



*The Queen's House before
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and Greenwich Palace, 1447-1453*

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Abstract: Almost two hundred years before Inigo Jones completed the Queen's House for Henrietta Maria at Greenwich, another French-born queen consort of England had established the first queenly household there. In 1447, Margaret of Anjou acquired the riverside residence of Humphrey, Duke of Gloucester, on what is now the site of the Old Royal Naval College. Over the next five years, the Queen commissioned a substantial programme of building works at the site, which transformed the existing manor house into a royal palace. Margaret's reputation and exercise of power have been widely discussed, yet little consideration has been given to her building activities, and their broader implications for our understanding of her gender role as consort. Through its examination of the location, layout, and design of Margaret's palace, this article sheds new light on the ways in which the Queen deployed the built environment to articulate her power and status. More broadly, it contributes to scholarship on royal women's patronage and curation of domestic space, and that concerning the role of queens as agents of cultural transfer.

Keywords: Margaret of Anjou; Greenwich Palace; Wars of the Roses; Domestic Space; Gender; Female Patronage; Cultural Transfer



On the ninth of April 1445, a seasick teenage girl arrived on the shores of Portchester in Hampshire following a turbulent journey across the English Channel. By the end of the month, she had recovered and married Henry VI in Titchfield Abbey. The young Queen then travelled to Blackheath on the outskirts of London, where she was greeted by Henry's uncle, Humphrey, Duke of Gloucester, and 500 of his liveried retainers ahead of her coronation.¹ From the elevated heights of Blackheath, the Queen and her company descended towards the neighbouring settlement of Greenwich where Duke Humphrey's riverside palace, which was named Bella Court and later the Palace of Pleasaunce or *Placentia* on account of its splendid appearance, stood. The route most likely taken by the party was through the Duke's deer park, the undulating terrain of which offered

¹ For Humphrey, Duke of Gloucester, see: G. L. Harriss, "Humphrey [Humfrey or Humphrey of Lancaster], duke of Gloucester [called Good Duke Humphrey] (1390–1447)," *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, doi:10.1093/ref:odnb/14155.

advantageous views onto both the palace below and the London skyline on the approach.² The sight that greeted the company must have been spectacular: still today, the stark contrast between the high ground and steep escarpment to the south of Greenwich and the low-lying river terraces to the north makes for a distinctive topography, forming the only hill on the eastern approach to London, which offers far-reaching views across the city. This was the Queen's first glimpse of the place that she would call home in the coming years, and of the residence that would later become her own. Perhaps it was this very moment that ignited her love of Greenwich and informed her decision to make the residence her own following Humphrey's death two years later, the subject on which this article will focus.

Margaret of Anjou

Margaret of Anjou is one of the most famous, or rather, infamous, queens in English History. Criticised by contemporary chroniclers and posthumously referred to as a she-wolf by William Shakespeare, Margaret's reputation was long tarnished in subsequent historiography due to her politically active role in the conflict now known as the Wars of the Roses.³ Born and raised in the French province of Anjou, Margaret was the second eldest daughter of Isabella, Duchess of Lorraine, and René, Duke of Anjou and titular king of Naples, Sicily, and Jerusalem. During her father's long absences, Margaret was educated by several prominent and influential women, most notably her mother, who ruled the Duchy of Lorraine when René was imprisoned, and her paternal grandmother Yolande of Aragon, a formidable and educated woman who acted as regent on behalf of her son, and who was regarded by her contemporaries as a skilled politician.⁴

The match between Margaret and Henry VI was devised to bring peace between England and France, but when Margaret arrived in England in 1445 she could have hardly imagined that she was soon to become a central player in a series of conflicts fought on English soil. Not long after Margaret's arrival and coronation it became clear that Henry, who had become king when he was merely a boy but was by this point a grown man, lacked the mental capacity to rule. In response to her husband's ineffectual rulership and the threat posed to the Crown from the house of York, Margaret stepped into the limelight to play a leading role in the conflict. After many years of warfare, negotiations, and ever-shifting fortunes, Margaret's Lancastrian army met their final defeat at the Battle of Tewkesbury in 1471, when

² Amanda Richardson, "Greenwich's First Royal Landscape: The Lost Palace and Park of Humphrey of Gloucester," *Southern History* 34 (2012): 53.

³ For a discussion of the historiography on Margaret's character, see: Diana Dunn, "Margaret of Anjou: Monster Queen or Dutiful Wife?," *Medieval History* 4 (1994): 199–212; and Imogene Dudley, "She-Wolf or Feminist Heroine? Representations of Margaret of Anjou in Modern History and Literature," in *Remembering Queens and Kings of Early Modern England and France: Reputation, Reinterpretation, and Reincarnation*, ed. Estelle Paranque (Cham: Palgrave Macmillan, 2019), 199–218.

⁴ For Yolande of Aragon, see: Zita Eva Rohr, *Yolande of Aragon (1381-1442) Family and Power: The Reverse of the Tapestry* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2016).

her son and long-awaited heir Edward was also killed. After a period of imprisonment, Margaret returned to France, where she died in poverty, a far cry from the wealth and power she had enjoyed in her early years as queen.

Historians long treated Margaret unfavourably on account of her stepping outside the confines of what was deemed appropriate to feminine behaviour by her English contemporaries, yet more recent revisionist accounts of her life, most notably by Helen Maurer, Joanna Laynesmith, and Helen Castor, have painted a more empathetic picture of the Queen, arguing that she demonstrated political acumen and acted to protect the interests of her family, and by extension, the Crown.⁵ Revisionist scholarship has shown that in the early years of her queenship, Margaret's political conduct was in fact in keeping with what was traditionally expected of a queen consort, her behaviour only changing in response to her husband's mental fragility and the political uncertainty that ensued. Literary scholars have also drawn attention to Margaret's role as a notable patron who greatly enriched the literary culture of the English court and acted as an agent of cross-cultural exchange.⁶ Most recently, Michele Seah has added to this chorus of voices through her positive reappraisal of the Queen's economic role as a landholder and estate manager.⁷ Little consideration, however, has been given to the ways in which Margaret of Anjou deployed material culture, and specifically the built environment, to articulate her power and status as queen consort. This is particularly surprising given that Margaret is the only late medieval queen of England who is visible in the historical record as a commissioner of domestic architecture in her own right. Margaret's building activities therefore offer a unique and important window onto female patronage and women's curation of domestic space in late medieval England, as the ensuing discussion will demonstrate.

Greenwich Palace: The Story so Far

Today, Greenwich palace lies buried beneath the Old Royal Naval College on the southern banks of the River Thames. Margaret's residence, however, had long been demolished by the time the Naval College (which had first served as Greenwich Hospital) was constructed in the seventeenth century, having been rebuilt at the end of the fifteenth century by Henry VII.⁸ In

⁵ Helen E. Maurer, *Margaret of Anjou: Queenship and Power in Late Medieval England* (Woodbridge: The Boydell Press, 2003); Joanna L. Laynesmith, *The Last Medieval Queens: English Queenship, 1445–1503* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004); Helen Castor, *She-Wolves: The Women who Ruled England before Elizabeth* (London: Faber & Faber, 2010).

