

Lady Jane Grey- the Forgotten Tudor



Sandy Leong told the story of Lady Jane Grey, the forgotten Tudor in October's meeting. She was born in October 1537 at Bradgate House situated in the deer park familiar to most people in Leicestershire and where a million people a year now visit. Her mother was the daughter of Henry VIII's sister Mary and so had a strong link to the line of succession. In the same month Henry VIII's third wife, Jane Seymour, gave birth to a son Edward and Jane's ambitious parents dreamed one day Lady Jane Grey would be queen, wife of Edward VI.

Jane lived at Bradgate until she was nine, her parents were not loving and she immersed herself in her studies and became known as a scholar. She left to live with Princess Elizabeth in Katherine Parr's household to learn the ways of high society. Following the funeral of Katherine Parr (then married to Thomas Seymour) when Jane, aged 11, was chief mourner, she returned to Bradgate to live with her parents and two sisters again.

Jane and Edward were educated together at Syon House in London until she was 12 when she returned to Bradgate for about three years. Sadly Jane was surrounded by scheming and ambitious men who had no interest in her wishes and it was arranged for her to marry Lord Guildford Dudley. Thomas Seymour persuaded the dying young King Edward to nominate Jane as first in the line of succession giving the Duke of Northumberland (and father of Dudley) an opportunity to present the reluctant 16-year-old Jane to the people of London as their queen. Few people in England knew anything about Jane and anyway their loyalty lay with Mary, daughter of Henry VIII and Catherine of Aragon. Jane was taken to the Tower of London, originally to prepare for her coronation but the people had chosen Mary for their queen and so Jane, the 9 days Queen was executed with her husband Dudley in 1554.

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