



Susanna Horenbout at the Tudor Court: Hans Holbein's Forgotten Sitter?

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Abstract: Amongst Hans Holbein's chalk drawings in the Royal Collection is a sketch of a young woman identified as Grace Newport, Lady Parker, dating to c. 1540-1543. Other proposed identifications are Elizabeth Calthorpe, second wife of Henry Parker, and Jane Parker, wife of George Boleyn and sister-in-law to the executed Queen Anne. This paper seeks to suggest that there is compelling evidence to propose that the "Lady Parker" from Holbein's sketch may be Susanna Horenbout, miniaturist at the Tudor court and honorary gentlewoman to at least three of Henry VIII's queens. This paper aims to bring Susanna's potential connection to the identity of Hans Holbein's "Lady Parker" into clearer focus.

Keywords: Hans Holbein; Susanna Horenbout; Grace Newport; Jane Parker; Elizabeth Calthorpe; Tudor court.

Brief overview of Holbein's career at the Tudor court

Hans Holbein the Younger¹, a German artist born in the late 1490s and originally hailing from Augsburg, came to England in 1526 on the recommendation of the Dutch scholar Erasmus of Rotterdam. He quickly garnered praise after finishing *The Family of Sir Thomas More*, a full-length painting depicting the scholar's closest family. He returned to his family in Basel, Switzerland, in 1528 and resumed his career in England in 1532, painting many influential courtiers until his death in 1543. French poet and reformer Nicholas Bourbon, who found asylum in England, praised Holbein in his verses dating to c. 1534-1535 and extolled him as "the royal painter, the Apelles of our time."² In the royal household accounts, Holbein was described as "Hans Holben, painter" in 1538.³ He was producing portraits as well as designing jewellery, furniture, book bindings and other precious objects for the King and his courtiers. Bourbon, whose portrait Holbein painted in 1535⁴, praised the artists' skill,

¹ He is called "the Younger" to distinguish him from his father, Hans Holbein the Elder, an accomplished painter of the Late Gothic school.

² Erika Michael, *Hans Holbein the Younger. A Guide to Research* (New York: Taylor & Francis, 1997), 7.

³ British Library, Arundel MS. 97, ff. 11.

⁴ Kate Heard, *Holbein at the Tudor Court* (London: Royal Collection Trust, 2023), 76.

writing: "While the divine genius of Hans immortalises my features, tracing them on the panel with skilful hand, I also have painted him thus in verse; Hans, thus painting me, was greater than Apelles."⁵

Holbein worked in England during a time of social and religious upheaval. In May 1527, Henry VIII decided to annul his marriage to Katherine of Aragon, his Spanish wife of twenty years and mother of his only legitimate child, Princess Mary. Katherine had been previously married to Henry's late brother, Arthur, Prince of Wales, but maintained that the marriage was not consummated. Henry VIII argued that because he married his late brother's widow, God disapproved of their match by denying them male offspring: "If you marry your brother's widow, you shall be childless."⁶ The King was pursuing his wife's maid of honour, Anne Boleyn, who spent her formative years serving at the Habsburg and Valois courts. Anne refused to become the royal mistress, fuelling the fires of the King's passion and inspiring him to write a series of love letters, seventeen of which are currently preserved at the Vatican Library. Anne's refusal to become his mistress prompted Henry VIII to seek the annulment of his marriage to Katherine of Aragon via the traditional route by obtaining a papal verdict annulling the match. In 1533, six years after he took the first steps towards ending his marriage, Henry VIII married the already pregnant Anne Boleyn and broke with the Catholic Church. It is against this dramatic backdrop that Holbein worked as a painter at Henry VIII's court.

Anne was crowned in June 1533; Holbein designed the tableau at Gracechurch Street for her coronation procession.⁷ On 7 September of that year, Anne gave birth to her only child by Henry VIII, Princess Elizabeth (the future Queen Elizabeth I). In 1534, Holbein decorated an elaborate silver cradle, which was ordered from the royal goldsmith Cornelius Hayes, with the figures of Adam and Eve, in anticipation of the birth of a son.⁸ Tragically, this elaborate cradle was to remain empty as Anne had either a miscarriage or a stillbirth that year. Holbein designed Anne's 1534 New Year's gift for Henry VIII: an extravagant silver-gilt table fountain, a pumped device which circulated scented water into a basin for washing hands in between meal courses.⁹ No portrait of Anne Boleyn by

⁵ Jeanne Elizabeth Nuechterlein, *Holbein and the Reformation of Art* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2000), 2: 302.

