The rebellion, led by Robert Aske, aimed to restore the old religion and traditional practices. It involved two main uprisings, one in Lincolnshire and a larger one in Yorkshire, with the latter becoming the more significant rebellion.

Aragon's nephew, Sandys was allegedly among a group of senior figures strongly opposed to

Henry's religious reforms – so opposed, in fact, that they might consider leading an armed uprising (see Box 4).

Indeed, both Sandys and his wife Margery had been known supporters of Queen Katherine. Sandys had first welcomed her to England in 1501, and numerous references to her remained within

The Vyne. She probably made a personal visit to The Vyne in 1527. Only a year after the royal visit of 1535, England would face the **Pilgrimage of Grace**, a massive northern rebellion against Henry's break with Rome, and the most serious threat to his reign. Given Sandys' military experience and longstanding ties to Katherine, one might ask: was he, too, on the brink of turning against the King?

Key questions: See Box 4

1. What do the sources (4.1–4.4) suggest about Sandys' loyalty to Henry? How seriously should we take this?
2. Why might Henry VIII choose this moment to pay Sandys a visit?

Box 4 Sandys' loyalty

4.1 Sandys to Cromwell, 22 December 1533

Whereas the King is pleased to license me to continue here for this season until the beginning of Parliament, in consideration of my age and sickness : I beg you will make my excuse to the King for my absence. At the Vine, 22 Dec

4.2 Chapuys to Charles V, 14 January 1535

I have received your Majesty's letters of the 9th ultimo, and informed the Queen and Princess of what concerned them, which has been to their great comfort. I have always done, and shall do, my best to gain the goodwill of this people towards your Majesty. It does not cost much trouble, for they are almost all devoted to you. The day before yesterday lord Sands, the King's chamberlain, captain of Guisnes, and one of the best men of war in the kingdom, sent to tell me he was very sorry the times were such that he could not invite me to his house, but your Majesty might be sure that you had the hearts of all this kingdom; and that if you knew the great disorder that exists here, and the little hope of making good resistance now that the people were so alienated from the King, you would not delay to apply a remedy. At the least disturbance your Majesty could make, this kingdom would be found in inestimable confusion. The said lord Sands is at his house pretending to be ill, he is so disgusted with the Court, and has sent this message to me by his physician, whom I know. I like to make acquaintance with men of that profession, because they can come and go to all places without suspicion. I have sent no message yet to those mentioned in your letters, because my ordinary messenger is in Flanders.

4.3 Chapuys to Charles V, 8 January 1535

The King has added to his titles that of Sovereign Head of the Church of England on Earth, and it is proposed to burn all the bulls and provisions hitherto granted by the Holy See..... Cromwell does not cease to harass the bishops, even the good ones like Winchester (Gardiner) and some others, whom he called lately before the Council to ask them if the King could not make and unmake bishops at pleasure; who were obliged to say Yes, else they should have been deprived of their dignities..... I sent lately to the principal (Lord Darcy) mentioned in my last, viz., him who sent me the pensée: and although I was afraid he had cooled, seeing that the King had not then proceeded so far in regard to the Church, I found he was firm and constant. We may be the more assured of him because he is allied with the Chamberlain (Sandys): the first having the greatest following in the kingdom, and the other being the best captain, and there is no doubt that with a little money 100,000 men could be mustered, when he thinks it should be proclaimed on the part of your Majesty that they come, not only for the cause of God and the Queen, but for the comfort of the poor oppressed people and the restoration of order and justice.

4.4 Charles V to Chapuys, 26 February 1535

We have received your letters of the 1st and 14th [Jan.], with the news of the confidence shown you by lords Darcy and Sands, the affection they show towards us and to the Queen and Princess, and the desire they have to see a remedy for the violence and disorder in England. We certainly perceive that the case is so extreme that there would be more than need if the other affairs of Christendom permitted, and if we were not hindered daily, especially now, by the coming of Barbarossa to Tunis with all the naval forces of the Turk, against whom we are compelled to prepare a powerful fleet, as you already know; besides the terms held by the king of France, and his preparations for war by sea and land, with the aid, of which he greatly boasts, of the king of England. And notwithstanding the good-will of the said personages and others in England we do not see how it is possible for the present to remedy the mischief by force, as, in truth, we have more than just cause to do. For which reason we think it best still to temporise, entertaining the said personages and others in hope, and waiting to see if God will inspire the said king of England to repent (a soi reduire), or some good opportunity may arise to compel him.

