Chapter 3 – The soap opera inspiring period of the

tudors and the seymours, 16th century England.



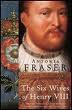
Photo from the Showtime website

No kidding, as I’m writing this, there’s a popular soap opera series on Showtime <http://www.sho.com/site/tudors/about.do> that’s a big international hit, and especially popular over in England. The stars include Sir John, Edward, Thomas, and Jane Seymour, along with Henry the VIII, Anne Boleyn (a Seymour cousin through Margery Wentworth), Thomas Cromwell (who was the Father-in-law of another daughter of Sir John), Katherine Parr , Henry’s 6th wife, and the daughter of Maud Greene-my mother’s family -and wife of Thomas Seymour.

I keep hitting the blogs while doing my research. The soap opera reference is necessary here, because in my opinion, the intrigue and back stabbing, not to mention beheading, that was going on during this period in the 1500’s may have caused a cover-up of our John Seymour of Sawbridgeworth’s true heritage.

Let’s start with the patriarch of the period, Sir John Seymour:

<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sir_John_Seymour_(1474–1536)>



“**Sir John Seymour**, of Wiltshire, KB (c. 1474 – 21 December 1536), a member of the English gentry and a courtier to King Henry VIII, is best known for being the father of the king's third wife, Jane Seymour. He was distantly descended from William Marshal, 1st Earl of Pembroke *(see page 27)*.

Seymour was married to Margery Wentworth, the daughter of Henry Wentworth of Nettlestead, Suffolk, and wife Anne Say *(the Says were the ancient Norman Lords of Sawbridgeworth, see the history of Sawbridgeworth in Ch 4)*, and a famous beauty, celebrated in the poetry of John Skelton; by her, he had nine children”, *see the tree*.

They lived in Wulfhall, outside Savernake Forest, in Wiltshire *(southwest England)*. Four of the Seymour children achieved prominence at the royal court— Edward, Thomas, Jane and Elizabeth. Sir John Seymour of Wolf Hall became a personage of note in public affairs. He took an active part in suppressing the Cornish rebellion in 1497; and afterwards attended Henry at the Field of the Cloth of Gold, and on the occasion of the visit of the Holy Roman Emperor Charles V of Spain to England in 1522.”

<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Field_of_the_Cloth_of_Gold> “The Field of the Cloth of Gold, is the name given to a place in France, near Calais. It was the site of a meeting that took place from 7 June to 24 June 1520, between King Henry VIII of England and King Francis I of France. The meeting was arranged to increase the bond of friendship between the two kings following the Anglo-French treaty of 1514.”

“Edward Seymour, Sir John’s oldest son, was briefly married to Catherine Fillol, but she had an affair with Sir John. When it was discovered, the marriage was annulled and the children declared bastards (since their legal grandfather could be their biological father) and Catherine was reportedly imprisoned in a local convent. The scandal damaged the Seymour family's reputation for many years afterward. A proposed marriage between Jane Seymour and William Dormer was rejected by the Dormers because of the scandal and the family's less-than-noble pedigree. The Seymour family was of the gentry.

Jane Seymour, the eldest daughter, was a Maid of Honour of Henry's first wife, Catherine of Aragon, and then later of Anne Boleyn.

Henry VIII stayed at Wulfhall with Queen Anne in the summer of **1535** *(the year of our John’s birth keeps popping up)* for a few days. In early 1536, Henry declared his love for Jane and began spending increasing amounts of time with her, chaperoned by her brother, Edward. Anne Boleyn was later arrested and executed on charges of treason, adultery and incest. Henry and Jane were officially betrothed the next day.

After Jane became queen on 30 May 1536, her family scaled the social ranks, as was befitting the family of a royal consort. Her eldest brother, Edward, was made an earl and eventually a duke and briefly ruled England on behalf of his nephew, King Edward VI. Her second brother, Thomas, was made a baron and Lord High Admiral, and in 1547 eloped with Henry VIII's widow, Queen Catherine Parr. Both men were beheaded for treason, only a few years apart.”

“Towards the last of his days *(In 1536, just after our John of Sawbridgeworth was born, and just before Jane’s marriage to Henry VIII)*, John Seymour was believed *(believed?)* to have entered a state of Madness, growing senile in his old age *(he was only 62 and fit enough to have an affair with his 28 year-old daughter-in-law)*. Jane Seymour and her brothers were believed *(“believed” again)* to have returned to Wolf Hall to nurse him as he was very cantankerous”.

*“Cantankerous?” I think it’s really funny how the history books make these events sound like just another day in the life. Let’s put it into perspective. Edward, and for that matter his father Sir John, were a couple of the top soldiers in England. Edward had probably just returned from some kind of bloody military engagement in 1535, where he was running people through with his sword, when he discovered that his wife was sleeping with his father, and in some rumours, found her pregnant. To Edward’s credit, he maintained his composure, at least temporarily. I mean, no one was slaughtered on the spot, but let’s be realistic, there were some hurt feelings, and a lot of emotion involved.*

*Later, when you read about brother Thomas (pg. 51), you’ll also probably agree that in his blindly ambitious eyes, Dad had become a major political liability. We’re not as sure about Jane’s ambitions, but it’s not beyond believability that she might have had similar feelings as she was trying to carefully seduce King Henry, while at the same time mortally betray her cousin Queen Anne Boleyn during this period. Back to the historical account--*

“His death did not come as shock to the family *(I’ll bet)*. When Jane apparently asked her father for approval to marry the king, John was said to be in a less than lucid state and could not comprehend the manner of the question asked.” *Does this mean that John had objections to the wedding, and maybe to other things that were going on possibly with Catherine Fillol and their son? In other words, are Edward & Co. creating a situation here where the perception is; “hey don’t worry about what he says, we assure you that he’s quite mad, and everything he says is pure gibberish.......”*

*So to sum up-- shortly after having an affair with his powerful and ambitious soldier sons’ wife, quite a stupid move I’ll add, Sir John suddenly went mad, became cantankerous, and was suddenly senile at the age of 62, and while his extremely ambitious kids were trying to take over the throne of England. Obviously then, Edward, Thomas and Jane immediately dropped everything back in London, took loony Dad back home, and watched over him until he died, shortly thereafter. His opinions about their plans to marry Jane to Henry didn’t matter, because he was senile, and when he suddenly dies, it was no surprise, and Jane didn’t attend the funeral. Is that about right?*

*So Edward “reportedly” had his wife Catherine Fillol sent off to a convent. Why all the secrecy, and why to a convent? Also, a short while later, Sir John was “believed to be mad?” Maybe he was objecting too loudly about what had happened to his pregnant mistress, and his new born son? If so, this would have made him even more unpopular than we can imagine he must have already been, especially with Edward, but also with Thomas and Jane.*

*I think it’s what a modern-day US Senator with Presidential aspirations would do if he could get away with it. In this guy’s humble opinion, one might conclude that Sir John died under suspicious circumstances, although there isn’t any proof, similar to with John’s birth.*

*So there we have the official historical version along with my personal opinions about the life of Sir John Seymour. Next is a brief blurb about another one of his ambitious children who also got involved with all of the Royal Court intrigue of the day.*

<http://tudorswiki.sho.com/page/John+Seymour?t=anon>

“Seymour's second daughter, Elizabeth,was married firstly to Gregory Cromwell, son of Henry's new chief minister, Thomas Cromwell, and secondly to John Paulet, 2nd Marquess of Winchester

Seymour died on 21 December 1536. By royal custom, his daughter Queen Jane did not attend the funeral.”

*Here’s a brief history on Thomas Cromwell ending, not surprisingly, with his execution at the Tower. Yawn, another framing and subsequent beheading at the orders of Henry.....*

[*http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Thomas\_Cromwell,\_1st\_Earl\_of\_Essex*](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Thomas_Cromwell,_1st_Earl_of_Essex)

“Thomas Cromwell, 1st Earl of Essex, KG, PC (c. 1485 – 28 July 1540), known as 1st Baron Cromwell of Wimbledon between 1536 and 1540, was an English statesman who served as chief minister of King Henry VIII of England from 1532 to 1540.

Cromwell rose from humble beginnings and attempted to modernize government at the expense of the privileges of the nobility and church; as a result, he was seen as an upstart. He was one of the strongest advocates of the English Reformation, the English Church's break with the papacy in Rome, and helped engineer the King's divorce from Catherine of Aragon in order to marry his mistress Anne Boleyn. After the King's supremacy over the Church of England was declared by Parliament in 1534, Cromwell supervised the Church from the unique posts of vicegerent for spirituals and vicar general.

Cromwell's rise to power made him many enemies, especially among the conservative faction at court. He fell from Henry's favour after arranging the King's marriage to a German princess, Anne of Cleves, which turned out to be a disaster. He was subjected to an Act of Attainder and executed for treason and heresy on Tower Hill on 28 July 1540. The king later expressed regret at having lost his great minister.”

*Now on to the matriarch of the clan, about who very little is known, except that she was descended from some powerful families, and therefore Sir John made another beneficial marriage for the Seymours:*

**Margery Wentworth (c. 1478 – c. October 1550,** *So she died while her grandson and oldest son were ruling one of the most powerful nations on Earth, and didn’t have to see their ultimate fates***)**was the wife of Sir John Seymour and is notable as the mother of Queen Jane Seymour, the third wife of Henry VIII of England and the grandmother of King Edward VI of England.

Margery was born in about 1478, the daughter of Henry Wentworth, Sheriff of Yorkshire and Anne Say, who was the daughter of Sir John Say and Elizabeth Cheney. Margery's first cousins, Elizabeth and Edmund Howard, were parents to two other wives of Henry VIII, Anne Boleyn and Catherine Howard, respectively. *(oh what a tangled web we weave. Edward, at his wife’s constant prodding, was instrumental in having John Howard, Earl of Surrey, executed in 1547 as he was a major political rival, which may have been the beginning of the end for him)* She was also known as a muse for the poet, John Skelton, as was Lady Elizabeth Boleyn, mother of Henry's second queen - who, like Margery, was considered a very great beauty.



To Mistress Margery Wentworth

WITH margerain *(marjoram)* gentle,

The flower of goodlihead *(beauty)*,

Embroidered the mantle

Is of your maidenhead.