⁶ Jenni Nuttall, "Margaret of Anjou as Patron of English Verse? *The Liber Proverbiorum* and the *Romans of Partenay*," *The Review of English Studies* 67, no. 281 (September 2016): 636–659; Sonja Drimmer, "Beyond Private Matter: A Prayer Roll for Queen Margaret of Anjou," *Gesta* 53, no. 1 (Spring 2014): 95–120; Raluca L. Radulescu, "Preparing for Mature Years: the Case of Margaret of Anjou and her Books," in *Middle-Aged Women in the Middle Ages*, ed. Sue Niebrzydowski (Woodbridge: D.S. Brewer, 2011), 115–138.

⁷ Michele Seah, "My Lady Queen, the Lord of the Manor: The Economic Roles of Late Medieval Queens," *Parergon* 37, no. 2 (2020): 9–36.

⁸ For the Tudor Palace, see: Philip Dixon, "The Tudor Palace at Greenwich," *The Court Historian* 11, no. 2 (2006):

the absence of surviving standing remains, information about Margaret's palace can instead be gleaned from the building accounts compiled between 1447 and 1453 by the Clerk of Works, Robert Kettlewell, who oversaw the works at Greenwich, as well as those at the nearby royal palace of Eltham.⁹ An account book for the years 1453-54 and five accounts of the treasurers of the chamber provide further details on Margaret's use of the palace and some of the moveable objects within it.¹⁰ In addition to the archival evidence, a report of the archaeological excavations carried out by Philip Dixon and his team during the early 1970s provides detailed information on the site's development.¹¹

Previous studies of Greenwich Palace have tended to focus primarily on the later history of the site, for which there is more evidence, and its male owners.¹² As the birthplace of Henry VIII, the palace's better known Tudor incarnation has also captured the popular imagination: when Time Team excavated the site in 2003, they focused wholly on the palace's associations with the most famous Tudor king, seeking to locate his armoury and tilt yard.¹³ Amanda Richardson has notably departed from the Tudor narrative to shed light on the earlier manor house built on the site by Margaret of Anjou's predecessor, Humphrey Duke of Gloucester.¹⁴ The significance of Margaret's building activities at Greenwich, however, has yet to be critically examined. In the few, brief instances where Margaret's palace has been discussed, emphasis has instead fallen on the events which took place there, and the extent to which the Queen's formation of her own household defied or supported the King's governance. In his biography of Henry VI, Ralph Griffiths argues that "major constitutional and political changes ... occurred at the queen's manor house of Greenwich," although he continues that "the role of Queen Margaret in precipitating them remains obscure".¹⁵ In her study of late medieval English queenship, J.L. Laynesmith argues that the Queen's household at Greenwich was not a discrete entity but was instead interlinked with the King's household and court, thus complementing and enriching the nature of English kingship.¹⁶ In focusing on the physical, rather than social, fabric of Margaret's palace, this article not only fills an important gap in the

105–112; Simon Thurley, "Greenwich Palace: The Banqueting House of 1527, The Sport of Kings," in *Henry VIII: A European Court in England*, ed. David Starkey (London: National Maritime Museum, 1991), 20–26, 64–70, 163–172.

⁹ Today, the accounts are housed in The National Archives, where they form part of the records of the Duchy of Lancaster. See accounts of Robert Kettlewell, Clerk of Works to Queen Margaret for her Manor of Pleasaunce in Gravesend (Kent), The National Archives, London (hereafter TNA) DL 28/1/11.

¹⁰ TNA MS. Duchy of Lancaster 28/5/8; TNA E101/409/14, 17; E101/410/2, 8, 11.

¹¹ Philip Dixon, *Excavations at Greenwich Palace, 1970–1971: An Interim Report* (London: Greenwich and Lewisham Antiquarian Society, 1972).

¹² A 2006 special issue of *The Court Historian*, which was dedicated to the palace, for example, focused exclusively on the site's post-medieval history. See: *The Court Historian*, 11, no. 2 (2006).

¹³ "Time Team," Series 10, Episode 5 (2003): "Joust Dig It: Greenwich, London," accessed 3 March 2021, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=J3LxvEt8WGU>.

¹⁴ Richardson, "Greenwich's First Royal Landscape".

¹⁵ Ralph A. Griffiths, *The Reign of King Henry VI* (Stroud: Sutton, 2004), 740.

¹⁶ Laynesmith, *Last Medieval Queens*, 221.

site's history, but also sheds new light on our understanding of Margaret's character and exercise of queenly power as it was articulated through the built environment.

Gender and Castle Studies

In great houses headed by men, women's apartments were routinely located in the more secluded areas of the domestic complex, away from ceremonial spaces and route ways. The physical enclosure of royal and noble women recalled contemporary imagery of the Virgin Mary, in which the mother of God is shown within enclosed domestic spaces such as bedchambers and walled gardens, which both contain and symbolise her chaste female body. Views onto spaces that symbolised the queen's chastity, particularly chapels and enclosed gardens, were also commonplace, as was imagery that emphasised the Virgin's maternal role.¹⁷ High-status women's spatial seclusion has primarily been read in terms of gendered power dynamics between elite men and women, calling into question whether women's physical confinement signalled their literal or merely symbolic exclusion from power.¹⁸ Yet, what can be said of instances where women directed their own building works and curated their own domestic space?

Female patrons have largely gone under the radar in studies of castles and medieval great houses, largely on account of the male biases and comparatively limited availability of surviving source material, and due to the male trajectory of castle studies.¹⁹ As Roberta Gilchrist so vividly puts it, "archaeologists and social historians have eulogized the male domain of the castle, reeking of sweat, testosterone and horses."²⁰ In her discussion of sources for women's architectural patronage in the seventeenth century, Anne Laurence notes that scholarship is inevitably skewed towards buildings with standing remains.²¹ Laurence's observation is perhaps one reason why the surviving seventeenth-century Queen's House at Greenwich, which was commissioned by queens Anna of Denmark and Henrietta Maria from the renowned architect, Inigo Jones, has piqued greater interest than Margaret's earlier palace.²²

¹⁷ Roberta Gilchrist, *Gender and Archaeology: Contesting the Past* (London: Routledge, 1999); Amanda Richardson, "Gender and Space in English Royal Palaces, c. 1160–c. 1547," *Medieval Archaeology* 47, no. 1 (2003): 131–165.

¹⁸ Amanda Richardson, "Gender and Space in the Later Middle Ages: Past, Present, and Future Routes," in *The Oxford Handbook of Later Medieval Archaeology in Britain*, ed. Christopher Gerrard and Alejandra Gutiérrez (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2018), 805–818.

¹⁹ An exception is Rachel M. Delman, "Elite Female Constructions of Power and Space, 1444-1541" (DPhil thesis, University of Oxford, 2017). For a critique of the male biases of castle studies, see: Karen Dempsey, "Gender and Medieval Archaeology: Storming the Castle," *Antiquity* 93, no. 369 (2019): 772–788.

²⁰ Gilchrist, *Gender and Archaeology*, 121.

²¹ Anne Laurence, "Women using Building in Seventeenth-Century England: A Question of Sources?," *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society* 13 (2003): 294.