⁶ Henry Ansgar Kelly, *The Matrimonial Trials of Henry VIII* (Oregon: Wipf & Stock Publishers, 2004), 21.

⁷ Eric Ives, *The Life and Death of Anne Boleyn* (Oxford: Blackwell, 2004), 225.

⁸ The National Archives, SP 1/88 ff.101-102. Henceforth referred to as TNA.

⁹ TNA, E 101/421/13: The 1534 New Year's gift roll.

Hans Holbein is known to survive, but a preparatory sketch inscribed "Anna Bollein Queen" is extant in the Royal Collection and is widely accepted as depicting Anne Boleyn.¹⁰

When Anne was executed on charges of adultery, incest and high treason on 19 May 1536, most of her ladies-in-waiting smoothly transferred to the household of Henry VIII's new queen, Jane Seymour, who previously served as Anne's maid of honour. Holbein sketched many ladies-in-waiting who were associated with the households of both Anne Boleyn and Jane Seymour. Among them were Mary Howard, Duchess of Richmond; Mary Shelton, Jane Ashley, Margery Horsman, Mary Zouch and Frances Howard, Countess of Surrey.¹¹

Holbein also painted Jane Seymour and Anne of Cleves, Henry VIII's third and fourth wives. He may have painted Katherine Howard, although doubts were recently raised as to the identity of the sitter usually identified as her. Art historian Franny Moyle proposed that the Royal Collection miniature is not a likeness of Katherine Howard, but depicts Henry VIII's fourth wife, Anne of Cleves.¹² "The range of Holbein's sitters in the 1530s makes clear that he was not allied to any court faction or religious ideology," pointed out Kate Heard, senior curator of prints and drawings at the Royal Collection Trust.¹³

Holbein's "great book"

Hans Holbein died of the plague between 7 October and 29 November 1543.¹⁴ His sketches were bound into one volume commonly known as the "great book" and passed to Henry VIII's son and successor, Edward VI. The new King's tutor, Sir John Cheke, identified the sitters.¹⁵ The inscriptions themselves are not contemporary to the drawings, but it is known from the 1590 reference that they derive from original identities "subscribed by Sr John Cheke Secretary to King Edward the Sixth," when the "greate booke" of Holbein's sketches was bequeathed by Henry FitzAlan, twelfth Earl of Arundel, to his son-in-law Lord

¹⁰John Rowlands and David Starkey, "An Old Tradition Reasserted: Holbein's Portrait of Queen Anne Boleyn," *The Burlington Magazine* 125, no. 959 (Winter 1983): 90–92. See also Heard, *Hans Holbein*, 64–67.

¹¹Heard, *Holbein*, 91, 97, 102, 137.

¹²Franny Moyle, *The King's Painter: The Life and Times of Hans Holbein* (London: Head of Zeus, 2021), 442.

¹³Heard, *Holbein*, 18.

¹⁴Oskar Bätschmann and Pascal Griener, *Hans Holbein* (London: Reaktion Books Ltd, 1997), 10.

¹⁵*Holbein and the Court of Henry VIII*, exhibition catalogue of the Queen's Gallery, Buckingham Palace (London and Bradford: Lund Humphries, 1972), 11.

Lumley.¹⁶ Cheke, appointed as Edward's tutor in 1544, personally knew people depicted in the sketches, but he made some erroneous identifications. For instance, he identified Margaret Giggs, Sir Thomas More's foster daughter, as "Mother Iak," Edward VI's wet nurse, and Elizabeth Dauncey, Sir Thomas More's second daughter, as "The Lady Barkley," confusing her with Anne Savage, one of Anne Boleyn's maids of honour who became Baroness Berkeley upon her marriage in April 1533. We know that these identifications are incorrect because the inscribed sketches depict the same women who appear in Hans Holbein's 1527 painting of Thomas More's family. Because of these misidentifications, the credibility of Cheke's inscriptions is sometimes called into question.

"Lady Parker": Grace Newport, Elizabeth Calthorpe or Jane Parker?