Plainly I cannot glose *(explain)*;

Ye be, as I divine,

The pretty primrose,

The goodly columbine *(a kind of pretty flower)*.

Benign, courteous, and meek,

With wordes well devised;

In you, who list to seek,

Be virtues well comprised.

With margerain gentle,

The flower of goodlihead,

Embroidered the mantle

Is of your maidenhead.

John Skelton

*And now to the oldest daughter, and ultimately most successful Seymour of the clan--*

**Jane Seymour** <http://englishhistory.net/tudor/monarchs/seymour.html>

“Here lies Jane, a phoenix

Who died in giving another phoenix birth.

Let her be mourned, for birds like these

Are rare indeed.”

Jane Seymour's epitaph



Miniature portrait of Jane Seymour by Lucas Horenbout

“Henry VIII had six wives but only one gave him a son. Jane Seymour fulfilled her most important duty as queen, but she was never crowned and died just twelve days after the long and arduous birth. She was Henry's third wife and seems never to have made much of an impression upon anyone except the king. Her meek and circumspect manner was in distinct contrast to Henry's second wife, the sharp-tongued Anne Boleyn. Jane had served as lady-in-waiting to Anne and she supplanted her in much the same way Anne had replaced Katharine of Aragon in Henry's affections. We will never know if Jane sought the king's favor or was a frightened pawn of her family and the king's desire. But we do know that she bravely sought pardons for those involved in the Pilgrimage of Grace revolt in 1536. Rebuked by the king, and mindful of the fates of his first two wives, she retired into a quiet and decorous role.”

*This revolt was led by nobles in the North who were against Henry’s reformation of the Church from Catholic to Protestant. Henry was excommunicated by the Pope after divorcing his first wife, Katharine in order to marry Anne Bolyn. Henry then went on to convert the entire country to his new found religion. Many of his English subjects didn’t really want to convert, which led to the revolt. The rebels were much more honorable than Henry, and when Henry offered them pardons and to put forth their demands to a freely elected Parliament, the nobles took the bait. To make a long story short, Henry betrayed about 15 of the leaders of the revolt, and instead of the promised pardon, had them executed, against Jane’s, and probably also brother Edward’s wishes .* [*http://www.historylearningsite.co.uk/pilgrimage\_grace.htm*](http://www.historylearningsite.co.uk/pilgrimage_grace.htm)

“The triumphant birth of her son Edward allowed her two ambitious brothers into the king's inner circle; however, both would be executed during Edward's reign.

**Biography**

Jane Seymour's family was of ancient and respectable lineage. Her father was Sir John Seymour of Wolf Hall in Wiltshire; he served in the Tournai campaign of 1513 and accompanied Henry VIII to the Field of the Cloth of Gold in 1520. He was made a knight of the body and later a gentleman of the king's bedchamber. Both positions were very desirable for they allowed personal access to the king. Courtiers were always desperate to gain the king's ear, if even for a brief moment. Sir John was able to secure appointments at court for his family; of his eight children, three would come to historical prominence - the eldest son Edward as duke of Somerset and Lord Protector, another son Thomas as Lord Admiral and husband of Henry VIII's last queen, and his daughter Jane as queen of England.

The Seymour rise to prominence at Henry's court mirrored that of the Boleyns; it was the path sought by all English families with a minor pedigree or clever son. But gaining the king's favor was rather different than maintaining it and the Seymours proved far more adept at the latter.

Jane's birthdate is unknown; various accounts use anywhere from 1504 to 1509. She first came to court as a lady-in-waiting to Katharine of Aragon, Henry VIII's first wife. But soon enough Anne Boleyn was queen and Jane attended her. She witnessed first-hand the tempestuous relationship between Anne and Henry. Jane herself was known for her quiet and soothing manner. Certainly Henry knew of her but there is no evidence that he took particular notice until September 1535 when his royal progress stopped at Wolf Hall. Such a visit was a great honor for the Seymour family. And it brought Jane, away from court and its flirtatious young beauties, immediately to the king's attention.

Many historians have argued this was the beginning of Henry's infatuation, but it was unlikely. Anne Boleyn was not completely out of favor just yet; she was pregnant again, though she would suffer a miscarriage in January. And Henry's flirtations were confined to Anne's cousin, Madge Shelton. Jane Seymour was perhaps in the king's thoughts but he did nothing for several months.

**In February 1536,** however, foreign ambassadors began to report rumors of the king's romance with Jane. They speculated upon her chances of becoming queen. Henry made his affection clear to Jane; she received costly gifts (which she prudently returned) and her brothers were promoted at court. **In April 1536, Edward Seymour and his wife** *(Anne Stanhope)* moved to rooms which connected through a hidden passage with the king's apartments. Henry could thus continue his courtship of Jane in relative privacy.

But the king was also mindful of the vicious rumors and public outrage which had accompanied his open courtship of Anne Boleyn while still wed to Katharine of Aragon. He was far more discreet with Jane, and this undoubtedly suited her character. She was content to remain unknown. There were rumors that she would not dine alone with the king, insisting always upon a chaperone, and that she responded to a particularly bold flirtation by reminding the king of his marriage.

Henry did not need to be reminded of his second marriage; it had become a bitter disappointment for him. He was determined to rid himself of Anne Boleyn. Jane's presence was merely another impetus for action.

Another impetus was the death of Katharine of Aragon on 7 January 1536. Catherine died probably of cancer. When Henry heard of her death, he celebrated at a banquet dressed in bright yellow from head to toes. All of Europe, and most Englishmen, had regarded her as the king's rightful wife and Anne as merely his concubine. On 29 January, Anne miscarried a son; the king ominously declared that he would have no more children by her. For Henry, it was suddenly clear that if he could rid himself of Anne and marry Jane, then he would have a legitimate marriage recognized by all and another possibility for a son.

The king began to mention publicly that he had been bewitched into marriage with Anne; he knew his words would reach her. Anne was terrified but could do little. She had few friends at court, and even those were prepared to desert her for the king's favor. On 2 May 1536, she was arrested and taken to the Tower of London. On 15 May, she was condemned to death; Henry sent a personal message to Jane with the news. Four days later Anne was executed; the day after, 20 May, the king was formally betrothed to Jane at Wulf Hall. They married ten days later on 30 May and Jane was publicly declared queen on 4 June. She chose an apt motto, 'Bound to Obey and Serve'.

She was never granted the lavish coronation which Anne had enjoyed. It was summertime and the minor plagues were sweeping through London; the king said she must wait until the spring to be crowned. It is also possible, and was rumored, that Henry had no intention of crowning Jane until she had proved her worth and provided a son. If she proved barren, he could annul their marriage with hopefully little fanfare.

Almost a decade had passed since the 'King's Great Matter' first began and still Henry did not have a legitimate heir. And on 20 July 1536, he received the devastating news that his only illegitimate son, Henry Fitzroy, duke of Richmond, had died at the age of 17. There had always been the possibility that Fitzroy could have succeeded him, but now Henry VIII was left with only two daughters, both declared illegitimate. It is certain that if Jane had not provided a son, she would have been quickly discarded. Personal affection could not overcome political necessity.

But Jane was able to provide the king with his fondest wish. And indeed the whole country wished for an heir; they had no desire to return to ruinous civil war.

Rumors of her pregnancy began almost immediately after her marriage. But it wasn't until early 1537 that rumors could finally be confirmed as fact. The London chronicler Edward Hall recorded public rejoicing at news of Jane's quickening: 'On 27 May 1537, Trinity Sunday, there was a Te Deum sung in St Paul's cathedral for joy at the queen's quickening of her child, my lord chancellor, lord privy seal and various other lords and bishops being then present; the mayor and aldermen with the best guilds of the city being there in their liveries, all giving laud and praise to God for joy about it.'

Bonfires were lit and celebrations held throughout England; prayers were offered for a safe delivery. In early October, Jane went to Hampton Court Palace for her lying-in and on 12 October, after a long and difficult labor, she gave birth to the wished-for son. It was the eve of St Edward's day and so he was baptized by that name on 15 October. His two half-sisters, Mary and Elizabeth, attended the splendid christening ceremony. Mary stood as godmother; Elizabeth was carried in the arms of Thomas Seymour, Jane's brother who would later plan to marry her. Her grandfather, Thomas Boleyn, also attended the ceremony.

After 29 years as king of England, Henry VIII finally had a legitimate male heir. Past grievances could be forgotten at this grand moment.

Jane did not savor her success for long. The christening ceremony had begun in her bedchamber; she was wrapped in robes and carried on a litter to the king's chapel. She was able to participate but the long ordeal proved too much. She was already weak and exhausted; she needed quiet and rest and received neither. Only a day later, it was reported that the queen was very ill. Her condition quickly worsened. She was delirious and had a high fever; doctors bled her and attendants hastened to fulfill her craving for sweets and wine. The king's chief minister Cromwell would later blame the sweets for her death but they did little to harm Jane. Modern historians believe she had puerperal sepsis, or 'childbed fever'. It was all too common in the 16th century.

It was later rumored that she died from complications of a Cesarean section, that Henry VIII had ordered the child ripped from her womb, but this was unlikely. There were no reports that she was bleeding excessively and she was able to attend the christening and greet visitors. Sadly, Jane was a victim of her times. Poor hygiene and medical knowledge could not stop the fever which finally killed her near midnight on 24 October.

Jane's early death, at the moment of her great triumph, and her gentle character had an enduring hold on Henry VIII's memory. She was given a solemn state funeral; Princess Mary acted as her chief mourner. In her short time as queen, Jane had attempted to reconcile Henry and his stubborn daughter. Her body was embalmed and laid to rest in the tomb at Windsor Castle which Henry was building for himself. Years after her death, even while he was married to other women, Jane continued to appear in royal portraits as queen consort. Her special status as mother to the heir was never forgotten.

The king wore black until well into 1538 and waited more than two years to marry again. This was the longest interval between marriages during his reign.