5

Securing loyalty? The visit on 15–19 October 1535

Yet perhaps Chapuys had misjudged Sandys, a man who had successfully navigated decades of courtly intrigue, often by maintaining a strategic distance, notably through his frequent absences in Calais. Let us now step inside The Vyne to glimpse what might have greeted Henry and Anne during their visit, and how Sandys subtly wove his loyalty into the very fabric of the house.

Within The Vyne, several remarkable Tudor features survive. One of the most notable is the two-storey **long gallery**, dating from Sandys' time. This elegant corridor would have connected the royal apartments of Henry and Anne. A surviving 1541 inventory, compiled after Sandys' death, offers a vivid sense of the rich interiors (see **Box 5**). The rooms would have been furnished with luxurious tapestries, silver plates

and well-appointed beds, fit for royal guests.

The royal apartments were housed within the main structure of The Vyne and consisted of a sequence of chambers, culminating in the private **privy chamber**, the heart of royal privacy. The Queen's apartments were, as was customary, even more lavish than the King's. The long gallery offered not only a place for the royal couple to stretch their legs but also a venue for quiet conversations – perhaps even with Lord Sandys himself.

Downstairs, the stone gallery contains a roundel depicting a classical male figure, likely an emperor or general, from the workshop of Giovanni da Maiano. Its significance lies in its comparison: similar artworks appear at Hampton Court. Was Sandys intentionally echoing the

grandeur of Cardinal Wolsey's palace and, by extension, aligning himself with courtly prestige?

Even more impressive is the recently restored **Oak Gallery** upstairs. Clad in fine linenfold oak panelling, this gallery displays a remarkable heraldic programme, often described as a 'who's who' of Tudor England. In an era where coats of arms symbolised lineage, loyalty and power, and where household retainers wore livery marked with their lord's emblem, this was a bold visual statement. Sandys' own emblem, a winged half-goat, features prominently alongside those of local gentry.



Classical roundel

Yet Sandys didn't just promote his own standing; he carefully aligned himself with royal authority and key political figures. The gallery includes Tudor roses and fleurs-de-lys, reinforcing England's claim

to the French throne, as well as a cardinal's hat for Wolsey and a bishop's mitre for Richard Fox, Bishop of Winchester. There are portcullises representing Margaret Beaufort, Henry's grandmother. Likely completed by 1526, the panelling also features pomegranates and castles, emblems of Katherine of Aragon. Given her visit in 1527, their presence is unsurprising, though they were probably hidden behind tapestries during the 1535 visit, with Anne Boleyn now in favour. Above the door to the royal chambers, the Royal Arms appear alongside Sandys' winged goat – an unmistakable declaration of

Glossary:

Long gallery: essentially, a long wide corridor, often with little furniture, which enabled the owners and guests at great houses to walk and to exercise without the need to go outside. These were becoming fashionable by Sandys' time.

Privy chamber: the most private part of the royal apartments, usually consisting of a bedchamber, library, study and garderobe. Access was heavily restricted.

loyalty, prestige and political awareness.

One final treasure survives: the **Tudor chapel**. In this devout age, religious observance was central, and Henry travelled with a reduced version of the Chapel Royal. The Vyne's chapel contains exquisite stained glass, commissioned by Sandys from Flanders, possibly for this space or for the Holy Ghost Chapel in Basingstoke (which he refounded), with the windows later relocated here. These windows combine

religious devotion with allegiance to the Tudors. The upper sections depict scenes from the Passion of Christ; below are images of a kneeling Henry VIII, Katherine of Aragon and Margaret Tudor, each accompanied by their patron saints. The chapel also preserves beautifully decorated tiles that hint at the splendour and ceremonial richness of royal chapels. Together, they show why The Vyne made such an ideal – and symbolic – stop on the 1535 summer progress.

A Tudor soundscape at The Vyne

The chapel at The Vyne featured in a research project called the Experience of Worship, which aimed to investigate religious life in the late medieval church. As part of this, chapel music at The Vyne was recreated to imagine what it would have sounded like at the time of Henry's visit. A project website and video provide an overview of this, along with some sound recordings.