²² For the Queen's House, see: Susan Alexandra Sykes, "Henrietta Maria's 'House of Delight': French Influence and Iconography in the Queen's House, Greenwich," *Apollo* 133, no. 351 (1991): 332–336; Paula Henderson, "Secret Houses and Lodges: the Queen's House, Greenwich, in Context," *Apollo* 146, no. 425 (1997): 29–35; Clare McManus, "Memorialising Anna of Denmark's Court: Cupid's Banishment at Greenwich Palace," in *Women and Culture at the Courts of the Stuart Queens*, ed. Clare McManus (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2003), 81–99;

By bringing Margaret of Anjou's building activities at Greenwich to the fore, this article argues for their importance in offering an alternative, female perspective to a narrative otherwise dominated by elite men. By assessing the location of Margaret's residence, the nature of her building works at the site and their significance, the discussion considers whether Margaret's building activities conformed to or deviated from the spatial arrangement expected of houses governed by men, and the implications this has for our understanding of the relationship between gender, power and space in late medieval England. By locating Margaret's actions within a broader, familial framework of (female) architectural patronage, this article also makes a new intervention into discussions of royal women's roles as agents of cultural transfer, arguing that Margaret's architectural patronage referenced the wider building strategies and traditions of her natal kin.

Why Greenwich?

When she acquired Greenwich in 1447, Margaret already had numerous other residences at her disposal. Ahead of her arrival in England in 1445, several of the royal palaces in London had been expanded to accommodate her. Margaret was also granted the customary dower of fifteenth-century queens, which comprised lands from the Duchy of Lancaster.²³ These lands were primarily in the midlands, but she also gained landholdings in Essex, Hertfordshire, Middlesex, Surrey, London and the "ancient southern parts" of the Duchy, namely in the counties of Hampshire, Wiltshire, Somerset, Dorset, Devon, Cornwall, Oxfordshire, and Herefordshire.²⁴ Most of Margaret's castles were in the midlands, including Leicester and Rockingham in Leicestershire, Tutbury in Staffordshire, Melbourne in Derbyshire, and Kenilworth in Warwickshire. The Queen also held castles at Pleshey in Essex, Hertford in Hertfordshire, and Odiham in Hampshire (Figure 1).²⁵

Margaret's decision to acquire Greenwich palace and to establish her own household there can be read as a clear demonstration of her personality and agency. Laynesmith has shown that Margaret's establishment of a household at Greenwich and her decision to concentrate her efforts on rebuilding her own manor houses, rather than those she shared with the King, forms a marked contrast with the actions of her English successors, Elizabeth Woodville and Elizabeth York, who showed little interest in domestic building projects.²⁶ This picture of Margaret's greater degree of independence is reinforced by her treasurers' accounts for the years 1452-53, which show her greater income, expenditure, and household size when

Gordon Higgott, "The Design and Setting of Inigo Jones's Queen's House, 1616-10," *Court Historian* 11, no. 2 (2006): 135-148.

²³ A.R. Myers, "The Household of Queen Margaret of Anjou, 1452-3: I," *Bulletin of the John Rylands Library* 40, no. 1 (1958): 87.

²⁴ Myers, "The Household of Queen Margaret of Anjou," 82.

²⁵ Myers, "The Household of Queen Margaret of Anjou," 82.

²⁶ Laynesmith, *Last Medieval Queens*, 246.

compared with her successors.²⁷

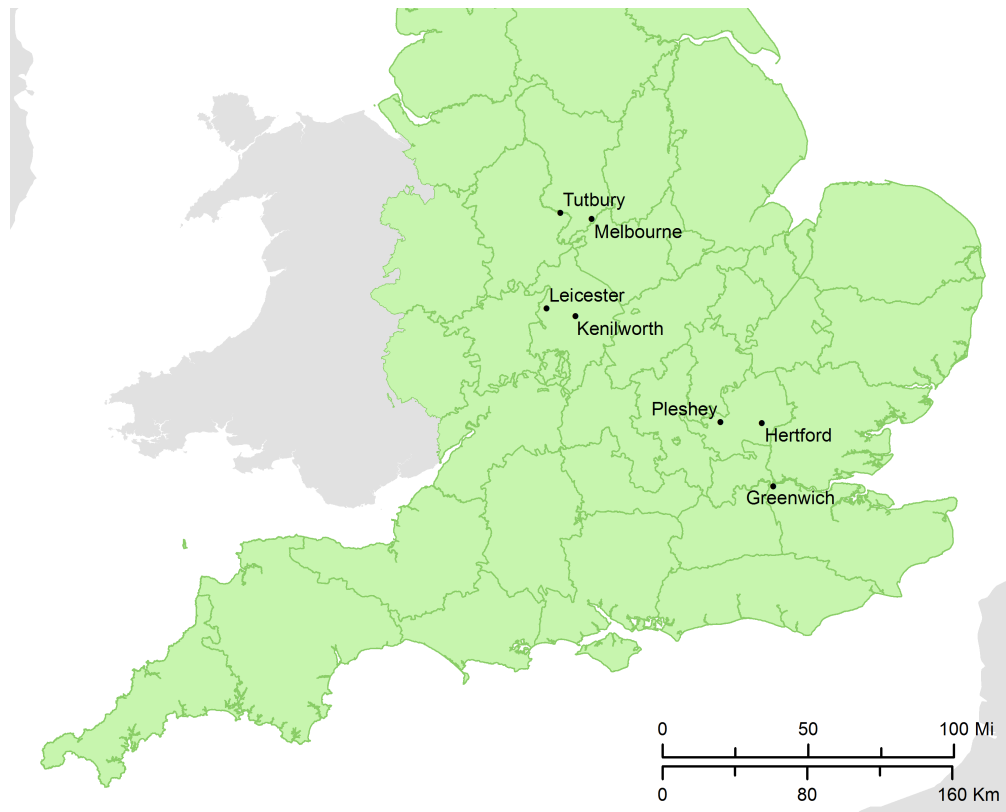


Figure 1: Outline map of England showing Greenwich in relation to Margaret of Anjou's other main residences.

By the time of Margaret's arrival in 1447, the manor of East Greenwich, as it was then known, had long been a site with royal associations. In the tenth century, King Alfred had granted the manor to his daughter Aelfthryth upon her marriage to Baldwin II, count of Flanders.²⁸ In the fourteenth century, Edward I and his son, the future Edward II, made an offering at two crosses in a chapel dedicated to the Virgin Mary in Greenwich. Henry IV also occasionally resided at Greenwich and retired there shortly before his death on account of the air reportedly being cleaner than in London.²⁹ In the early fifteenth century, Henry V gave the manor to Thomas Beaufort, Duke of Exeter (c.1377-1426), who was a military commander during the Hundred Years' War. Duke Humphrey acquired it shortly after Beaufort's death.³⁰

The location of the house was both practical and aesthetically pleasing. East Greenwich was at that point in Kent, close to the county's western border with the city of London. By the

²⁷ Myers, "The Household of Queen Margaret of Anjou," 88.

²⁸ Michael Egan, "The Church in Medieval Greenwich," *Archaeologia Cantiana* 123 (2003): 236.

²⁹ Richardson, "Greenwich's First Royal Landscape," 54.