***Next - Edward Seymour****. Edward was Sir John’s oldest son, and a great warrior, so first let’s look at one of his major battles. It looks like the Scots would have been no big fans of the Seymours. I’ve run across generations of Seymours who led battles against them, and here’s maybe the most famous, and the last. It also is another display of the Tudor and Seymour mentality in those days, as they’re trying desperately to arrange another favorable wedding, this time at the sharp point of an invading army. This cracks me up, they called it the “war of the rough wooing”. You’ve gotta love the Brit sense of humor...*



[*http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Battle\_of\_Pinkie\_Cleugh*](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Battle_of_Pinkie_Cleugh)

“The Battle of Pinkie Cleugh, along the banks of the River Esk near Musselburgh, Scotland on 10 September 1547 *(Edward was 39, and he is basically “King” of England, as his 9 year-old nephew’s Protector)*, was part of the “War of the Rough Wooing”. It was the last pitched battle to be fought between the Scottish and the English Royal armies and the first "modern" battle to be fought in the British Isles. It resulted in a catastrophic defeat for the Scots caused by the use of naval artillery by the English for the first time in a land battle in Britain. In Scotland, it was known as Black Saturday.

This was historically significant as the first "modern" battle fought in Britain, demonstrating active cooperation between the infantry, artillery and cavalry with a naval bombardment in support of the land forces.

**Background to the War**

In the last years of his reign, King Henry VIII of England had tried to secure an alliance with Scotland, and the marriage of the infant Mary, Queen of Scots, to his young son, the future Edward VI. When persuasion and diplomacy failed, he launched a ruthless war against Scotland, an episode known as the Rough Wooing.

After Henry died, Edward Seymour, maternal uncle to Edward VI, became Protector with the title of Duke of Somerset and with initially unchallenged power. He too wished to forcibly ally Scotland to England by marrying Mary to Edward, and also to impose an Anglican Reformation on the Scottish church establishment. Early in September 1547, he led a well-equipped army into Scotland, supported by a large fleet, *which must have been led by his brother, Thomas the Admiral*.

**The Campaign**

Somerset's (*Edward Seymour)* army was partly composed of the traditional county levies, summoned by Commissions of Array and armed with longbow and bill as they had been at the Battle of Flodden, thirty years before. However, Somerset also had several hundred German mercenary arquebusiers *(musketeers)*, a large and well appointed train of artillery, and 6,000 cavalry, including a contingent of Italian mounted arquebusiers under Don Pedro de Gamboa. The cavalry were commanded by Lord Grey of Wilton, as High Marshal of the Army, and the infantry by the Earl of Warwick, Lord Dacre of Gillesland, and Somerset himself. William Patten, an officer of the English army, recorded its numbers as 16,800 fighting men and 1,400 "pioneers".

Somerset advanced along the east coast of Scotland to maintain contact with his fleet and thereby keep in supply. Scottish Border Reivers harassed his troops but could impose no major check.

Meanwhile, the Scottish Regent, the Earl of Arran, had levied a large army, consisting mainly of pikemen with contingents of Highland archers. Arran also had large numbers of guns, but these were apparently not as mobile or as well-served as Somerset's. His cavalry consisted only of 2,000 lightly equipped riders under the Earl of Home, most of whom were potentially unreliable Borderers. His infantry were commanded by the Earl of Angus, the Earl of Huntly and Arran himself. According to Huntly, the Scottish army numbered 22,000 or 23,000 men, while an English source claimed that it comprised 36,000.

Arran occupied the slopes on the west bank of the River Esk to bar Somerset's progress. The Firth of Forth was on his left flank, and a large bog protected his right. Some fortifications were constructed in which cannon and arquebuses were mounted. Some guns pointed out into the Forth to keep English warships at a distance.

**Prelude**

On 9 September part of Somerset's army occupied Falside Hill (then known as Fawside, and currently as Fa'side, as in Fa'side Castle), 3 miles (4.8 km) east of Arran's main position. In an outdated chivalric gesture, the Earl of Home led 1,500 horsemen close to the English encampment and challenged an equal number of English cavalry to fight. With Somerset's reluctant approval, Lord Grey accepted the challenge and engaged the Scots with 1,000 heavily armoured men-at-arms and 500 lighter demi-lances. The Scottish horsemen were badly cut up and were pursued west for 3 miles (4.8 km). This action cost Arran most of his cavalry.

Later during the day, Somerset sent a detachment with guns to occupy the Inveresk Slopes, which overlooked the Scottish position. During the night, Somerset received two more anachronistic challenges from Arran. One request was for Somerset and Arran to settle the dispute by single combat. Another was for 20 champions from each side to decide the matter. Somerset rejected both proposals.

**The battle**

On the morning of Saturday, 10 September, Somerset advanced his army to close up with the detachment at Inveresk. He found that Arran had moved his army across the Esk by a Roman bridge, and was advancing rapidly to meet him. Arran knew himself to be outmatched in artillery and therefore tried to force close combat before the English artillery could deploy.

Arran's left wing came under fire from English ships offshore. (Their advance meant that the guns on their former position could no longer protect them.) They were thrown into disorder, and were pushed into Arran's own division in the centre.

On the other flank, Somerset threw in his cavalry to delay the Scots' advance. The Scottish pikemen drove them off and inflicted heavy casualties on the English horsemen. Lord Grey himself was wounded by a pike thrust through the throat and into his mouth.

However, the Scottish army was now stalled and under heavy fire from three sides from ships' cannon, artillery, arquebusiers and archers to which they could not reply. When they broke, the English cavalry rejoined the battle following a vanguard of 300 experienced soldiers under the command of Sir John Luttrell. Many of the retreating Scots were slaughtered, or drowned as they tried to swim the fast-flowing Esk or cross the bogs.

Although they had suffered a resounding defeat, the Scottish government refused to come to terms. The infant Queen Mary was smuggled out of the country and sent to France to be betrothed to the young dauphin Francis. Somerset occupied several Scottish strongholds and large parts of the Lowlands and Borders but without peace, these garrisons became a useless drain on the Treasury of England.

A violent Reformation in Scotland was only a few years away, but the Scots refused to have Reformation imposed on them by England. During the battle, the Scots taunted the English soldiers as loons [persons of no consequence], tykes and heretics. A thousand monks from various orders formed part of the Earl of Angus's division. Many died in the battle.

David H. Caldwell wrote, "English estimates put the slaughter as high as 15,000 Scots killed and 2,000 taken but [the Earl of] Huntly's figure of 6,000 dead is probably nearer the truth." Of the Scottish prisoners, few were nobles or gentlemen. It was claimed that most were dressed much the same as common soldiers and therefore were not recognised as being worth ransom.

Caldwell says of the English casualties, "Officially it was given out that losses were only 200 though the rumour about the English court, fed by private letters from those in the army, indicated that 500 or 600 was more likely.

Although the Scots blamed traitors within their own ranks for the defeat, it is probably fair to say that a Renaissance army defeated a Mediaeval army. Henry VIII had taken steps towards creating standing naval and land forces which formed the nucleus of the fleet and army with which Somerset gained the victory.

It should be noted that the longbow continued to play a key role in England's battles and Pinkie was no exception. Though the combination of bill and longbow which England used was old, it could still hold its own against the pike and arquebus tactics used in Continental armies at this stage in the development of firearms.

The battle-site is now part of East Lothian.”

<http://www.spartacus.schoolnet.co.uk/TUDseymourE.htm>

“Edward Seymour, the son of Sir John Seymour, and the brother of Thomas Seymour, was born in 1500. After studying at Cambridge University, he saw military service in France in 1523. On his return he worked for Henry, Duke of Richmond, as Master of the Horse.

Seymour's political career improved when his sister, Jane Seymour, married Henry VIII in 1536. Seymour was given the title, the Earl of Hertford, in 1537. Seymour returned to military duty and in 1542 served with distinction in Scotland (1542) and in France (1545).

When Henry VIII died in 1547 Seymour was named as executor of the will. Edward was too young to rule and Seymour was appointed by the Council of Regency as Protector of the Realm. He was also given the title of Duke of Somerset.

The Duke of Somerset was a Protestant and he soon began to make changes to the Church of England. This included the introduction of an English Prayer Book and the decision to allow members of the clergy to get married. Attempts were made to destroy those aspects of religion that were associated with the Catholic church, for example, the removal of stained-glass windows in churches and the destruction of religious wall-paintings.

Seymour also showed concern for the poor and on 14 June 1549, he persuaded Edward VI to pardon all those people who had torn down hedges enclosing common land. Many landless people thought that this meant that their king disapproved of enclosures. All over the country people began to destroy hedges that landowners had used to enclose common land.

This led to the Kett Rebellion in Norfolk. The mayor of Norwich refused to let Kett's army enter the city. However, Robert Kett and his men, armed with spears, swords and pitchforks, successfully stormed the city walls. The English government were shocked when they heard that Kett and his rebels controlled the second largest city in England.

Robert Kett formed a governing council made up of representatives from the villages that had joined the revolt. This council then sent details of their demands to Edward VI. Seymour responded by sending John Dudley, Duke of Northumberland, (*three years later it will be Dudley who gets Edward executed)* and a large army to defeat Kett.

The Privy Council *(being led by Dudley)* became concerned that Seymour's policies were leading to a popular uprising. In October, 1549, he was removed from power and imprisoned in the Tower of London.

Seymour was released in 1550 and allowed to return to the Privy Council. Seymour soon got involved in a conspiracy and he was once again arrested. Edward Seymour, Duke of Somerset, was found guilty of treason and executed on 22nd January, 1552.”