<https://sound-heritage.ac.uk/projects/tudor-soundscape-vyne>

Key questions: See Box 5

1. Review the 1541 inventory. Why would Sandys furnish the chambers so lavishly for royal visits that would last only a few days? (5.1)
2. Why would Sandys commission expensive craftsmen from Flanders who had also served Wolsey? (5.2, 5.3)

3. What do the surviving fragments of the Tudor Vyne tell us about the lives of the Sandys family in the 16th century?

Box 5 Sandys' loyalty

5.1 The 1541 inventory

In February 1541, a full room-by-room inventory was taken at The Vyne of all the items and furnishings. It is an expansive list, covering some 46 pages. While things, may have changed since 1535, it gives us an indication of the Tudor-era rooms at The Vyne and the likely items within them.

Below are some excerpts from the Royal apartments.

This is the Inventory of all and singuler the Goods Catall debtes plate jewells & redy monye of the right honorable Sir William Sandys knight of the Garter Lorde Sandys and Lorde Chamberlayn late deceased being in divers places vewed and praysed the vii vi ix daies of february The year of or lorde god one thousande ffyve hundred and ffourty

In the kings chamber wtin the pulles

Item v small peces of Imagery cont all xxxvi stickes at is vi li xii s

Item a cubbord carpet of ii yerdes and another wyndow carpet of the same length of turky making price x s

Item a celer and tester of grene velvit upon velvit purled paned wt clothe of gold wt a valaunce of ye same fringed wt silke & gold abbas beneth the bedd of the same stupe fringed wt silke & gold wt v curtains of sarcenet yelow and grene_xli

It a fyne counterpoynte of counterfet arras smale cont xii sticke at mis elviii s

It a bedd of downe cont ix quarters & a bolster to the same 13 i li vis vii d

It a mattres of fustian stuffed wt woll vili s

It a bedsted of flaunders making wt iii pillers all gilt xx s

It a single cubbord of waynscot_iis iii d

It a flaunders chaire xx d

It a payr of Aundiernes_v\$

It a payr of tongs xii d

5.1 The 1541 inventory continued

In the Quenys grete chamber

*Item vili peces of fyne Imagery hangyngs cont CC xx sticke in all price le
sticke wt a border of antike and my lords armes wt this posy
Aides Dieu at iii s le sticke xxxiii li It i wyndow peces of courser stuff
cont xxii sticke at ii s ili d le stickelis ii d*

*It a celer & a tester of grene and crymson velvit paned embrothered wt my
lords armes wt his conysance & the garter wt a valaunce frynged wt sylke
and gold wt v curtayns of damask red and grene paned xv li*

*It a large quylte of red satten lyned wt grene buckeram cont
it yerds di length it yerds qtr long ii li*

*It a large counterpoynt of water
flowers cont xxiii sticke at xvi d le sticke xxxii s*

It a bedd of downe & a bolster cont ix quarters mke 15 ini li

It a matteras of fustian stuffed wt woll x s

It a trussing bedd wt iti gilt pillers and i pomell gilt xxs

It an old chayre of blake velvit sore worn embrodered wt gold vis vii d

It alarge payr of andiorns wt latten pomells xx s

Item a cubbord carpet of turky making ii yerdes long viis vi d

It a lyvery cubbord xx d

*It iii curteyns of saten of bridges paned redd and yelowe old and frayed
cont xxxili yards xxii s*

It a loking glasse gilteil s

Sm xliii li xi s i d

5.2

Terracotta roundel from the studio of Giovanni de Maiano at The Vyne, showing a Roman emperor or general



Photo taken at The Vyne

5.3

Terracotta roundel from Giovanni de Maiano at Hampton Court Palace, showing Emperor Augustus



Photo taken at Hampton Court

5.4 The Oak Gallery

The door on the left likely led to the royal chamber; there is a royal coat of arms above the doorway