³⁰ George H. Chettle, "Introduction: Greenwich before the building of the Queen's House," in *Survey of London Monograph 14, The Queen's House, Greenwich* (London, 1937), 16–24.

later medieval period, the settlement had developed into a market town with a flourishing maritime and mercantile community.³¹ It was also an important centre of royal ship-building.³² The close proximity of one of medieval England's four principal roads, Watling Street (the present day A2), to the south of the settlement meant that goods and people could easily reach the palace overland from the Kent coast and central London.³³ Margaret made the most of the good local communication routes, sourcing panelling for her palace from London, roof tiles from Dulwich, Flanders tiles from Billingsgate and stone from Maidstone in Kent.³⁴ The location also gave Margaret access to skilled craftsmen, including the King's glazier, John Prudde, who resided at the royal palace of Westminster and supplied Pleasaunce with customised stained glass.³⁵

The River Thames provided another important means of communication. In the later middle ages, Greenwich grew into a key trading port between London and the Low Countries, with the river providing access to the North Sea and the English Channel.³⁶ Margaret exploited this to her advantage, commissioning a wharf, a forty-foot pier, and stone steps, which gave access to the Thames at all states of tide.³⁷ The project was a substantial undertaking and it is possible that the structures remained in place during the Tudor period. Indeed, the descriptions provided in Margaret's accounts bear close resemblance to features represented in Wyngaerde's sixteenth-century drawing of the post-medieval palace, which shows steps to the east of the main gatehouse and a pier to the west (Figure 2).

While Greenwich was undoubtedly an advantageous location for Margaret personally, it is evident that the establishment of her household there also complemented a broader display of royal power. As the first high-status residence *en route* upriver to London, Greenwich was poised at the gateway between the capital and the continent. In this respect, it was ideally placed to advertise Margaret's symbolic role as a gatekeeper to the King (and, prior to that, Duke Humphrey's role as regent). After Greenwich, the next high-status residence upriver was the royal palace of the Tower of London. The ordering of the residences meant that the owner of Greenwich was second only to the King in this spatial sequence of power. The palace's position may have also been a nod to Margaret's symbolic role as peacekeeper between England and France at a time when the Hundred Years' War was still ongoing.

³¹ G.M. Draper, "Timber and Iron: Natural Resources for the Late Medieval Ship-Building Industry in Kent," in *Later Medieval Kent, 1220-1540*, ed. Sheila Sweetinburgh (Woodbridge: Boydell & Brewer, 2010), 55–77.

³² Draper, "Timber and Iron"; Susan Rose, "Royal Ships on the Thames before 1450," in *Shipbuilding on the Thames and Thames-built Ships*, ed. Roger Owen (West Wickham: J. R. Owen, 2004), 11–19.

³³ Draper, "Timber and Iron," 63; Richardson, "Greenwich's First Royal Landscape," 57; F. M. Stenton, "The Road System of Medieval England," *The Economic History Review* 7, no. 1 (1936): 3.

³⁴ TNA DL 28/1/11.

³⁵ TNA DL 28/1/11. For Prudde, see: Richard Marks, "Window Glass," in *English Medieval Industries: Craftsmen, Techniques, Products*, ed. John Blair and Nigel Ramsay (London: Hambleton Press, 1991), 280–283.

³⁶ Draper, "Timber and Iron," 63.

³⁷ TNA DL 28/1/11, 15.



Figure 2: Detail from Anton van den Wyngaerde's 'Greenwich Palace', c.1558. Oxford, Ashmolean Museum, WA. C. LG. IV. 8b. Steps leading to the river are shown to the left of the image, and a pier to the far right. Image: © Ashmolean Museum, Oxford.

The Palace in 1447

The house that Margaret acquired had been built by Humphrey Duke of Gloucester in 1428.³⁸ Duke Humphrey's residence was reputedly one of the finest in fifteenth-century England, forming a "miniature" court, where he and his wife Eleanor entertained poets, astrologers, physicians, musicians and other great thinkers of the day.³⁹ The couple's residence stood to the north-east of the settlement and less than half a mile north of the medieval parish church dedicated to the local martyr, St Alfege.⁴⁰ Although nothing survives of the palace above ground, archaeological excavations have revealed that the pre-Tudor residence, in its various incarnations, had a river-facing frontage and was arranged around two rectangular courtyards, which were oriented from north to south. During Duke Humphrey's ownership, the footprint of the house measured 21 metres in length and 8.5 width, later expanding westwards with Margaret's subsequent alterations.⁴¹ The house was most likely two stories high, and incorporated an earlier, fourteenth-century residence which had stood in the same place. There is some debate as to whether the palace was surrounded by a moat, although Duke Humphrey's licence to crenellate confirms that a wall enclosed the palace, as well as the gardens and park, which were located directly to the south of the residence.⁴² The park, which had first been enclosed by Humphrey and his wife Eleanor in 1433, was roughly synonymous with the hilly terrain which still forms Greenwich park today, although the hunting lodge established by the couple was demolished to make way for the Royal Observatory in the seventeenth century.⁴³ The couple's creation of the park reordered the existing landscape,

³⁸ Richardson, "Greenwich's First Royal Landscape."

³⁹ Harriss, "Humphrey, duke of Gloucester," *ODNB*.

⁴⁰ For a discussion of the medieval church of St. Alfege, see: Egan, "The Church in Medieval Greenwich."

⁴¹ Dixon, *Excavations at Greenwich Palace*, 9–14.

⁴² See: Richardson, "Greenwich's First Royal Landscape," 54.

⁴³ Richardson, "Greenwich's First Royal Landscape," 53.

including the enclosure of a road of 136 perches long. In 1434, Humphrey and Eleanor were instructed to replace the route, resulting in the present-day Maze Hill, which traces the park's eastern boundary.⁴⁴ While Greenwich palace was principally approached via river, any visitor approaching the settlement or palace via road would have therefore been required to take a circuitous route around the park before reaching the main gatehouse, unless they were granted exclusive access through the deer park. The act of tracing the boundary of the park must have created a heightened sense of ceremony and anticipation for those visiting Duke Humphrey, and subsequently, the Queen.

Margaret's Palace

Duke Humphrey's lifestyle was scaled back after the trial and imprisonment of his wife, Eleanor Cobham, for alleged witchcraft in 1441, yet it is unlikely that the couple's Greenwich residence was in any great state of disrepair when Margaret acquired it six years later. Set against this context, Margaret's five-year programme of improvements at the cost of almost £300 can be seen as a powerful statement of her wealth and status as queen consort, transforming what was already regarded as one of the most impressive residences in England into a palace fit for a queen.⁴⁵ While the young Queen chose to retain the park and hunting lodge implemented by Humphrey and Eleanor, between 1447 and 1453, she added to the existing gardens and nearly doubled the size of the house through the addition of a new courtyard and a two-storey set of stone-built lodgings.⁴⁶ The steady flow of workers to and from the palace over a sustained period undoubtedly made a powerful statement to the outside world of Margaret's position and wealth as the new Queen of England, as well as showcasing her ability to command a substantial, specialist workforce.

Margaret's works on the residence resulted in two principal courtyards or wards for herself and the King. The Queen's own ward appears to have been a new addition, while Henry's ward seems to have been adapted from Duke Humphrey's earlier lodgings on the site. Both the King's and Queen's apartments were seemingly arranged over two levels, and most likely formed a near-symmetrical arrangement, with their respective closets offering views onto the household chapel from either side.