<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Edward_Seymour,_1st_Duke_of_Somerset> *Here we see that indeed, power does corrupt….*

Following his victory over the Scots at the Battle of Pinkie Cleugh, his position appeared unassailable. However, the Seymour brothers had accumulated enemies and grudges during their time in royal favour, and, shortly after his brother Thomas's downfall *(read execution)* in 1548, Edward, too, fell from power. His position, although not his office of Protector, was taken by John Dudley, 1st Earl of Warwick, later 1st Duke of Northumberland; his properties (such as Somerset House, Sleaford Castle and Berry Pomeroy Castle) were confiscated by the crown; and he was executed for treason at Tower Hill on 22 January 1552. *I wonder to what extent these “grudges” were the result of the Seymours’ efforts to get John Howard executed in 1547. It probably made others in the Council very wary of them. Dudley was quoted as blaming Anne Stanhope for Edward’s problems, and it was she who prodded Edward to work against Howard due to some insult he made, but based on the history of Anne Stanhope, was probably well deserved.*

Council of Regency

Henry VIII's will named sixteen executors, who were to act as Edward's Council until he reached the age of 18. These executors were supplemented by twelve men "of counsail" who would assist the executors when called on. The final state of Henry VIII's will has been the subject of controversy. Some historians suggest that those close to the king manipulated either him or the will itself to ensure a shareout of power to their benefit, both material and religious. In this reading, the composition of the Privy Chamber shifted towards the end of 1546 in favour of the reforming faction. In addition, two leading conservative Privy Councillors were removed from the centre of power. Stephen Gardiner was refused access to Henry during his last months. Thomas Howard, 3rd Duke of Norfolk, found himself accused of treason; the day before the king's death his vast estates were seized, making them available for redistribution, and he spent the whole of Edward's reign in the Tower of London. Other historians have argued that Gardiner's exclusion was based on non-religious matters, that Norfolk was not noticeably conservative in religion, that conservatives remained on the Council, and that the radicalism of men such as Sir Anthony Denny, who controlled the dry stamp that replicated the king's signature, is debatable. Whatever the case, Henry's death was followed by a lavish hand-out of lands and honours to the new power group. The will contained an "unfulfilled gifts" clause, added at the last minute, which allowed Henry's executors to freely distribute lands and honours to themselves and the court, particularly to Seymour (then known as Earl of Hertford), who became the Lord Protector of the Realm and Governor of the King's Person, and who created himself Duke of Somerset.

Henry VIII's will did not provide for the appointment of a Protector. It entrusted the government of the realm during his son's minority to a Regency Council that would rule collectively, by majority decision, with "like and equal charge". Nevertheless, a few days after Henry's death, on 4 February, the executors chose to invest almost regal power in the earl of Hertford. Thirteen out of the sixteen (the others being absent) agreed to his appointment as Protector, which they justified as their joint decision "by virtue of the authority" of Henry's will. Seymour may have done a deal with some of the executors, who almost all received hand-outs. He is known to have done so with William Paget, private secretary to Henry VIII, and to have secured the support of Sir Anthony Browne of the Privy Chamber.

Hertford's appointment was in keeping with historical precedent, and his eligibility for the role was reinforced by his military successes in Scotland and France. In March 1547, he secured letters patent from King Edward granting him the almost monarchical right to appoint members to the Privy Council himself and to consult them only when he wished. In the words of historian G. R. Elton, "from that moment his autocratic system was complete". He proceeded to rule largely by proclamation, calling on the Privy Council to do little more than rubber-stamp his decisions.

Somerset's takeover of power was smooth and efficient. The imperial ambassador, Van der Delft, reported that he "governs everything absolutely", with Paget operating as his secretary, though he predicted trouble from John Dudley, who had recently been raised to Earl of Warwick in the share-out of honours. In fact, in the early weeks of his Protectorate, Somerset was challenged only by the Chancellor, Thomas Wriothesley, whom the Earldom of Southampton had evidently failed to buy off, and by his own brother. Wriothesley, a religious conservative, objected to Somerset’s assumption of monarchical power over the Council. He then found himself abruptly dismissed from the chancellorship on charges of selling off some of his offices to delegates. His removal forestalled the forming of factions within the Council.

Somerset faced less manageable opposition from his younger brother Thomas Seymour, who has been described as a "worm in the bud". As King Edward's uncle, Thomas Seymour demanded the governorship of the king’s person and a greater share of power. Somerset tried to buy his brother off with a barony, an appointment to the Lord Admiralship *(which he stripped from John Dudley)*, and a seat on the Privy Council—but Thomas was bent on scheming for power. He began smuggling pocket money to King Edward, telling him that Somerset held the purse strings too tight, making him a "beggarly king". He also urged him to throw off the Protector within two years and "bear rule as other kings do"; but Edward, schooled to defer to the Council, failed to co-operate. In April, using Edward’s support to circumvent Somerset’s opposition, Thomas Seymour secretly married Henry VIII's widow Catherine Parr, whose Protestant household included the 11-year-old Lady Jane Grey and the 13-year-old Princess Elizabeth.

*This is an entertaining video about Thomas, Catherine Parr Seymour and Princess Elizabeth*: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=u2G6fq3EADM>

In summer 1548, a pregnant Catherine Parr discovered Thomas Seymour embracing Princess Elizabeth. As a result, Elizabeth was removed from Catherine Parr's household and transferred to Sir Anthony Denny's. That September, Catherine Parr died in childbirth, and Thomas Seymour promptly resumed his attentions to Elizabeth by letter, planning to marry her. Elizabeth was receptive, but, like Edward, unready to agree to anything unless permitted by the Council. In January 1549, the Council had Thomas Seymour arrested on various charges, including embezzlement at the Bristol mint. King Edward, whom Seymour was accused of planning to marry to Lady Jane Grey, himself testified about the pocket money. Most importantly, Thomas Seymour had sought to officially receive the governorship of King Edward, as no earlier Lord Protectors, unlike Somerset, had ever held both functions. Lack of clear evidence for treason ruled out a trial, so Seymour was condemned instead by an Act of Attainder and beheaded on 20 March 1549.

War

Somerset’s only undoubted skill was as a soldier, which he had proven on expeditions to Scotland and in the defence of Boulogne-sur-Mer in 1546. From the first, his main interest as Protector was the war against Scotland. After a crushing victory at the Battle of Pinkie Cleugh in September 1547, he set up a network of garrisons in Scotland, stretching as far north as Dundee. His initial successes, however, were followed by a loss of direction, as his aim of uniting the realms through conquest became increasingly unrealistic. The Scots allied with France, who sent reinforcements for the defence of Edinburgh in 1548, while Mary, Queen of Scots was removed to France, where she was betrothed to the dauphin. The cost of maintaining the Protector's massive armies and his permanent garrisons in Scotland also placed an unsustainable burden on the royal finances. A French attack on Boulogne in August 1549 at last forced Somerset to begin a withdrawal from Scotland.

Rebellion

During 1548, England was subject to social unrest. *Remember that our young John Seymour was a 13 year old orphan boy at this time in Sawbridgeworth.* After April 1549, a series of armed revolts broke out, fuelled by various religious and agrarian grievances. The two most serious rebellions, which required major military intervention to put down, were in Devon and Cornwall and in Norfolk. The first, sometimes called the Prayer Book Rebellion, arose mainly from the imposition of church services in English, and the second, led by a tradesman called Robert Kett, mainly from the encroachment of landlords on common grazing ground. A complex aspect of the social unrest was that the protestors believed they were acting legitimately against enclosing landlords with the Protector's support, convinced that the landlords were the lawbreakers.

The same justification for outbreaks of unrest was voiced throughout the country, not only in Norfolk and the west. The origin of the popular view of Somerset as sympathetic to the rebel cause lies partly in his series of sometimes liberal, often contradictory, proclamations, and partly in the uncoordinated activities of the commissions he sent out in 1548 and 1549 to investigate grievances about loss of tillage, encroachment of large sheep flocks on common land, and similar issues. Somerset's commissions were led by an evangelical M.P. called John Hales, whose socially liberal rhetoric linked the issue of enclosure with Reformation theology and the notion of a godly commonwealth. Local groups often assumed that the findings of these commissions entitled them to act against offending landlords themselves. King Edward wrote in his Chronicle that the 1549 risings began "because certain commissions were sent down to pluck down enclosures".

Whatever the popular view of Somerset, the disastrous events of 1549 were taken as evidence of a colossal failure of government, and the Council laid the responsibility at the Protector's door. In July 1549, Paget wrote to Somerset: "Every man of the council have misliked your proceedings ... would to God, that, at the first stir you had followed the matter hotly, and caused justice to be ministered in solemn fashion to the terror of others ...". By that autumn, plans were afoot to eject Somerset as Protector. *It looks like according to Paget, who had also been an advisor of Henry VIII’s, that Edward was just too nice a guy……*

Fall of Somerset

The sequence of events that led to Somerset's removal from power has often been called a coup d'état. By 1 October, Somerset had been alerted that his rule faced a serious threat. He issued a proclamation calling for assistance, took possession of the king's person, and withdrew for safety to the fortified Windsor Castle, where Edward wrote, "Me thinks I am in prison". Meanwhile, a united Council published details of Somerset's government mismanagement. They made clear that the Protector's power came from them, not from Henry VIII's will. On 11 October, the Council had Somerset arrested and brought the king to Richmond. Edward summarised the charges against Somerset in his Chronicle: "ambition, vainglory, entering into rash wars in mine youth, negligent looking on Newhaven, enriching himself of my treasure, following his own opinion, and doing all by his own authority, etc." In February 1550, John Dudley, Earl of Warwick, emerged as the leader of the Council and, in effect, as Somerset's successor. Although Somerset was released from the Tower and restored to the Council, he was executed for felony in January 1552 after scheming to overthrow Dudley's regime. Edward noted his uncle's death in his Chronicle: "the duke of Somerset had his head cut off upon Tower Hill between eight and nine o'clock in the morning".

Historians contrast the efficiency of Somerset's takeover of power, in which they detect the organising skills of allies such as Paget, the "master of practices", with the subsequent ineptitude of his rule. By autumn 1549, his costly wars had lost momentum, the crown faced financial ruin, and riots and rebellions had broken out around the country. Until recent decades, Somerset's reputation with historians was high, in view of his many proclamations that appeared to back the common people against a rapacious landowning class. More recently, however, he has often been portrayed as an arrogant ruler, devoid of the political and administrative skills necessary for governing the Tudor state.

He was interred at St. Peter ad Vincula, Tower of London.

Descendants

Edward Seymour and his first wife Catherine Fillol had two sons:

John, b 1527, *or 1518, which is a frustratingly big gap*; died 19 December 1552 at either 25 or 34,

Edward Seymour, of Berry Pomeroy, Devonshire, England (1529-1593).

*It will be this Edward’s line that eventually becomes Dukes of Somerset, and Marquess of Hertford in 1750.*

“In 1540, Somerset, who was now married to his second wife and had become the Earl of Hertford, obtained this grant:

Grant to the earl of Hertford that the lands he now holds in fee simple may descend as follows:—The manors of Mochelney, Drayton, Westhover, Yerneshill, Camell, Downehed, Kylcombe, and Fyffec, Soms., to the heirs male of himself and lady Anne, his wife, or any future wife he may have; with contingent remainders in tail male to Edward Seymour, his son by his late wife, Katharine, dec., one of the daughters of Sir Wm. Fylolle, dec., to Henry Seymour, brother of the Earl, and to Sir Thos. Seymour, youngest brother of the Earl; with remainder to heirs female of the Earl's body; with remainder to the right heirs of the said Edward Seymour. All other his possessions which he has or hereafter may hold to be judged to descend in the same manner.