5.5 The royal coat of arms

The winged goat on the bottom right represents Sandys



5.6 Crest of the winged goat



5.7 Wolsey's cardinal hat



5.8 Pomegranate



5.9 Bishop Fox



5.10 Portcullis



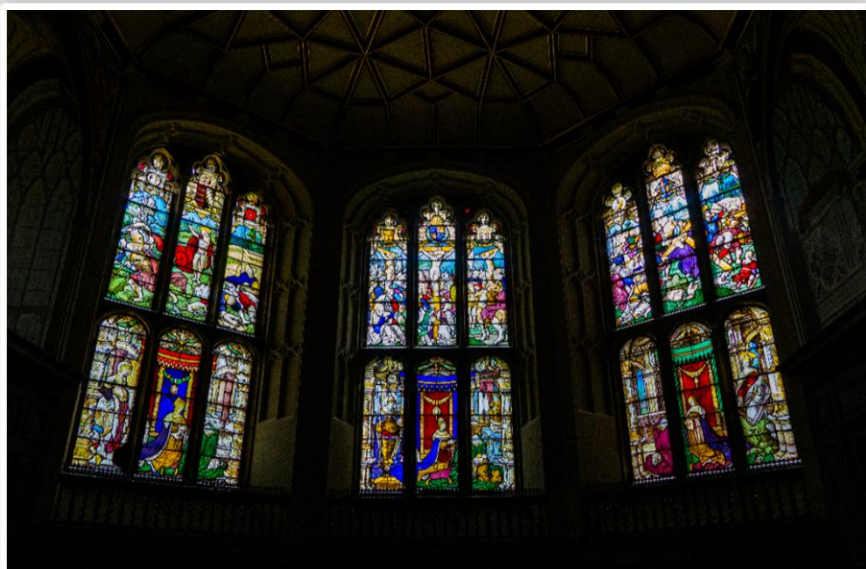
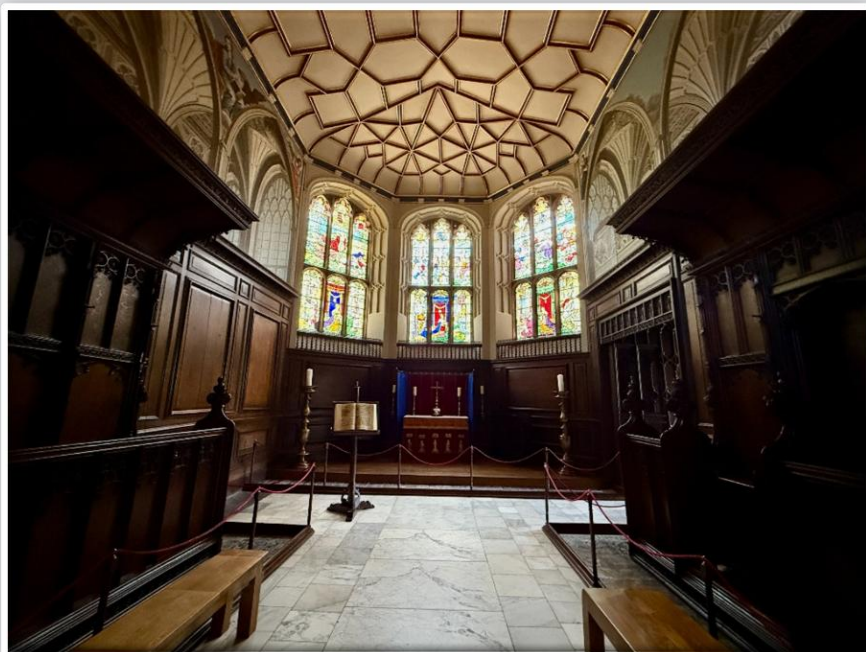
5.11 Fleur-de-lys