The ward that was newly devised for the Queen's own use stood next to the great and privy gardens. Within, it contained a series of progressively more exclusive rooms. Instructions for the paving of two "tresauces" or galleries under the Queen's chamber with Flemish tiles suggest that Margaret's lodgings rested on arcaded walkways, perhaps in a similar fashion to the principal's lodgings of Queens' College, Cambridge, which the Queen founded in 1448, the

⁴⁴ Richardson, "Greenwich's First Royal Landscape," 59.

⁴⁵ TNA D28/1/11; Chettle, "Introduction: Greenwich before the building of the Queen's House"; Howard M. Colvin, *History of the King's Works, Volume II* (London: H.M. Stationery Office, 1963), 949–950.

⁴⁶ Dixon, *Excavations at Greenwich Palace*, 9–14.

year after her works at Pleasaunce began (Figure 3).⁴⁷ On the ground floor of the Queen's ward was a hall, which had a gallery variously referred to as a "Hautpac" or "Hautepace" (high place or dais) at its upper, eastern end. The presence of a hall in Margaret's ward makes it likely that she also had her own kitchen for the preparation of her own and her servants' meals. The division of a separate building into six offices, including a spicery and a wafery, a pantry with a bread oven, and scalding and poultry houses, certainly suggests that the culinary needs of Margaret and her household were adequately catered for. An additional "secret larder" contained food for the Queen's personal consumption.⁴⁸



Figure 3: The Principal's Lodgings at Queens' College, Cambridge, which was founded by Margaret of Anjou in 1448. The gallery and arcaded walkways beneath the lodgings may have resembled those at Pleasaunce. Image: Author's own.

A payment to a certain John Lokyer for a hollow key to the door in the "Hautpac" indicates that access to the gallery was tightly regulated, most likely because it led to the more exclusive rooms beyond the great hall. The first of these rooms was the great parlour, which was located on the ground floor. The substantial size of this room is suggested by its eleven windows, including two large bay windows overlooking the great garden, the floors of which were paved with 300 tiles.⁴⁹ Parlours commonly provided more intimate spaces for the reception and entertainment of guests than the great halls preceding them, as signalled by their smaller size and lower ceilings. It would thus seem that the parlour created for Margaret at Pleasaunce was a particularly sizable example of such a room, and it can, by extension, be reasonably be inferred that the Queen's great hall was a grand and impressive space.

Entry to Queen's rooms on the floor above was via a great door.⁵⁰ Margaret's rooms included a great chamber, middle chamber, her own bedchamber and a "secret camera"

⁴⁷ TNA DL 28/1/11, 14, 29. For the broader similarities between Queens' College, Cambridge, and late medieval domestical architectural design, see: Anthony Emery, *Greater Medieval Houses of England and Wales, 1300-1500, Volume II: East Anglia, Central England and Wales* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), 69.

⁴⁸ TNA DL 28/1/11, 14.

⁴⁹ TNA DL 28/1/11, 29.

⁵⁰ TNA DL 28/1/11, 9, 20.

(Figure 4). The Queen also had her own closet, which was most likely accessed from her bedchamber, and which provided views towards her household chapel.⁵¹ As in most great houses of the period, the sequential ordering of rooms provided increasing levels of seclusion, with the more formal reception rooms giving way to the Queen's personal living space beyond. The reception chambers on the first floor of the Queen's ward again appear to have been sizeable: 1,600 tiles were brought in to pave the middle chamber alone. A bed purchased for the great chamber measured an impressive ten feet in length and eight in width.⁵² This piece of furniture was likely used by Margaret as a ceremonial bed from which she received guests, as was customary in continental palaces. The walls of Margaret's ward were newly lined with wainscoting and the floors were paved throughout with terracotta tiles bearing the Queen's monogram. The soffits, arcades and pillars were carved with Margaret's personal emblem, the marguerite or daisy, to mark her ownership over the space.

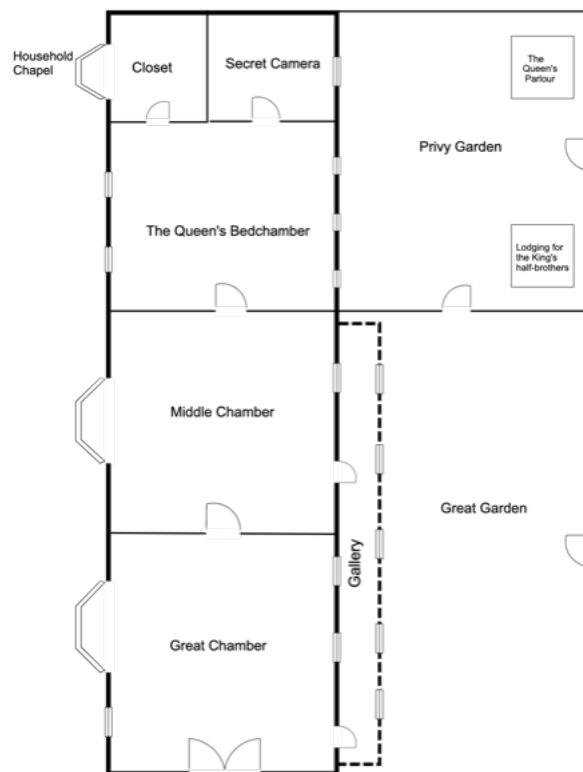


Figure 4: Schematic representation of the first-floor level of Margaret of Anjou's ward at Greenwich. Image not to scale.

Payments made for the installation of numerous windows suggest that the Queen's apartments had a light and spacious appearance. The main reception rooms, namely the great

⁵¹ TNA DL 28/1/11, 35.

⁵² TNA DL 28/1/11, 14.

and middle chambers, were fitted with two large bay windows.⁵³ The bay window in the great chamber was filled with fifty-one feet of white glass, which was flourished with marguerites and the arms of the King and Queen.⁵⁴ Twenty-seven feet of glass was divided between three further windows in the room.⁵⁵ The great and middle chambers additionally opened out onto a newly constructed gallery, which contained five windows overlooking the great garden.⁵⁶ Three of five windows in the Queen's bedchamber, meanwhile, offered views onto the more exclusive space of the privy garden.⁵⁷ Margaret's closet contained a three-sided bay window, which faced towards the household chapel. The room also contained a fireplace for warmth.⁵⁸

Such a spatial arrangement, with its emphasis on seclusion and piety, is in keeping with a feminine spatial ideology that we would expect to find in a royal residence under male lordship. Margaret's creation of her own great hall and parlour, as well as a middle and great chamber, however, meant that she was also equipped with her own "public" rooms for the reception of guests, which she might have otherwise shared with her husband in the palaces headed by the King.