Under the terms of the grant, Edward, Somerset's second son by Katherine, would inherit only if Hertford left no male heirs by his second or any subsequent wife. John was cut out altogether.

It is not until later that writers would explicitly accuse Katherine of adultery. Peter Heylyn, writing in the seventeenth century, had this explanation for the disinheritance of Hertford's offspring by his first wife:

Concerning which there goes a story, that the Earl having been formerly employed in France, did there acquaint himself with a Learned man, supposed to have great skill in Magics: of whom he obtained, by great rewards and importunities, to let him see, by the help of some Magical perspective, in what Estate all his Relations stood at home. In which impertinent curiosity, he was so far satisfied, as to behold a Gentleman of his acquaintance, in a more familiar posture with his wife, than was agreeable to the Honour of either Party. To which Diabolical illusion he is said to have given so much credit, that he did not only estrange himself from her society at his coming home, but furnished his next wife with an excellent opportunity for pressing him to the disinheriting of his former Children.” <http://www.susanhigginbotham.com/subpages/maritaledwardseymour.html>

*Here’s my attempt at translating this olde English: Edward was a superstitious guy, as am I sometimes too, by the way, and while he was working in France went to see a mystic who saw in his crystal ball a vision of some guy that Edward knew having sex Catherine. He so strongly believed in this vision that he went home and disowned his wife, and gave Stanhope an opening to manipulate him into disinheriting his first two sons as well. Let’s keep in mind that this is a story written by some guy a hundred years later, and we’re not given any clue as to why we’re supposed to believe it, but it’s out there, and we should at least consider it. Maybe the truth is that while he was working in France is actually when Sir John and Catherine conceived our John, and when he got home found her pregnant. It’s just as believable. Let’s continue with Susan Higginbotham’s little story about our family:*

“A tawdrier explanation can be found in this marginal note that appears in Vincent's Baronage in the College of Arms: "repudiata quia pater ejus post nuptias eam cognovit." This note, which older sources like the Complete Peerage preferred to leave discreetly untranslated, suggests that Katherine had committed adultery with her own father-in-law, John Seymour. Nothing else, however, supports the story that Katherine and her father-in-law were lovers. It is noteworthy that John Seymour did have an illegitimate son, John, who may have been confused with Katherine's son John, thereby giving rise to the report that the elder John Seymour had fathered Katherine's child.

Modern writers, even authors of nonfiction, have improved upon the bare allegation of incest. Alison Weir in The Six Wives of Henry VIII writes that "the scandal had shocked even Henry VIII's courtiers," while Elizabeth Norton in her biography of Jane Seymour states that the relationship between Edward Seymour and his father "would have been irreparably damaged" and that society would have "shied away from any alliance with" the Seymour family. Joanna Denny in her peculiar biography of Anne Boleyn writes of "the great scandal that attached to the Seymour name." None of these writers give any sources for their statements. In fact, there is no contemporary evidence of hostility between John Seymour and his son, no evidence that Somerset's marital difficulties excited any interest at Henry VIII's court at the time, and no evidence that the Seymour family was shunned. Far from being a pariah at court, Somerset enjoyed increasing royal favor throughout the 1520's, long before his sister Jane came to Henry VIII's attention. Thus, while Katherine Fillol may have been unfaithful to her husband, or at least may have been thought by him to have been unfaithful, there is no contemporary evidence to support the later story that her sexual partner was her father-in-law.

Nothing seems to be known about Katherine after her father made his will. By March 9, 1535, when the couple were given a grant of land, Somerset had married his second wife, Anne. It is said in various places that Somerset divorced Katherine, but there are no records of such a proceeding. More likely, Katherine had simply died, leaving Somerset free to remarry.

Somerset did not entirely throw off his sons by Katherine. Accounts from 1536 and 1537 refer to a "Mr. Edward" who was delivered to the Prior of Sempringham and who received a coat, hose, and a doublet, and to a "Mr. John Seymour," who was supplied with money for a winter coat and other necessaries, for "necessaries against Christmas," and for "necessaries against Easter." (It may be, however, that the John referred to was Somerset's illegitimate brother, not his son by Katherine.)

More is known, naturally, about the two men as adults. John Seymour represented Wooton Bassett in Parliament. He is often said to have accompanied his father to prison in the Tower in 1551; in fact, the John Seymour who was imprisoned was Somerset's illegitimate brother. The younger John took advantage of his father's execution in 1552 to attempt to recover lands of his mother that Somerset had sold without her assent. He was successful, but he did not live long to enjoy them. He died in December 1552, unmarried and childless. In his short will, witnessed by his recently pardoned uncle John, he left the bulk of his property to his brother Edward:

That I John Seymor hath and doth give and bequeathe thes p[ar]celles and somes of money as followith /. In primis I give and bequeathe to Mastres Yonge for her paynes taken with me vjli xiijs iiijd /. Item I give and bequeathe to Mystres Alice for her paynes taken with me vjli xiijs iiijd /. Item I give and bequethe unto Thomas Wright my boye xxs /. Item I give and bequeathe unto Nicholas Skynner my s[e]rv[a]unte twentie poundes /. Item I give and bequethe unto Mother Yonge fourtie shillinges /. Item I give to Richard Whytney the lease of Bridgenorth and of Clarley and of Bevyngton which is all but on lease of the kinge / and also I give hym the lease callyd Seynt Mary Lande of Martley /. Item I give to Thomas Bydyll three poundes / Also I make my brother Sir Edwarde Seymor thelder my full Executour and I give hym all my landes and goodes that is unbequeathed he to paie and discharge all my debtes

Witnesses Richard Corbet. John Skynner / John Seymor

John Seymour was buried at Savoy hospital.

Edward Seymour accompanied his father to Scotland in 1547 and was knighted there. He also gained by his father's death; in June 1553, he was granted a number of lands, including Berry Pomeroy in Devon. He married Jane Walsh and died in 1593, a prosperous man. Although he had only one son, another Edward, that was enough to mean that in the eighteenth century , the dukedom of Somerset would pass to his descendants. Two hundred years after Katherine Fillol had been put aside by her husband, her descendants had been restored to their rightful inheritance.”

*Now on to 13x great grandma Catherine Fillol*

**Catherine Fillol** <http://wapedia.mobi/en/Catherine_Fillol>

“Catherine Fillol (born c. 1507) was the daughter and co-heiress of Sir William Fillol, of Woodlands, Horton, Dorset, and of Fillol's Hall, Essex

She became before 1519, *at the age of 12*, the first wife of Edward Seymour, who went on to become the first Duke of Somerset of a new creation, Lord Protector of England and the uncle of King Edward VI, after his sister Jane married King Henry VIII. Seymour's own marriage to Fillol was annulled before the rise in the Seymours' fortunes, when it was alleged that she was having an affair with his father, Sir John Seymour. The marriage was annulled, around 1535, and Seymour married secondly Anne Stanhope. Catherine is rumoured to have gone to a local convent. *The timing here is very important. Note that the marriage was annulled in 1535, the same year that our John was born, and while she was rumoured to have been in a convent.*

Catherine had two sons, John Seymour (buried 19 December 1552), who died unmarried and without issue *(in the Tower just after Edward was executed)*, and Edward Seymour. It is unclear when she died, with some sources giving the date as 1535, when she was only around twenty-eight years old and others stating 1552, the same year that her former husband was executed for treason. *It’s a reasonable question to wonder why the daughter and co-heiress of Sir William Fillol, of Woodlands, Horton, Dorset, and of Fillol's Hall, Essex, just disappeared without a trace. It’s not as though she were some peasant kid. The key here is the 1535 date, though. Also recall that Edward is the Lord of Hertford, in the county of Hertfordshire where our John was raised, and apparently had no parents according to extensive records searches by genealogists.*

Edward Seymour had seven more children by his second wife *(recall the story of Anne Stanhope in the Foreword)*, including his heir Edward Seymour *(so he had two sons named Edward, which is confusing. In fact, I sometimes have a hard time following all of the names and titles, which is why I’m constantly adding explanatory notes)*. When he was later created Duke of Somerset, his children by his first marriage were still considered illegitimate, but the patent of nobility provides that the dukedom is to descend first to his heirs by Anne, and only in the event of the failure of that line to his heirs by Catherine. However, Fillol was the ancestress of the Seymour Baronets of Berry Pomeroy Castle, who in 1750 inherited the Dukedom of Somerset, according to the planned reversion, so that her descendants include the present Duke.”

*So, Catherine’s sons ended up inheriting everything 200 years later when Edward’s second wife’s line came to an end. Interesting that his second wife, Anne Stanhope, was the granddaughter of King Edward III, and therefore a more beneficial pairing for him.*

*Let’s take a look at Thomas Seymour, who was easily the most ambitious of the lot, and that’s saying something:*

<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Thomas_Seymour,_1st_Baron_Seymour_of_Sudeley>



**“Sir Thomas Seymour, 1st Baron Seymour of Sudeley** KG (c. 1508 – 20 March 1549) was an English politician.

Early years

Seymour was a son of Sir John Seymour and the former Margery Wentworth. Sir John and Lady Seymour had eight surviving children; the eldest was Edward Seymour, 1st Duke of Somerset, the second, Thomas. He was an older brother of Jane Seymour, the third Queen consort of King Henry VIII of England and mother of Edward VI. After the death of that king, Thomas Seymour married Henry VIII's sixth wife and widow, Catherine Parr.”

*This is an important difference between our line, which includes the current Duke of Somerset, John Michael Seymour, and the line of Edward and Thomas. Their mother, Margery Wentworth includes the Cheney family, as her grandmother was Elizabeth Cheney. Hmmmmmmm. One must understand the US presidency of George Bush II and Vice President Cheney to understand my scepticism here, but the blind ambition displayed by Sir John and Margery’s children might be explained this way. It appears that Catherine Fillol’s line has a bit more integrity, but of course, I’m biased.*

“Thomas spent his childhood in Wulfhall, outside Savernake Forest, in Wiltshire. Historian David Starkey describes Thomas thus: 'tall, well-built and with a dashing beard and auburn hair, he was irresistible to women'. A prominent Tudor courtier, Sir Nicholas Throckmorton, described Thomas Seymour as 'hardy, wise and liberal...fierce in courage, courtly in fashion, in personage stately, in voice magnificent, but somewhat empty of matter'.