The sketch bearing the inscription "the Lady Parker" is executed in black and coloured chalks on pale pink prepared paper. Most of Holbein's female sitters either look down or to the side,¹⁷ but the "Lady Parker" looks directly at the viewer; her distinctive eyes are arresting and wide-set. A small French hood decorated with pearls is perched atop Lady Parker's head, revealing her blond hair parted in the middle. A partlet, a short collar, covers her upper chest and shoulders. The Royal Collection identifies this sitter as Grace Newport, Lady Parker and dates the sketch to c. 1540-1543. An entry in the Royal Collection Trust catalogue reads:

This portrait probably shows the young Grace (1515–by 1549), daughter of Sir John Newport, who married Sir Henry Parker in 1523 when she was 8 years old. Grace may have been one of Jane Seymour's ladies, and in 1537 attended both the christening of Prince Edward and the funeral of the Queen shortly afterwards. She is shown wearing the rounded "French hood" popularised by Anne Boleyn and a high-collared dress. Such costume was fashionable in the 1540s, and the portrait can therefore probably be dated towards the end of Holbein's life. Unusually for Holbein, Grace confronts the viewer with a steady gaze rather than facing to left or right. No associated painted portrait is known.¹⁸

¹⁶ The reference is from the Lumley Inventory cited here from Jane Roberts, *Holbein and the Court of Henry VIII: Drawings and Miniatures from the Royal Library, Windsor Castle* (Edinburgh: National Galleries of Scotland, 1993), 13. See also Lionel Cust, "The Lumley Inventories," *The Volume of the Walpole Society*, 6 (1917–1918): 15–35.

¹⁷ This is not, however, unique; the Countess of Surrey by Holbein (RCIN 912214) also confronts the viewer's gaze.

¹⁸ Hans Holbein the Younger (1497/8–1543). Grace, Lady Parker (1515–by 1549) c. 1540–1543. RCIN 912230. <https://www.rct.uk/collection/912230/grace-lady-parker-1515-by-1549> (accessed January 2024).

However, this statement contains several factual errors. The French hood was not popularised by Anne Boleyn; it is a myth that first stemmed from Agnes Strickland's narrative in the nineteenth century.¹⁹ French hoods were popular in England before Anne returned from France in 1521; Princess Mary, Henry VIII's sister, married Louis XII of France and accumulated a trousseau of dresses and headpieces in various styles, including French and Italian.²⁰ Rosalind Mearns pointed out that Mary Tudor wore a French hood during Prince Arthur's wedding festivities in 1501 but that this particular headdress "seems not to have been widely worn until later decades, and images of these early versions are entirely lacking."²¹ One of the earliest visual depictions of the French hood at Henry VIII's court is Lucas Horenbout's miniature of the King's daughter, Princess Mary, dating to c. 1525.²² Mary Tudor and Charles Brandon's joint portrait shows the Queen-duchess wearing a richly bejewelled French hood; it has been usually dated to 1515, but recent research suggests an alternative date of 1532.²³ In the late 1530s and early 1540s, French hoods evolved to be smaller and perched higher on the wearer's head, as evidenced by this type of headdress worn by Henry VIII's daughters, Mary and Elizabeth, in *The Family of Henry VIII* dating to c. 1545.²⁴

Partlets were fashionable since at least 1533 as is evidenced by references to various styles and measurements in the Lisle correspondence.²⁵ At the height of the partlet's popularity in the 1530s and 1540s, it was worn to infill the neck of a woman's upper chest.²⁶ The shape evolved with time; by the 1540s, the partlet usually had a small standing collar, as is shown in Holbein's *Portrait of an English Lady* in the Kunsthistorisches Museum, dating to c. 1540–1543.²⁷

¹⁹ Maria Hayward, *Dress at the Court of King Henry VIII* (London: Routledge, 2007), 172.

²⁰ TNA, SP 1/9 f.101: Wardrobe of Mary the French Queen.

²¹ Rosalind Mearns, "Material Messages: A Reassessment of the Double Portrait of Mary Tudor and Charles Brandon," *Textile History* 50, no. 2 (2019): 128–142.

²² National Portrait Gallery 6453, Queen Mary I, attributed to Lucas Horenbout (or Hornebolte) watercolour on vellum, c. 1525, 1 3/8 in. (35 mm) sight diameter. <https://www.npg.org.uk/collections/search/portrait/mw09583/Queen-Mary-I>

²³ Mearns, "Material Messages," 138.