5.12 Roundel of St George slaying the dragon; he was the patron saint of the Order of the Garter



5.13 The chapel at The Vyne



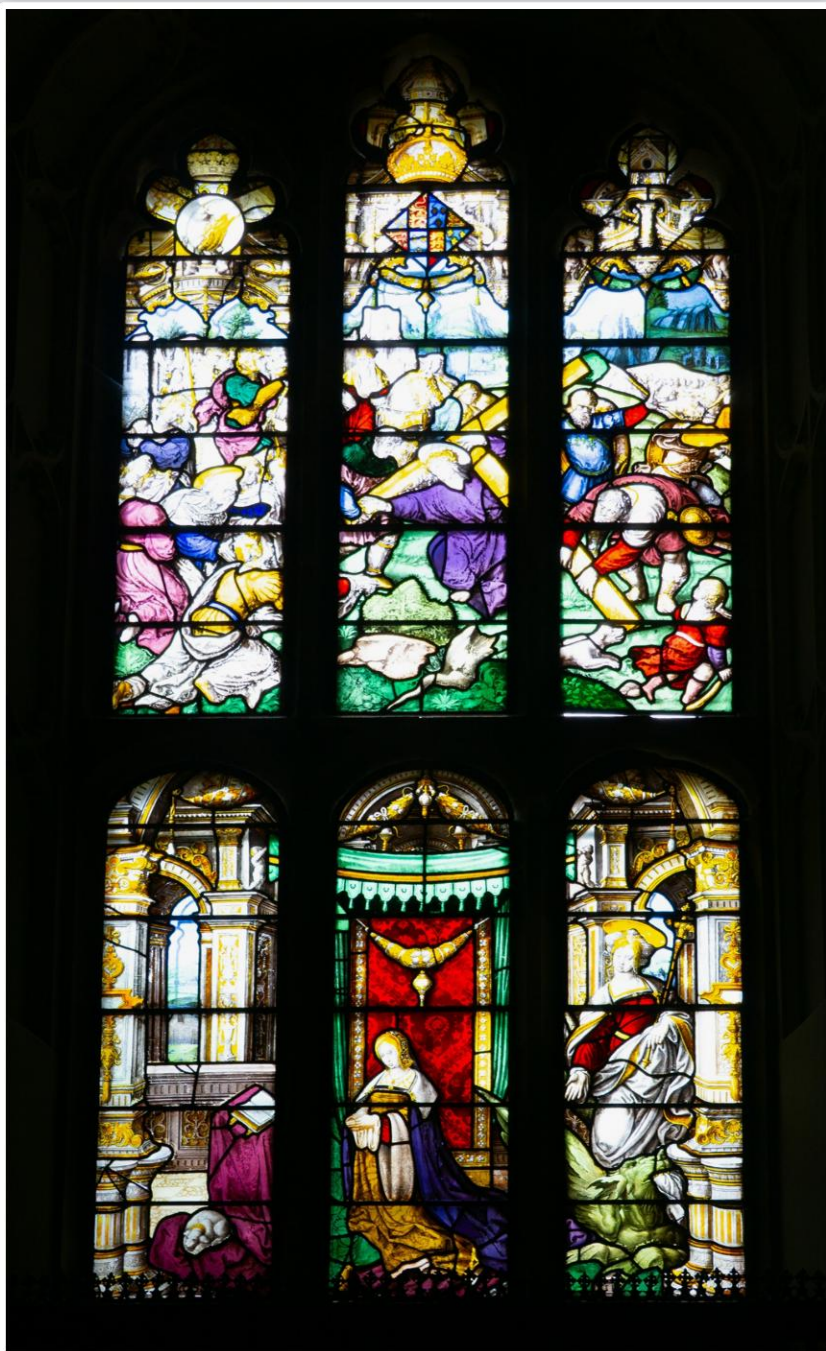
5.14 Henry VIII



5.15 Queen Katherine



5.16 Margaret, Queen of Scotland



5.17 Detail of Tudor rose from the chapel tiles



6

The aftermath of 1535 – loyalty secured?

Not long after the summer progress of 1535, dramatic events overtook the Tudor court. In January 1536, Queen

Anne Boleyn suffered a miscarriage; by May, she became the first queen of England to be executed on charges of adultery, treason and incest.



Ruins of the Holy Ghost Chapel, Basingstoke

Yet for William Sandys, the royal visit appears to have strengthened rather than weakened his standing. Evidence of his ongoing loyalty comes in the form of a letter sent shortly after the visit by his wife, Margery Sandys, to Thomas Cromwell. In it, she pleaded on behalf of William More, the Prior of Worcester, who had recently been arrested. Margery, the niece and co-heiress of Sir Reginald Bray, a powerful courtier under Henry VII, had strong family ties to Worcester, and More was evidently a family friend. Records show that in 1523, More had sent her some 'swete wyne', and in 1530, she had gifted him a rosary described as 'a peyer of grete Amber bedes'.

In 1535, however, More came under suspicion during the official visitations of his priory. Accused by hostile monks of tolerating criticism of the King, he found himself placed under house arrest. The charges, clearly fuelled by personal grievances, amounted to nothing less than an allegation of treason. But thanks to the intervention of Margery and William Sandys, More was released, and ultimately secured a comfortable retirement pension after the dissolution of his monastery.

Sandys, it seems, managed the political and religious upheavals of the 1530s with outward conformity and deft diplomacy. He even profited from the dissolution of the monasteries, acquiring Mottisfont Abbey. His presence at key ceremonial events, such as the christening of Prince Edward in 1537 and the funeral of Jane Seymour, demonstrated his continuing prominence at court.