Family's royal connection through marriage

The Seymour family's power grew during Henry VIII's marriage to Anne Boleyn, to whom Jane became a lady in waiting. As Anne failed to give King Henry a son, the Seymour brothers saw an opportunity to push their sister Jane in the King's direction. Henry married Jane eleven days after Anne's execution in May 1536 (*in the Wikipedia account, the same day, or the day after)*, and she gave birth to their son and only child (*future King Edward VI)* in October of the following year.”

*Here again, the timing is important, the year after Catherine Fillol was secreted away to a convent after having an affair with Sir John. It was rumoured that the affair was discovered due to Catherine’s pregnancy which occurred while Edward was away.....*

“It was the elder brother, Edward Seymour, who benefited most from his sister's marriage to the King. Historians have speculated whether the division between Edward and Thomas began at that time, as Thomas unsurprisingly began to resent his brother and the relationship between them began to dissolve. Although Thomas was named Lord High Admiral, he was consumed by jealousy of his brother's power and influence.

In 1543, John Nevill, 3rd Baron Latymer, died leaving a wealthy widow, formerly Catherine Parr. An attachment then developed between Catherine and Thomas. Unfortunately for Thomas, Henry VIII also became interested in Catherine and eventually married her, having been impressed with her dignity and intelligence. Jealous of Seymour's attentions to Catherine, the King sent Thomas away on a diplomatic mission to the Netherlands.

**Henry VIII died in January 1547**, leaving Catherine one of the wealthiest women in England. Thomas had been made Master-General of the Ordnance in 1544 and Lord Warden of the Cinque Ports in 1545. He returned to court a few months before Henry's death and saw his brother Edward become Lord Protector of England and, in effect, ruler of the realm as Regent for his nephew, Henry VIII's minor son and successor, the short-lived Edward VI. As part of an 'unfulfilled gifts clause' left unmentioned in Henry's will, Thomas was granted the title Baron Seymour of Sudeley. However, Thomas' fervent desire was to unseat and replace his brother as Lord Protector.

Though Thomas Seymour's name had been linked to Mary Howard, Duchess of Richmond, he was still unmarried at the time of the King's death. One view is that Thomas schemed to marry either Princess Mary or Princess Elizabeth, Henry VIII's daughters by his first two marriages, and there were rumours that he attempted to pursue a relationship with Elizabeth, still in her early teens. If he hoped for such a marriage as a route to power, he was unsuccessful, though his secretmarriage to Catherine Parr, Elizabeth's guardian, in late April of 1547 was viewed by some as an attempt to become close to the young princess. Certainly, many regarded this marriage as having occurred too quickly after the King's death. Anne Stanhope, Somerset's proud wife, disliked Catherine and Thomas and began to turn many people in court against them. To demonstrate her hatred, Anne kept the Queen's jewels, which by right were Catherine's.

Princess Elizabeth, Catherine Parr's ward, had gone to live with her stepmother in Chelsea after Henry VIII's death. Thomas, therefore, acquired the guardianship of Elizabeth and also of Lady Jane Grey, another young member of the household. The overly-ambitious Thomas started to make advances toward Elizabeth, sneaking into 'the Lady Elizabeth's chamber before she was ready, and sometimes before she did rise; and if she were up he would bid her good morrow and ask how she did, and strike her upon the back or on the buttocks familiarly....' Thomas, while doing this, was often only partly dressed. He was forty; she was just fourteen. As gossip began to spread, Kat Ashley, Elizabeth's governess, implored Seymour to quit his bedroom antics with the princess. Indignant, Thomas retorted, 'By God's precious soul, I mean no evil, and I will not leave it!' Strange episodes followed as he continued his advances towards Elizabeth. Elizabeth was confused by these affairs. Sometimes she acted as if it were all a game; other times she would become offended. Although Elizabeth's governess at one time averred that the Queen had found Elizabeth in Seymour's arms (implying a sexual encounter or close to it), she later withdrew the story. Catherine did, nevertheless, try to save Elizabeth's reputation by sending her away to the house of Anthony Denny in Hertfordshire. However, when Catherine died in childbirth in August 1548, Thomas renewed his attentions to the Princess.

Thomas also bribed a man called John Fowler, one of King Edward VI's closest servants, from whom he received information that the King frequently complained about the lack of pocket money he received. Thomas smuggled money to the King and began to voice open disapproval of his brother's administrative skills. As Lord High Admiral, he was able to control the English navy, and he openly asked people for support in case of a coup. As admiral, he also encouraged piracy, allowing pirates safe passage in exchange for shares of their booty. He was completely and thoroughly indiscreet in his bid for power.

Thomas seems also to have hoped to finance a coup by bribing the vice-treasurer of the Bristol Mint, Sir William Sharington. Sharington was responsible for debasing the coinage in Bristol and he had been fiddling the account books and keeping the majority of the profit. When Thomas learned of the scheme, he blackmailed Sharington.

Thomas' downfall

By the end of 1548, Thomas' plans had been reported to the Privy Council by an informant. The Bristol Mint was investigated and Sharington revealed all. Somerset attempted to protect his brother and called a council meeting that Thomas was supposed to attend in order to explain his actions. However, Thomas did not appear and developed a plan to kidnap the King.

On the night of the 16th of January, Thomas broke into the King's apartments at Hampton Court Palace. He entered the privy garden and awoke one of the King's pet spaniels. Alerted by the dog, the guards arrested Thomas, and he was sent to the Tower of London.

*Fantastic! Hollywood couldn’t write it any better. Sir Thomas Seymour, Lord High Admiral of one of the largest Navies in the world, was sneaking through the palace garden in the middle of the night in order to kidnap his nephew, King of England, but woke up a spaniel who barked and gave him away, and he got arrested. That’s beautiful.*

On 18 January, the council sent agents to question everyone associated with Thomas, including Princess Elizabeth, who by now was suspected of a sexual relationship with him and even of being pregnant with his child, and possibly of being involved with him in a plot to seize the throne from her half-brother, Edward VI.

On 22 February, the council officially accused him of thirty-three charges of treason. Somerset *(his big brother, in case you’ve lost track)* delayed signing the death warrant, so the council went to Edward VI *(his nephew)* for his signature. On 20 March, Seymour was executed at the Tower, dying 'dangerously, irksomely and horribly.' His daughter by Catherine Parr, Mary Seymour, was placed in the care of the Duchess of Suffolk, Catherine Brandon. Mary should have been left wealthy, but her mother, dying at her birth, had left her entire fortune to Thomas. When Thomas was executed, the crown confiscated everything he had, including Catherine's bequest. The child appears to have died around the age of two, when she disappears from the historical record. The title 'Baron of Sudeley' passed to Catherine Parr's brother, William. *Here again, sorry to be so cynical, but the daughter of the Queen of England just disappears from the historical record?*

It is falsely alleged that upon hearing of his death, Princess Elizabeth remarked, 'Today died a man with much wit and very little judgment.' It seems true, however, that whatever the truth was about her experience with Thomas Seymour, Elizabeth afterwards became considerably more wary in her interactions with men.

*Here’s a short biography of King Edward, King Henry the VIII’s and Jane Seymour’s son. He didn’t really do much during his short life, and didn’t live long enough to become so corrupt. Please excuse the repetition of information previously included.*

<http://www.probertencyclopaedia.com/cgi-bin/res.pl?keyword=Duke+of+Somerset&offset=0>

**“Edward VI was king of England** from 1547 to 1553. He was born in 1537 at Hampton Court and died in 1553. He was the son of Henry VIII by Jane Seymour. Being only nine at his accession a council of regency was formed under his uncle the Earl of Hertford. Edward VI was intellectually precocious (fluent in Greek and Latin, he kept a full journal of his reign) but not physically robust. His short reign was dominated by nobles using the Regency to strengthen their own positions. The King's Council, previously dominated by Henry, succumbed to existing factionalism. On Henry's death, Edward Seymour, Earl of Hertford and soon to be Duke of Somerset, the new King's eldest uncle, became Protector. Edward Seymour was an able soldier; he led a punitive expedition against the Scots, for their failure to fulfill their promise to betroth Mary, Queen of Scots to Edward, which led to Edward Seymour's victory at the Battle of Pinkie Cleugh in 1547 - although he failed to follow this up with satisfactory peace terms.

During Edward VI's reign, the Church of England became more explicitly Protestant - Edward VI himself was fiercely Protestant. The Book of Common Prayer was introduced in 1549, aspects of Roman Catholic practices (including statues and stained glass) were eradicated and the marriage of clergy allowed. The imposition of the Prayer Book (which replaced Latin services with English) led to rebellions in Cornwall and Devon.

*This is actually historically significant. The Seymours played a major role in breaking England away from the Catholic Church and the Pope after Henry VIII got the ball rolling. This single fact changed the course of English, and therefore American and World history.*

Despite his military ability, Edward Seymour was too liberal to deal effectively with Kett's rebellion against land enclosures in Norfolk. Edward Seymour was left isolated in the Council and the Duke of Northumberland subsequently overthrew him in 1551. Edward Seymour was executed in 1552, an event which was briefly mentioned by Edward VI in his diary: 'Today, the Duke of Somerset had his head cut off on Tower Hill.' *Yawn. I guess he was getting used to seeing family members executed by this time. Edward’s oldest son John, with Catherine Fillol, also died just a few months after Edward’s execution at a young age. Very little is known about him, and I think there’s something suspicious about that, and wish that I knew more about why he died so soon after his father, and was never married. Maybe it had something to do with his fathers’ suspicions about his parentage?*

Northumberland took greater trouble to charm and influence Edward VI; his powerful position as Lord President of the Council was based on his personal ascendancy over the King. However, the young King was ailing. Northumberland hurriedly married his son Lord Guilford Dudley to Lady Jane Grey, one of Henry VIII's great-nieces and a claimant to the throne. Edward VI accepted Lady Jane Grey as his heir *(instead of Mary and Elizabeth, who ended up as Queens, and understandably, not big fans of the Seymour family)* and, on his death from tuberculosis *(at age 15, shortly after his uncles had been executed, and under the constant attendance of John Dudley, who some believed to have poisoned the King, but that’s pure unsubstantiated rumor.)* in 1553, Lady Jane Grey assumed the throne.”