The King's rooms were likely similar in their layout to those of the Queen, as suggested by the inclusion of two great bay windows in the King's ward and the presence of a "camerina" (vaulted room) in both the King and Queen's wards. In contrast to the extensive works on the Queen's ward, however, little mention is made of the King's rooms in the building accounts, suggesting that Henry most likely occupied the rooms formerly inhabited by his uncle, Duke Humphrey. This hypothesis is further supported by a reference to a library in the King's ward, which was not newly constructed, but merely paved as part of Margaret's works on the property.⁵⁹ Duke Humphrey's well-known reputation as a humanist and bibliophile certainly make it probable that he left behind a library fit for a royal reader.⁶⁰ The presence of a library in Henry's ward also suggests that there may have been some differences in the spatial environments of the King's and Queen's wards, as no reference is made to a library for the Queen despite her well-known literary interests.

The only evidence of substantial building works in the king's ward is between 1452 and 1453, when a new chapel closet was created for Henry's personal use.⁶¹ The closet was roofed with tiles brought from the nearby settlement of Dulwich, and within, it contained a fireplace and an altar made of elm wood. A new scheme was devised for the twenty-two feet of glass occupying a three-light window above the closet altar. Its central image was a Crucifixion scene

⁵³ TNA DL 28/1/11, 13.

⁵⁴ TNA DL 28/1/11, 6v, 7.

⁵⁵ TNA DL 28/1/11, 7v.

⁵⁶ TNA DL 28/1/11, 12; 14v.

⁵⁷ TNA DL 28/1/11, 7v.

⁵⁸ TNA DL 28/1/11, 35.

⁵⁹ TNA DL 28/1/11, 35.

⁶⁰ David Rundle, "Good Duke Humphrey: Bounder, Cad and Bibliophile," *Bodleian Library Record* 27, no. 1 (2014): 36–53.

⁶¹ TNA DL 28/1/11, 27.

with Mary and Joseph at the foot of the cross. Three escutcheons accompanied the main image, namely the arms of St George and those of the king and the Queen. An additional bay window, which was positioned to provide views directly onto the chapel, was glazed with fourteen feet of glass, which was painted with Margaret's namesake flower, the marguerite, alongside the king's personal emblem, the hawthorn bud.⁶² A new vestry beneath the closet was also created for the safekeeping of jewels. Its windows were secured with iron bars and it could be accessed directly from Henry's apartments via a tresaunce or gallery.

The timing of the closet's commission is striking. Following the downfall of William Duke of Suffolk in 1450, Margaret had taken on a far more active role in English politics. Without a son and heir to the English throne, however, her influence was limited. Following many years of childlessness, in October 1453, Margaret finally gave birth to her first and only child, Edward of Lancaster. Margaret's safe delivery of a son gave new hope to the ruling house, yet by the time of Edward's birth, the King had fallen into a state of mental instability. From this point onwards, Margaret became a highly visible champion of her husband's and son's causes. The expansion of the King's lodgings at Pleasaunce between 1452 and 1453 is, therefore, suggestive of the growing importance of Margaret's role and the significance of her palace as a royal residence. It also indicates that Henry was spending an increasing amount of time at the palace. Indeed, Margaret is known to have hosted the royal court at Greenwich at Christmas 1452 and again in 1455 following the King's recovery.⁶³ Margaret's hosting of the royal court was, as Laynesmith argues, a move that was not emulated by her successors to the same degree.⁶⁴ Set against this context, the commission of a new closet with a window celebrating human salvation through the holy family can be read as an astute piece of political propaganda, which celebrated the couple's newfound status as parents. The inclusion of Mary and Joseph alongside Margaret and Henry's arms forged a powerful visual connection between royal and heavenly parents. The marguerites and hawthorn buds dominating the scheme of the room's other window appear to have also reinforced a wider message of the couple's unity and fertility. While gazing upon these images during his devotions at the palace, the King would have accordingly been reminded of the centrality of his wife and infant son to his performance of the office of kingship.

The chapel appears to have remained structurally much the same as it was during Duke Humphrey's ownership of the house, Margaret's main works being repairs to the stained glass and the creation of a new door between the chapel and the newly built vestry. When replacing the stained-glass in the gable window above the altar, Margaret chose to retain the Duke of Gloucester's arms. This was a politically savvy move, particularly as the Queen had been implicated in Humphrey's downfall and murder. The preservation of the duke's arms thus acknowledged and respected his memory.

⁶² TNA DL 28/1/11, 30v.

⁶³ Laynesmith, *Last Medieval Queens*, 221.

⁶⁴ Laynesmith, *Last Medieval Queens*, 221.

Further works carried out under Margaret's ownership of the property included the erection of a counting house and the construction of a "stewhouse," which was accessible via three doors. Within the stewhouse was a bath, referred to as a "bathynghat," which was panelled with wainscot. This is most likely the room identified as a possible bathroom in the 1970-71 excavations, which was located on the northern side of the complex, facing the river. The room contained a sloping floor for water drainage, which was paved with red earthenware tiles that had been glazed olive green.⁶⁵ While in late medieval England bathhouses in public contexts were commonly associated with licentiousness and prostitution, in France bath chambers were a common feature of royal palaces. Indeed, Margaret's French-born predecessors, Isabella of France and Philippa of Hainault, both had bathtubs installed in the royal residences they shared with the King.⁶⁶ Margaret's inclusion of such a feature thus suggests an element of cultural transfer, while also providing evidence of her agency in ordering the design and space of her palace.

In royal residences headed by kings, chambers were not usually reserved for the use of individual servants within the queen's quarters.⁶⁷ Margaret had a far larger body of servants than her predecessors, however, the numbers being closer to those of the King than to other late medieval queens of England.⁶⁸ A chamber described as belonging to "barbilonz" at Greenwich most likely belonged to Barbelina Herbequyne, one of Margaret's unmarried ladies-in-waiting.⁶⁹ Margaret seems to have been particularly keen to look after her unmarried female servants, as evidenced by her gift of two collars to one of her unmarried damsels, Osan, one of which was a Lancastrian collar of esses, which was used to mark royal favour.⁷⁰ It is thus possible that other women within Margaret's retinue also had chambers reserved for their use at Pleasaunce. The effect of the female presence at the palace was no doubt striking: both Chris Woolgar and Joanna Laynesmith have shown how the presence of the queen's retinue of ladies made for a distinctive sensory environment, while others, including Zita Rohr, Nadine Akkerman, and Birgit Houben, have emphasised the cultural and political significance of women's households, and the wider impact that these female networks could have on contemporary society and culture.⁷¹

William de la Pole, Duke of Suffolk, also had his own chamber at the palace until his

⁶⁵ Dixon, *Excavations at Greenwich Palace*, 9–14.

⁶⁶ Chris M. Woolgar, *The Senses in Late Medieval England* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2006), 243.

⁶⁷ Woolgar, *Senses*, 227.

⁶⁸ In 1454, Margaret had a total of 120 servants. Myers, *Household Accounts of Margaret of Anjou*, 90.

⁶⁹ TNA DL 28/1/11, 13.

⁷⁰ A.R. Myers, ed., "The Jewels of Queen Margaret of Anjou," *Bulletin of the John Rylands Library* 42, no. 1 (1959): 127.