Margery Sandys died in March 1539, bringing to a close a marriage that had lasted over four decades. Lord Sandys himself died just over a year later, on 7 December 1540.



Remains of Sandys' tomb

He was buried in the tomb he had commissioned within the Guild Chapel of the Holy Trinity, located on the south side of the Holy Ghost Chapel in Basingstoke. The tomb, contracted with Flemish craftsmen in 1536, was fashioned from dark-grey Tournai marble, simple yet

finely executed and adorned with Sandys' heraldic arms and badges. Though the chapel is now in ruins, the remains of this tomb still survive today, a testament to a

man who weathered the storm of Henry VIII's reforms with political skill, discretion and a lasting legacy.

Key questions: See **Box 6**

1. Why was Sandys keen that Cromwell visit, as well as the King? What does that tell us about the role of politics during royal visits? (6.1–6.2)
2. Why does Sandys get a mention in the King's reply to the rebels during the Pilgrimage of Grace? What does that tell us about Sandys' perceived loyalty? (6.3)
3. Why do you think Sandys is pulling down a 'seyd idol'? (6.4) How could you link this to the visit of 1535?

Box 6 The aftermath of the 1535 visit

6.1 Lady Margery Sandys to Cromwell, 21 October 1535

I write to you of the prior of Worcester, Dan Wm. More, who remains in Gloucester at the King's pleasure and yours. I beg the matter may be examined, for he is a true monk to God and the King, and his accuser, Dr. Nekam, is very well known. He was elected to his room by the whole convent and the gift of the bishop of Winchester, Dr. Fox, without giving a penny for his promotion. He will be glad to give you in ready money as much as any other man will give, and therefore my trust is you will be good to him. At the Vine, 21 Oct. 27 Hen. VIII. Signed.

6.2 William Lord Sandys to Cromwell, 22 October 1535

The King and Queen came to my poor house on Friday the 15th of this month, and continued there till Tuesday. I expected to have seen you, which would have been a great comfort to me and my poor wife. Please to remember that on behalf of my friend, John Awdelett, of Abingdon, you were pleased to befriend him; but I hear from him that the matter at variance betwixt the abbot and him has not been committed, as you promised, to be decided by certain indifferent persons. The Vine, 22 Oct. 27 Hen. VIII. Signed.

6.3 Answer to the demands of the rebels in Yorkshire, 1536

First as touching the maintenance of the faith. The terms be so general that hard they be to be answered; but if they mean the faith of Christ to which all Christen men be most obliged, we declare and protest ourself to be he that always do and have minded to die and live in the purity of the same."... God forbid that we, who have been 28 years king, should not know now better than at first what were the common wealth and what were not. What King has kept you his subjects so long in wealth and peace, ministering indifferent justice, and defending you from outward enemies? What king has been more ready to pardon or loath to punish? As to the beginning of our reign, when ye say so many noble men were counsellors; who were then counsellors I well remember, and yet of the temporality, I note but two worth calling noble; the one, Treasurer of England; the other, High Steward of our house. Others, as the lords Marmy and Darcy, scant well-born gentlemen, and yet of no great lands till they were promoted by us. The rest were lawyers and priests, save two bishops, Canterbury and Winchester. Why then are you not better content with us now who have so many nobles indeed, both of birth and condition? For of the temporality we have in our Privy Council, the dukes of Norfolk and Suffolk, the marquis of Exeter, the lord Steward when he may come, the earls of Oxford and Sussex, lord Sandys our chamberlain, the lord Admiral, treasurer of our house, Sir William Poulet, comptroller of our house; and of the spirituality, the bishops of Hereford, Chichester, and Winchester. How came you to think that there were more noble men in our Privy Council then than now? But it does not belong to any of our subjects to appoint us our Council. . . Whereas ye, the Commons, name certain of our Council as subverters both of God's law and the laws of this realm; we hold them just and true executors of both: if, however, anyone can prove the contrary we will proceed against them. One thing makes me think this slander untrue; it proceeds from a place so far distant and from a people who never heard them preach.

6.4 William Lord Sandys to the keeper of Cromwell's House at the Austin Friars

Has received the King's command, by letters of the lord Privy Seal, to pull down the image at Basingstoke and send "the seyd idoloe" to his house at the Austin Friars. Sends it accordingly.