*A common trivia question in England: Who was the last Tudor King? That would be Edward VI. Following him was Lady Jane Grey for 9 days, who was pushed into office by the same John Dudley, Duke of Northumberland, who led the Coup to overthrow Edward. Before dying, Edward VI signed papers to install Dudley’s daughter-in-law, Lady Jane Grey onto the throne. While he was off trying to arrest Princess Ann a few days later, he was betrayed by the Council and arrested. He begged for his life and disavowed his protestant beliefs and accepted Catholicism, but was executed anyway. Afterward he was vilified for having plotted for years against Thomas and Edward Seymour, and even the King. During this time Edward Seymour was proclaimed the “Good Duke”, and John Dudley the “Wicked Duke”. Some say he was a convenient scapegoat for the rest of the evildoers, which looks very possible.*

*Just before being executed, and after his wife Catherine Parr died, Thomas Seymour was trying to Marry Lady Jane Grey himself. After Thomas’ execution, Dudley tried to have her married to Edward’s oldest son Edward, but it never panned out.*

*On the whole, to me, it looks like Seymour and Dudley were two of a kind. Two of the top Generals of the day, who were also very ambitious, but weren’t very good politicians. Two of Seymour’s daughters, on Anne Stanhope’s side, were married to Dudley’s sons in attempts to bring peace, but they just couldn’t trust each other, and brought about each others’ destruction, being manipulated by those who* ***were*** *good at politics.*

*In a much smaller way, of course, I was similar, and wonder if such traits are genetic. Although I was the leader on the football field, which is a little like a military environment where performance is the only factor that matters, I was much less successful with corporate politics. At the office, although recognized as extremely competent in my work, I didn’t exactly rise to the top, nor even near it. In the military, as in sports, being liked is very secondary. If you kick ass, you’re number 1. If the other guys don’t like you, at least they respect you, and will do as you say. In the office, I’ve seen a lot of very mediocre performers rise ahead of superior talents due solely to their political skills. I guess the more things change, the more they stay the same……*

*When Lady Grey was dethroned, “Bloody” Mary, for whom the cocktail was named, and granddaughter of Ferdinand and Isabella, and half sister of Edward VI, took over. Lady Jane, and her husband, the son of John Dudley, were both executed. She was only 16 at the time, and died with great dignity. She became a protestant martyr. Mary was queen for only five years, but managed to burn about 300 dissenters at the stake in order to bring back her Catholicism, which Henry VIII, the Seymours and Edward VI had managed to almost shed the country of. When she died in 1558, she was replaced by another of Edward’s half sisters, Elizabeth.*

*Elizabeth I, who spent a year in house arrest during Mary’s reign, ruled for 45 years, and brought back Protestantism to England, this time for good. As the daughter of Anne Boleyn, she was distantly related to the Seymours through the Cheney family, so not related to our branch through Catherine Fillol. Anne Boleyn and Jane Seymour shared a great-grandmother in Elizabeth Cheney.*

<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Elizabeth_I_of_England> *Here we see how she dealt with the huge problem of Catholicism vs. Protestantism, which played a big role in the development of both England and America.*

“Elizabeth and her advisors perceived the threat of a Catholic crusade against heretical England. Elizabeth therefore sought a Protestant solution that would not offend Catholics too greatly while addressing the desires of English Protestants; she would not tolerate the more radical Puritans though, who were pushing for far-reaching reforms. As a result, the parliament of 1559 started to legislate for a church based on the Protestant settlement of Edward VI, with the monarch as its head, but with many Catholic elements, such as priestly vestments.”

*The Puritans then took off for America and Holland. They were even more anti-Catholic, and therefore Elizabeth thought they could create big problems during this period. What she proposed was a softer separation, which in America is the Episcopal Church, which in fact is what my grandparents Westley C. and Leone Dann Seymour practiced. It looks like Richard of Sawbridgeworth left for America seeking more economic opportunities than anything religious, but I’m not sure. When I was reading the history of the Leventhorpes in Sawbridgeworth I saw a letter written by one of them in the 1600’s about trying to escape religious persecution by sailing to France. They were Catholics, and having a hard time. With the Puritans headed to America, it wasn’t the place for Catholics. Anyway, our branch of the Seymour family obviously was never going to be recognized as what they were—Part of the Berry Pomeroy line, and future inheritors of the Dukedom of Somerset in 1750, so off to America where family names were largely meaningless.*

*Here’s a section from the Wikipedia site on Elizabeth I about she and Thomas Seymour-*

“Henry VIII died in 1547, when Elizabeth was 13 years old, and was succeeded by her half brother, Edward VI. Catherine Parr, Henry's last wife, soon married Thomas Seymour of Sudeley, Edward VI's uncle and the brother of the Lord Protector, Edward Seymour, Duke of Somerset. The couple took Elizabeth into their household at Chelsea. There Elizabeth experienced an emotional crisis that some historians believe affected her for the rest of her life. Seymour, approaching age 40 but having charm and "a powerful sex appeal", engaged in romps and horseplay with the 14-year-old Elizabeth. These included entering her bedroom in his nightgown, tickling her and slapping her on the buttocks. Catherine Parr, rather than confront her husband over his inappropriate activities, joined in. Twice she accompanied him in tickling Elizabeth, and once held her while he cut her black gown "into a thousand pieces." However, after Catherine Parr discovered the pair in an embrace, she ended this state of affairs. In May 1548, Elizabeth was sent away.

Thomas Seymour continued scheming to control the royal family. When Catherine Parr died of puerperal fever after childbirth on 5 September 1548, he renewed his attentions towards Elizabeth, intent on wedding her. The details of his former behaviour towards Elizabeth emerged during an interrogation of Catherine Ashley and Thomas Parry, Elizabeth’s cofferer. For his brother and the council, this was the last straw, and in January 1549, Seymour was arrested on suspicion of plotting to marry Elizabeth and overthrow his brother. Elizabeth, living at Hatfield House, would admit nothing. Her stubbornness exasperated her interrogator, Sir Robert Tyrwhitt, who reported, "I do see it in her face that she is guilty". Seymour was beheaded on 20 March 1549.

From the start of Elizabeth's reign, it was expected that she would marry and the question arose whom. She never did, although she received many offers for her hand; the reasons for this are not clear. Historians have speculated that Thomas Seymour had put her off sexual relationships, or that she knew herself to be infertile. She almost married one of John Dudley’s sons, but it didn’t come to be because of political pressures by others who were opposed”

“By 1570, senior figures in the government privately accepted that Elizabeth would never marry or name a successor. William Cecil was already seeking solutions to the succession problem. For this stance, as for her failure to marry, she was often accused of irresponsibility. Elizabeth's silence strengthened her own political security: she knew that if she named an heir, her throne would be vulnerable to a coup.”

*Elizabeth I was the last Tudor monarch. When she dies the throne passed to James Stuart of Scotland. The Seymours were still trying to marry into the royal succession, and for that reason 5 generations of Seymours spent time in the Tower of London. First, of course we’ve already seen what happened to Edward, Thomas, and John, an illegitimate son of Sir John who lived with Edward, and was his trusted advisor and apparently acted as his attorney as well. Now here’s Edward’s 3rdson, oldest surviving with Anne Stanhope, who was also named Edward:*

**“Sir Edward Seymour, 1st Baron Beauchamp of Hache and 1st Earl of Hertford (2nd creation), KG (12 October 1537 – 6 April 1621)** was the son of Edward Seymour, 1st Duke of Somerset, by his second wife Anne Stanhope. <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Edward_Seymour,_1st_Earl_of_Hertford>



Following Somerset's disgrace and execution, his son was also created 1st Earl of Hertford in its second creation, the earldom being recreated for him in 1559 by Queen Elizabeth I, but he lost it again shortly afterwards for secretly marrying Lady Catherine Grey, sister of Lady Jane Grey.

A series of clandestine marriages

His first wife, Lady Catherine, was a potential claimant to Elizabeth's throne, and law established that it was a penal offence for her to marry without notifying the Sovereign. They were married by an anonymous clergyman at Hertford House, Canon Row, before 25 December 1560. The marriage was kept secret until August nearly a year later when Catherine became visibly pregnant and she confided the reason to Lord Robert Dudley *(the Dudleys and the Seymours continue their rivalry)*. Each was ordered to confinement in the Tower; Catherine was confined immediately, and Seymour imprisoned upon his return. While in custody, they were questioned about every aspect of their marriage, but they both claimed to have forgotten the date.

A commission was begun, headed by Archbishop Parker in February 1562. Under this pressure, Lady Catherine finally declared that they had waited for Elizabeth to quit the capital for Eltham Palace. Servants were questioned, and none of them could remember the exact date either. John Fortescue said it was 'in November'. The priest could not be located, but by consulting the accounts of the Cofferer of the Household the marriage date was decided to be 27 November. His son Edward was declared illegitimate and the father was fined 15,000 pounds in Star Chamber for "seducing a virgin of the blood royal."

Despite all this, the Earl apparently found a way to continue marital relations with his wife in the Tower. In February 1563, Thomas Seymour was born. Lady Catherine died in 1568, and Seymour was finally allowed out of the Tower and allowed to re-appear at court. Officially his sons remained bastards.

His eldest son was Edward Seymour, Viscount Beauchamp (1561–1612) whose son William Seymour, 2nd Duke of Somerset was imprisoned for secretly marrying Arbella Stuart *(see below)*. In fact, Edward, William, and William's elder brother, another Edward, were all, at various times, considered possible matches for Arbella.

In 1582, he married his second wife, Frances Howard. Their union was in secret, and remained a secret for nearly a decade, with Frances serving as a gentlewoman of the Privy Chamber. Hertford attempted to have this marriage set aside in 1595 (hoping to clear his still illegitimate sons' claim to the throne). He was arrested again, and Frances died in 1598.

May 1601, he secretly married once more, to a widow named Frances Prannell (born, interestingly enough, Frances Howard).”