⁷¹ Woolgar, *The Senses*; Laynesmith, *The Last Medieval Queens*, 227. For the wider impact of queenly households, see: Nadine Akkerman and Birgit Houben, eds., *The Politics of Female Households: Ladies-in-Waiting Across Early Modern Europe* (Leiden: Brill, 2014); Zita Rohr, "Rocking the Cradle and Ruling the World: Queens' Households in Late Medieval and Early Modern Aragon and France," in *Royal and Elite Households in Medieval and Early Modern Europe: More than Just a Castle*, ed. Theresa Earenfight (Leiden: Brill, 2018), 309–337.

murder in 1450. Laynesmith argues that Margaret's household "provided a vital stage in the careers of many of Suffolk's party," and it is therefore unsurprising to find a chamber reserved for his use at Greenwich, even if he was not able to enjoy it for long.⁷² Margaret commissioned a pair of trestles for Suffolk's widow, Alice, and the couple's son, John, raising the possibility that they also had their own chambers at the palace. Alice was both a lady-in-waiting and a close friend to Margaret, and it seems likely that the duchess regularly resided at the palace alongside Margaret's other attendant ladies.

Outdoor Spaces

Margaret of Anjou commissioned numerous gardens as part of her works at Greenwich palace, some of which were intended for utilitarian purposes, others for recreation. Members of Margaret's natal family, her father René and her aunt Marie of Anjou included, are known to have taken a keen interest in gardening, and their influence may have inspired the Queen's significant investment in her landscape at Greenwich.⁷³ Margaret's outdoor space included an orchard, as well as a great and small vegetable garden (orto), the larger of which was paved and enclosed.⁷⁴ The Queen also commissioned a great and little garden, both of which had their own gardeners.⁷⁵ As outlined above, the great garden was located next to the great parlour on the ground floor and was overlooked by the main reception rooms of Margaret's apartments directly above.⁷⁶ It was planted with vines, with a certain John Aleyn paid for supplying six loads of rails for the purpose of training them.⁷⁷ The smaller of the two gardens was enclosed within a hedge. Within, Margaret commissioned a paved parlour with bay windows and a tiled floor for her own personal use, as well as another new lodging which was glazed with three sets of the King and Queen's arms. This second lodging also contained two beds, which had been brought from London and were reserved for the use of the King's half-brothers, Edmund and Jasper Tudor.⁷⁸ As already noted, the reception rooms of Margaret's apartments gave views from a gallery onto the great garden, whereas views towards the privy garden were only available from the most secluded spaces of Margaret's apartments, including her own bedchamber. Thus, the internal filtering of space was reinforced by the arrangement of the landscape below, where the little garden was the most secluded outdoor space, being reserved for the exclusive use of Margaret and her closest family members.

Margaret also oversaw wider works on the landscape, including the creation of a new dovecote next to the main gatehouse, where it would have been visible to those on the

⁷² Laynesmith, *The Last Medieval Queens*, 230.

⁷³ For Marie of Anjou's gardens at Chinon, see: Solveig Bourocher, "Queen Marie of Anjou: Patron of the Works on the Château of Chinon in the Middle of the Fifteenth Century?," *Le Moyen Age* 117 (2011–2013): 487–506.

⁷⁴ TNA DL 28/1/11, 21.

⁷⁵ TNA DL 28/1/11; Myers, *The Household of Queen Margaret of Anjou*, 416–417.

⁷⁶ TNA DL 28/1/11, 6v, 7v.

⁷⁷ TNA DL 28/1/11, 34.

⁷⁸ TNA DL 28/1/11.

approach upriver. The placement of dovecotes close to gatehouses was common practice among the ruling aristocracy, who sought to advertise their exclusive right to keep doves to the wider community.⁷⁹ As well as providing food for the elite table, doves were also associated with the Holy Spirit in Christian thought. Dovecotes thus enhanced the religious symbolism of the lordly landscape, and by association, gestured to the head of household's piety. The river-facing frontage of the palace was also altered in other ways: Margaret commissioned a wall between the house and the Thames, along with the abovementioned wharf and pier, which enabled people and goods to reach or depart from the residence at all states of tide.

Margaret's letters show that she was an attentive and active estate manager and that control over resources and the appearance of a well-managed and orderly estate were important to her. Wider works to her estate at Greenwich included the enclosure of the wood yard.⁸⁰ The Queen's reported love of horses found expression in her construction of three new stables, one of which was reserved for her own palfreys, a type of horse which was popularly used for long-distance riding and hunting.⁸¹

The deer park appears to have remained much the same as it was during Duke Humphrey's ownership of the property. The fashion for enclosing parks and bringing them closer to the elite residence intensified during the fifteenth century, enabling the head of household to better showcase the outdoor space under their control and to create distance between their residence and the vernacular landscape beyond.⁸² Amanda Richardson and others have also read the creation of smaller parks in gendered terms, arguing that the late medieval fashion for creating smaller hunting grounds and "lady parks," such as the one most likely enclosed in 1470 at Lathom for Eleanor Neville (d. before 1471), marked the replacement of the hunt par force with bow and stable hunting and hawking.⁸³ The latter forms of hunting were deemed more appropriate for women because they were less dangerous than the hunt par force, which was physically strenuous and carried out across open terrain. Richardson also makes a convincing argument that the driving force behind the creation of the park at Greenwich was the Duke of Gloucester's wife, Eleanor Cobham, on account of its creation shortly after the couple's marriage and the presence of Eleanor's name in the patent rolls.⁸⁴ Thus, the Queen's decision to retain the existing park may have been related to the space's fashionable appearance and its suitability for forms of hunting which facilitated female

⁷⁹ Oliver Creighton, *Designs Upon the Land: Elite Landscapes of the Middle Ages* (Woodbridge: The Boydell Press, 2009), 106–109.

⁸⁰ TNA DL 28/1/11, 23, 24.

⁸¹ TNA DL 28/1/11, 20v, 30.

⁸² Stephen Miles, *Parks in Medieval England* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009), 102.

⁸³ Amanda Richardson, "Riding like Alexander, Hunting like Diana: Gendered Aspects of the Medieval Hunt and its Landscape Settings in England and France," *Gender and History* 24, no. 2 (2012): 260.

⁸⁴ Richardson, "Greenwich's first Royal Landscape," 53. For a discussion of Eleanor's management of Greenwich, see: Sally Fisher "All my frendysfro me thei flee': The Disgraced and Unstable Household of Eleanor, Duchess of Gloucester," in *Royal and Elite Households in Medieval and Early Modern Europe: More than just a Castle*, ed. Theresa Earenfight (Leiden: Brill, 2018), 142–168.

participation. Margaret certainly loved hunting, and her letters reveal her particular concern for the maintenance of her favourite hunting grounds, whether they were her own or those of friends and associates.⁸⁵ In 1449, she wrote to the keeper of Abfield park near her residence in Pleshey stating that no person may hunt there unless, “hit be under our signet, and signed with our owne hand.”⁸⁶ She also warned the keeper that if he failed to inform her of trespassers’ names, it would be at his “perill.”⁸⁷ In the previous year, she had also written to the keeper of Elizabeth, Lady Saye’s park at Faulkbourne in Essex, informing him that only those who had received either her own or Lady Say’s permission were permitted to hunt there.⁸⁸