7

Conclusion

The 1535 progress to The Vyne offers a vivid window into the complex



relationship between Henry VIII and his courtiers. It reveals how loyalty, ambition and political calculation played out not only in grand halls and royal residences, but also in the private chambers and galleries of country estates. This episode reminds us that history is woven from a rich tapestry of sources: written records, surviving architecture, personal correspondence and visual art, all of which, when combined, give us a fuller understanding of the past. Through this lens, we can glimpse how summer progresses were not just ceremonial journeys, but also powerful expressions of royal authority, religious transformation and social hierarchy. At The Vyne, the story of 1535 is one of spectacle, politics and faith – an enduring reflection of the turbulent, theatrical world of Henry VIII's court.

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Appendices

Notes:

1. William Sandys – timeline

c. 1470	William Sandys born.
1487	Sandys fought and then knighted at Battle of Stoke.
1491	Prince Henry born.
1492	War with France. Sandys in Flanders and in the party to meet the French ambassadors.
1494	Marriage to Margery Bray. Sandys participated in ceremony to make Prince Henry Duke of York and Knight of Bath.
1497	Sandys fought at Battle of Blackheath.
1501	Sandys in party that welcomed Princess Katherine of Aragon.
1503	Sandys a banner-holder at the funeral of Queen Elizabeth. Sandys accompanied Princess Margaret to Scotland for her marriage.
1509	Coronation of Henry VIII.
1510	Sandys appointed Constable of Southampton Castle. Visit of Henry VIII and Queen Katherine to The Vyne.
1512	Sandys appointed to the military expedition to Spain and as Treasurer of War.
1513	Sandys took part in war against France and the Battle of Spurs.

1517	Sandys praised by Bishop Fox to Wolsey for handling riots at Southampton. Sandys appointed Treasurer of Calais.
1518	Sandys became a Knight of the Garter.
1520	Sandys one of three commissioners preparing for the Field of the Cloth of Gold.
1522	Sandys led an expedition into France along with Lord Howard.
1523	Sandys became Baron Sandys of The Vyne. More fighting in France.
1525	Sandys made the King's Chamberlain and Deputy of Guines.
1526	Visit by Henry to The Vyne.
1531	Visit by Henry and Anne to The Vyne.
1532	Anne proclaimed queen.
1535	January: Letter from Chapuys to Charles V claiming that Sandys disaffected with the King and would lead an armed uprising. July: Thomas More executed. 15–19 October: Henry and Anne visited The Vyne. 21 October: Lady Margery wrote to Cromwell pleading for the Prior of Worcester.
1536	April: Sandys one of those commissioned to investigate the alleged treason of Anne Boleyn. 15 May: Sandys voted guilty in Anne Boleyn's trial. 27 June: Sandys exchanged Chelsea and Paddington properties for the dissolved Mottisfont Priory. October: Sandys supported the King with 400 men during the Pilgrimage of Grace.

1537	October: Sandys attended christening of Edward V and was ranked 15th in precedence. November: Sandys attended funeral of Jane Seymour.
1538	September: Sandys told Cromwell that he would remove an image 'seyd idoloë' from Basingstoke at the King's command. December: Sandys part of a panel to try Lord Montague and the Marquis of Exeter for treason.
1539	March/April: Death of Margery Sandys.
1540	January: Sandys in the King's party to welcome Anne of Cleves. June: Sandys went to Guines to see to the fortifications. Cromwell was committed to the Tower for treason. December: Death of Sandys.

2 Activity: Reasons for the visit

Why did Henry visit The Vyne? Give a score for each category and justify the score.		
Factor	Score /10	Reason
Suitable lodgings/ size of house		
Hunting		
Rewarding loyalty		
Gaining loyalty		
Religion		

3 Activity: Who benefits?

Who benefited from the visit? Add evidence.	
The monarch	The courtier

Who benefited the most from the visit of 1535?

1.4 Teacher notes

Purpose of this booklet

This booklet is designed to support A-level history pupils by offering:

- a detailed case study of a courtier during the reign of Henry VIII, enriching understanding of the royal court, the mechanisms of royal authority and the roles that courtiers played in war, diplomacy and religious reform
- a broader perspective on the Tudor court, moving beyond the traditional focus on figures like Wolsey and Cromwell, and challenging the notion of royal authority as being static or limited to a few individuals
- an appreciation of the historical environment and heritage associated with Tudor history
- a more nuanced approach to source evaluation, combining primary written accounts with material culture from the period
- exposure to the latest historical scholarship

At the heart of the booklet lies a deceptively simple question: Why did Henry VIII and Anne Boleyn visit The Vyne in 1535? By examining this question from multiple angles, pupils are encouraged to engage in deeper historical enquiry and make connections with their broader Tudor studies.