<http://en.wikisource.org/wiki/Seymour,_Edward_(1539%3F-1621)_(DNB00)> Some further interesting information on Stanhope’s Edward.

“On the outbreak of the plague he was removed from the Tower in August 1563, and placed under custody of his mother and her second husband, Francis Newdigate, at Hanworth. But owing to John Hales's published assertion of his wife's claim to the royal succession [see Hales, John, (d. 1571), and Seymour, Catherine] he was, on 26 May 1564, committed to the custody of Sir John Mason [q. v.] The death of his wife on 27 Jan. 1567–8 relieved Hertford to some extent of the royal displeasure; he was released late in the same year, **but was kept in easy confinement in various country houses until 1571** (Wilts Arch. Mag. xv. 153; but cf. Notes and Queries, 8th ser. vii. 422–3).” *Probably just coincidence, but there seem to be so many. Here we see that the half brother of our John of Sawbo, who was then Earl of Hertford, was finally freed at the same time that John seems to have started receiving some help from Dorothy Seymour and Sir Leventhorpe. I guess that Dorothy and Leventhorp would need his permission, as leader of the clan, to do anything like that. After spending so much time imprisoned,and having his son born there, Edward might have been feeling a little sympathetic towards his half brother’s difficult existence in Sawbridgeworth with a family and struggling along as a cobbler.*

“Warned by experience, Hertford henceforth lived as quietly as possible. On 30 Aug. 1571 he was created M.A. of Cambridge, and on 2 Feb. 1571–2 was admitted a member of Gray's Inn. In 1578 he was placed on the commission for the peace in Wiltshire, and in the following year was joint commissioner for musters in the same shire. But he again incurred Elizabeth's wrath in November 1595 by renewing the petition to have the declaration of the invalidity of his marriage set aside, and was once more committed to the Tower (cf. Cal. State Papers, Dom. 1595, p. 121; ib. Addenda, 1580–1625, pp. 406–8). He was released on 3 Jan. following. On 29 May 1602 he was made lord lieutenant of Somerset and Wiltshire, and in June 1603 custos rotulorum of the latter shire. On 19 April 1605 he was sent as ambassador-extraordinary to Brussels. On 28 June 1608 he was reappointed lord-lieutenant of Somerset and Wiltshire, and from June 1612 to March 1619 was high steward of the revenues to Queen Anne. In January 1620–1 he attended parliament (D'EWES, Autobiogr. p. 170). He died on 6 April 1621, and was buried with his first wife in Salisbury Cathedral, where a magnificent monument was erected to his memory. A portrait engraved from it is given in Doyle's ‘Official Baronage.’”

*Let’s see what the 2nd Duke of Somerset was up to at this time. Remember, he’s not in our line, but also through Edward and Anne Stanhope.*

<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/William_Seymour,_2nd_Duke_of_Somerset>

Sir William Seymour, 2nd Duke of Somerset, KG (1588 – 24 October 1660) was an English nobleman and Royalist commander in the English Civil War.



Seymour was the grandson of Edward Seymour, 1st Earl of Hertford *(2nd creation, so great grandson of the Protector)* and Catherine Grey, which thus gave him a distant claim to the throne through the latter's descent from Mary Tudor, younger sister of King Henry VIII of England. His parents were Edward Seymour, Lord Beauchamp of Hache, and Honora Rogers. William was the great-grandson of the first Duke of Somerset.

Secret Marriage

He married, firstly, Arbella Stuart, daughter of Charles Stuart, 1st Earl of Lennox and Elizabeth Cavendish, on 22 June 1610, in a secret marriage at Greenwich.

Arbella was thirteen years his senior, and the marriage was disapproved of by King James I of England - the marriage of two potential Tudor pretenders to the throne, who were fourth and sixth in line to the English throne, could only be seen as a threat to the ruling dynasty. As a result, William was condemned to life imprisonment in the Tower of London (thus becoming the fourth of five generations of Seymours to spend time in the Tower).

In June of 1611, he escaped from the Tower, planning to meet up with Arbella, who also had escaped captivity. They were to flee to the Continent, but bad weather and other circumstances prevented their meeting, and Arbella was recaptured. While she herself was placed in the Tower, William managed to reach safety abroad at Ostend. Arbella remained there until her death in 1615, without ever being reunited with her husband.

Family

Seymour married, secondly, Lady Frances Devereux, daughter of Robert Devereux, 2nd Earl of Essex and Frances Walsingham, daughter of Francis Walsingham, on 3 March 1616 at Drayton Bassett, and had seven children:

Earl of Hertford

Seymour, who succeeded his grandfather as Earl of Hertford in 1621 *(while our Richard was living in Sawbo as a young man)*, became a prominent member of the opposition to King Charles I in the House of Lords, supporting the Petition of Right of 1628, and co-signing the letter of the 12 Peers of 1640, along with his brother-in-law the Earl of Essex.

However, Hertford parted company with the more radical opponents of the King in the Long Parliament in 1641, and was created Marquess of Hertford by the King. In the Civil War, Hertford, along with such figures as Sir Edward Hyde, was a moderate royalist, and throughout sought a compromise settlement, continuing unofficial negotiations with his brother-in-law Essex, who became the Parliamentary commander, throughout the war. He was nevertheless a trusted supporter of the King, who made him guardian of his son the Prince of Wales, and who undertook several important military commands in royalist service over the course of the war, commanding troops from South Wales *(near Penhow)*.

After the end of the First Civil War and the King's imprisonment, Hertford was the most prominent nobleman to remain alongside the king throughout his captivity, and was with him up until his execution in 1649. During the Interregnum, Hertford largely kept himself away from both politics and royalist conspiracies, believing that the monarchy would be restored given time, and that conspiracies would only delay the restoration.

When the Restoration came in 1660, Hertford was restored to all his former positions, and his services in the Royalist cause were further recognised by Charles II who restored Hertford to his great-grandfather's dukedom of Somerset which had been forfeited in 1552. He died at Essex House, London and was buried on 1 November 1660 at Great Bedwyn, Wiltshire. He was succeeded by his grandson William Seymour.

*Well that covers many, but by no means all of the major players in the Tudor-Seymour tangled mess. Five generations of Seymours would spend time in the Tower, thrown in there by the Tudors and then the Stuarts for trying to marry and procreate their way onto the throne. Following is a little history on this “Tower” that has been mentioned so much in our family history:*

Sketch in 1597

The Tower with the River Thames and Tower Bridge to the south. The outer curtain walls were erected in the 13th century.

Interior of the innermost ward. To the right is the 11th-century White Tower; the structure at the end of the walkway to the left is Wakefield Tower. Beyond that can be seen Traitors' Gate.

*I once missed a connecting flight between Zurich and Abu Dhabi going through London, and had to spend the night. I immediately hopped on the Tube (“please mind the gap”) and went down to the Tower for the tour. There were maybe only 20 tourists on that cold winter day, and the tour guide asked 2-3 of us our surnames, including me. When I told him Seymour, he got a kind of look on his face, and told me that I, indeed had a couple of relatives here, and told some of the story of Edward and Thomas. This was before I knew the whole history, and couldn’t really appreciate it as much.*

[*http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Tower\_of\_London*](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Tower_of_London)

“Her Majesty's Royal Palace and Fortress, more commonly known as the Tower of London, is a historic castle on the north bank of the River Thames in central London, England. It lies within the London Borough of Tower Hamlets, separated from the eastern edge of the City of London by the open space known as Tower Hill. It was founded towards the end of 1066 as part of the Norman Conquest of England. The White Tower, which gives the entire castle its name, was built by William the Conqueror in 1078, and was a resented symbol of oppression, inflicted upon London by the new ruling elite. The castle was used as a prison since at least 1100, although that was not its primary purpose. A grand palace early in its history, it served as a royal residence. As a whole, the Tower is a complex of several buildings set within two concentric rings of defensive walls and a moat. There were several phases of expansion, mainly under Kings Richard the Lionheart, Henry III, and Edward I in the 12th and 13th centuries. The general layout established by the late 13th century remains despite later activity on the site.

The Tower of London has played a prominent role in English history. It was besieged several times and controlling it has been important to controlling the country. The Tower has served variously as an armoury, a treasury, a menagerie, the home of the Royal Mint, a public records office, and the home of the Crown Jewels of the United Kingdom. From the early 14th century until the reign of Charles II, a procession would be led from the Tower to Westminster Abbey on the coronation of a monarch. In the absence of the monarch, the Constable of the Tower is in charge of the castle. This was a powerful and trusted position in the medieval period. In the late 15th century the castle was the prison of the Princes in the Tower. Under the Tudors, the Tower became used less as a royal residence, and despite attempts to refortify and repair the castle its defenses lagged behind developments to deal with artillery.

The peak period of the castle's use as a prison was the 16th and 17th centuries, when many figures fallen into disgrace, such as Elizabeth I before she became queen, were held within its walls. This use has led to the phrase "sent to the Tower". Despite its enduring reputation as a place of torture and death, popularized by 16th-century religious propagandists and 19th-century writers, only seven people were executed within the Tower before the World Wars of the 20th century. Executions were more commonly held on the notorious Tower Hill to the north of the castle, with 112 occurring there over a 400-year period *(only 2 Seymours, glad to report, although many more spent time in the Tower)*. In the latter half of the 19th century, institutions such as the Royal Mint moved out of the castle to other locations, leaving many buildings empty. Anthony Salvin and John Taylor took the opportunity to restore the Tower to what was felt to be its medieval appearance, clearing out many of the vacant post-medieval structures. In the First and Second World Wars, the Tower was again used as a prison, and witnessed the executions of 12 men for espionage. After the wars, damage caused during the Blitz was repaired and the castle reopened to the public. Today the Tower of London is one of the country's most popular tourist attractions. It is cared for by the charity Historic Royal Palaces and is protected as a World Heritage Site.”

*There’s a lot of circumstantial evidence supporting the possible motives for keeping the birth of John a secret over in Sawbridgeworth, and the basic decency of Edward which would support his looking after him in at least a minor way, such as passing along the seal with family crest, and his living at Pishiobury, even though any documentary evidence of his relationship couldn’t be allowed to exist. Let’s move on to Herts County and Pishiobury Manor and learn why that connection is important.*