The Queen’s letters and writs reveal her anxiety regarding the presence of trespassers on her estates. They also show that she sought to keep her parks well-stocked, not only for the purposes of her own hunting activities, but for the recreation of her husband too.⁸⁹ As with other enclosed outdoor spaces such as gardens and orchards, Richardson argues that enclosed deer parks owned by women likely carried close associations with female chastity, sexual fidelity, and virtue in late medieval discourse.⁹⁰ This, however, was not singularly a concern for women. As Roberta Gilchrist argues, “female fidelity, and its display through the physical confinement of women, became essential to the perpetuation of successful lineage,” thus making it a wider family issue.⁹¹ Richardson argues that by forcibly entering parks, male trespassers were able to strike at “the king through the symbolic violation of the queen.”⁹² The concept of challenging the King’s authority through the violation of female spaces resonates with Mark Ormrod’s reading of an episode from the Peasants’ Revolt of 1381, in which the rebels broke into the chamber of the King’s mother, Joan of Kent. Ormrod shows how the chroniclers Froissart and Walsingham employ the spatial politics of the chamber to emphasise the heinous nature of the rebels’ actions and to present Joan as both vulnerable and a royal patroness who validates her son’s deeds.⁹³ By breaking into Joan’s bedchamber, the rebels not only threatened Joan’s sexual respectability, but also her son’s sovereignty.⁹⁴ Similarly, Nicola Clark has shown how the downfall of Henry VIII’s fifth wife, Katherine Howard, hinged on the mismanagement of domestic space by her step-grandmother, Agnes Tilney, Duchess of Norfolk, in whose household the Queen had grown up. The ability of several men to gain the key to maidens’ chamber where the women of the household slept subsequently embroiled

⁸⁵ Seven of Margaret’s letters deal exclusively with hunting concerns. See: Helen Maurer and B.M. Cron, eds., *The Letters of Margaret of Anjou* (Woodbridge: Boydell & Brewer, 2019), 158–170.

⁸⁶ Maurer and Cron, *The Letters of Margaret of Anjou*, 166.

⁸⁷ Maurer and Cron, *The Letters of Margaret of Anjou*, 166.

⁸⁸ Maurer and Cron, *The Letters of Margaret of Anjou*, 162.

⁸⁹ Maurer and Cron, *The Letters of Margaret of Anjou*, 161.

⁹⁰ Richardson, “Riding like Alexander,” 260.

⁹¹ Gilchrist, *Gender and Archaeology*, 112.

⁹² Richardson, “Riding like Alexander,” 262.

⁹³ W.M. Ormrod, “In Bed with Joan of Kent: The King’s Mother and the Peasants’ Revolt,” in *Medieval Women: Texts and Contexts in Late Medieval Britain: Essays for Felicity Riddy* (Turnhout: Brepols, 2000), 287.

⁹⁴ Ormrod, “In Bed with Joan of Kent,” 282–285.

Agnes and Katherine in a royal scandal, resulting in the former's tarnished reputation and the latter's death.⁹⁵ Margaret of Anjou's eagerness to defend and protect the boundaries of her estates was, therefore, not only a personal matter; it had implications for the broader reputation of her family too.

Conclusion

In many ways, Margaret's palace at Greenwich appears to have been a site where normative gender roles were encoded in domestic architecture. The King and Queen had separate living quarters, and the Queen's apartments spatially emphasised her piety and privacy by prioritising views onto the adjoining gardens and chapel, thus conforming to the spatial layout we would expect to find in castles and palaces under male lordship. The inclusion of a library in the king's ward is also suggestive of slight differences in the spatial arrangements of the two wards, and thus the differing roles of the King and Queen.

The new window devised for the king's closet, with its emphasis on the holy family, along with the presence of lodgings for the King's brothers in the privy garden, also suggest that Greenwich was a site where Margaret advertised her power through the family. Margaret's concern for the maintenance of her hunting grounds can also be read in this light, with control over access being closely linked to female chastity and lineage, and, by extension, the King's sovereignty. In these respects, the Queen's renovations at Greenwich appear to have expressed her distinctly feminine concerns as queen consort, complementing her husband's kingship, and thus seemingly reinforcing Laynesmith's argument regarding the nature of Margaret's household.

The addition of rooms for Margaret's servants and the arrangement of her own apartments over two levels, however, suggests a more equal power relationship between the King and Queen than that suggested by the architecture of the kingly residences, where the Queen's quarters were often located more secluded parts of the high-status domestic complex, or beneath those of their husbands. In this respect, Margaret's actions show her greater degree of autonomy when compared to her English-born successors and indicate that she was not merely a passive conduit of support for her husband, but rather played an active role in fashioning her queenly image. In this respect, the argument presented here resonates with Zita Rohr's wider observations that queenly heads of household were not merely passive chattels of support for their male kin, but active and important players in their own right. Successful pre-modern female households, Rohr argues, were consciously curated by their "alpha" women to enhance their reputations, influence, and political effectiveness.⁹⁶ As the "alpha" woman at Greenwich, Margaret likewise curated domestic space for the articulation of her identity and power as consort.

⁹⁵ Nicola Clark, "Queen Katherine Howard: Space, and Promiscuity Pre- and Post- Marriage, 1536-1541," *Royal Studies Journal* 6, no. 2 (2019): 89–103.

⁹⁶ Rohr, "Rocking the Cradle and Ruling the World," 310.

Rather than purposefully stepping outside the confines of what was expected of her as queen consort, however, Margaret was more likely deploying a language of female power that was familiar to her from her upbringing in France, where the women around her routinely governed and embarked upon building projects of a similar kind. Strikingly, the spatial arrangement created by Margaret for herself at Greenwich bears close resemblance to the design of the apartments created at around the same time for her aunt, queen Marie d'Anjou, at her preferred residence of Chinon in France. As part of her substantial works on the residence, Marie created first-floor level apartments, which offered commanding views of city and rivalled those of her husband, Charles VII.⁹⁷ As was the case at Pleasaunce, Marie's rooms offered varying levels of seclusion, and they included two large rooms, as well as smaller adjoining rooms and a stew, which gave access to an attic above. Marie also created an oratory and galleries, and she commissioned significant works on the garden, where she kept a menagerie of exotic animals. Just as Margaret commissioned rooms for the King's brothers at Greenwich, Marie also created a room with an oratory for her brother (Margaret's father), René of Anjou, thus again showing a concern to accommodate male family members. The similarities in the two women's actions further indicate that Margaret's self-fashioning as queen consort spoke to the traditions known to her natal family, whereby women commonly asserted their status and power through their architectural patronage in a way that complemented, rather than challenged, their male kin. Margaret's creation of a bathroom and gardens at Greenwich reinforces this argument, while also suggesting her role as an agent of cultural transfer, who shaped the materiality and courtly fashions of her new home.

Margaret's love of building continued into the following decade: she later commissioned works at her castles of Pleshey in Essex and Tutbury in Staffordshire. Yet by that point the country had descended into chaos and Margaret's attentions had turned to the more immediate tasks of raising armies and rallying support for the Lancastrian cause. Thus, the Queen's works at Greenwich give us a unique insight into the ways in which she materially expressed her power and status in her early years as consort, before the Wars proper began. What they reveal is that the young Queen was an innovative and energetic patron who shaped the material environment of her new home in ways which simultaneously articulated her personality, referenced the strategies employed by the women of her natal family, and celebrated her vital contribution to the office of kingship.

⁹⁷ Bourocher, "Queen Marie of Anjou," 487–506.