The booklet is structured into six chapters, each containing a short article and a curated selection of sources. Key questions are included in each chapter to guide discussion. While the booklet is primarily intended to extend pupils' knowledge and stimulate classroom debate, it also includes a couple of written tasks in the appendices.

It is self-contained and suitable for use as a further reading assignment. Alternatively, it can support source-based activities in class or complement a physical visit to The Vyne in Hampshire. The booklet is formatted to be easily printed as an A5 booklet.

Notes to accompany the sources

1. Buildings and archaeology

These sources encourage pupils to explore how contemporary written accounts can be corroborated with archaeological evidence. Sources 1.1 and 1.4 help to assess the scale of The Vyne, which can be compared with John Leland's description in 1.3.

2. Royal hunting

Hall's Chronicle (2.1) highlights the role of hunting and entertainment during royal progresses, and how such events could mask significant political decisions, such as the execution of Empson and Dudley in 1510.

The Privy Purse accounts (2.2) reveal the prominence of hunting and drinking during progresses. The entry from 6 August refers to Sandys (then Lord Chamberlain), indicating that a stag was hunted and brought to The Vyne for display and feasting.

3. France, wars and diplomacy

- 3.1 illustrates Sandys' military involvement and the composition of royal armies, which still relied on high-status individuals commanding retainers, despite the increasing professionalisation of royal armies, with some permanently retained troops and the use of specialist mercenaries.
- 3.2 sees Sandys being recommended for promotion by Bishop Fox of Winchester. His heraldry is visible at The Vyne (5.9). The source also reflects the role of landowners in maintaining local order within counties; Sandys served as Constable of Southampton Castle.
- 3.3 details preparations for the Field of the Cloth of Gold, emphasising the complexity and expense involved. Sandys (referred to as 'Sandes') played a key role.
- 3.4 discusses the 'platte' – a plan for the temporary palace built for Henry VIII – and the logistical and financial challenges faced by Sandys and other commissioners.

4. Sandys' loyalty

These sources explore Sandys' loyalty during religious upheaval:

- 4.1 is a letter from Sandys to Cromwell citing illness.
- 4.2 presents Chapuys' claim that Sandys was avoiding court and feigning illness, providing an ulterior motive for 4.1. However, keen observers will note that the dates of 4.1 and 4.2 don't really align with this theory.
- 4.2 and 4.3 suggest that Chapuys believed that Sandys might lead a rebellion if supported by Charles V, who, while flattered, was preoccupied with conflicts in the Mediterranean (4.4).

5. Inside The Vyne

These sources examine the material culture of The Vyne:

- 5.1 offers an inventory that need not be studied in detail to give an impression of the opulence of rooms prepared for royal guests, especially the Queen's chambers.
- 5.2 and 5.3 allow comparisons between roundels at The Vyne and Hampton Court.
- The royal coat of arms in 5.5 is above the doorway seen in 5.4.
- 5.6–5.12 present symbols associated with key figures: Sandys, Wolsey, Katherine of Aragon, Bishop Fox, Margaret Beaufort, the French monarchy and the Order of the Garter.
- 5.13–5.17 collectively depict the visual splendour of The Vyne's chapel, one of the finest surviving examples of a Tudor-era chapel outside royal palaces.

6. Aftermath of the 1535 visit

- 6.1 and 6.2 show how Margery Sandys and her husband sought to leverage the royal visit for personal and political gain. Their disappointment at not seeing Cromwell underscores the importance of political networking during progresses. Note that Sandys' reference to his 'poor house' is a humble rhetorical device, and not a literal description.
- 6.3 portrays Sandys as a trusted member of the nobility and an advisor, at the heart of the Tudor regime. This allows for comparison with the Chapuys sources.

- 6.4 refers to the removal of a religious image ('seyd idoloe') from Holy Ghost Church in Basingstoke. As the King's Vicegerant in Spirituals, Cromwell had issued injunctions in 1536 and 1538 that ordered the removal of images or artefacts considered to be idolatrous or superstitious.