²⁴ *The Family of Henry VIII*, c. 1545, RCIN 405796, <https://www.rct.uk/collection/405796/the-family-of-henry-viii> (accessed March 2024).

²⁵ Hayward, *Dress*, 167.

²⁶ Hayward, *Dress*, 166.

²⁷ Hans Holbein the Younger, *Portrait of an English Lady*, c. 1540–1543. Oil on panel. Kunsthistorisches Museum, Vienna, Gemäldegalerie, 847.

As will be discussed below, Grace Parker did not die “by 1549,” but at least ten years earlier.²⁸ There is also no firm evidence in court records that Grace served as a regular lady-in-waiting to Jane Seymour or that she attended Prince Edward's christening on 15 October 1537 and Queen Jane's funeral procession on 12 November 1537.²⁹ These events are well-documented, and Grace's name is not recorded. Jane Seymour's household records are fragmentary, but it is possible to identify her ladies-in-waiting and maids of honour based on three documents, including the “book of the Quenes juelles,” a catalogue of jewels she gifted to her ladies³⁰; a list of people who attended Prince Edward's christening³¹; and Jane's funeral procession listing the ladies and maids who served in her Privy Chamber and who took part in the obsequies.³² Grace is not mentioned during any of these events. Her husband, Henry Parker, on the other hand, appears more often in the records from this period. He was knighted at Anne Boleyn's coronation in 1533 and served on Hertfordshire commissions from 1535. He attended occasions of state, such as Prince Edward's christening in 1537 and Anne of Cleves's reception in 1539. He was also called on for military service, joining the King against rebels in 1536 and serving in the rear guard during the war with France in 1544.³³

Grace Newport, wife of Sir Henry Parker and daughter-in-law of Henry Parker, tenth Baron Morley, is a shadowy figure and does not feature prominently in court records during the late 1520s and 1530s, when Holbein was active. She was the daughter of Sir John Newport of Furneux Pelham and Mary Danyell. According to her father's inquisition post mortem, Grace was born in 1515 and was eight years old when she married Henry Parker on 18 May 1523.³⁴ She is mentioned in the last will of her maternal grandmother, Margery Danyell, dated to 1520 and proved in 1523.³⁵ Grace's whereabouts between her marriage in May 1523 and the birth of her first child in August 1533 remain unknown.

²⁸ The 1549 date is widely accepted by historians. See Stanley Thomas Bindoff, *The House of Commons, 1509–1558: Appendices, Constituencies, Members A–C* (London: Boydell & Brewer, 1982), 1:58.

²⁹ J. S. Brewer, James Gairdner, and R. H. Brodie, ed., *Letters and Papers, Foreign and Domestic, of the Reign of Henry VIII* (London: HMSO, 1862–1932), 12 (1):1060. Hereafter *LP*.

³⁰ *LP*, 12 (2):973.

³¹ *LP*, 12 (2):911.

³² *LP*, 12 (1):1060.

³³ Bindoff, *The House of Commons*, 58.

³⁴ George Edward Cokayne, *The Complete Peerage of England, Scotland, Ireland, Great Britain and the United Kingdom: Moels to Nuneham* (London: The St Catherine Press, 1936), 9:224.

³⁵ TNA PROB 11/21/102. Last will of Margery Danyell.

Grace is absent from the households of Henry VIII's wives Anne Boleyn, Jane Seymour and Anne of Cleves during the period from 1533 to 1539. She was only briefly mentioned in 1536 as "Dame Grace, wife of Sir Henry Parker, son and heir to Henry lord Morley" when her jointure was settled in Parliament.³⁶ Grace was presumably not attending the queens as their regular lady-in-waiting because throughout the 1530s she was occupied with bearing and raising children. While it is not impossible that Grace served as lady-in-waiting while pregnant, the conspicuous absence of her name in the court records in the royal household in the 1530s suggests that she withdrew from regular service and devoted her time and energy to bearing and raising her numerous children.

The practice of keeping parish registers began in England in 1538 when Thomas Cromwell ordered the clergy to keep written records of baptisms, marriages and burials. Before 1538, noble families often kept track of the births of their children in private books.³⁷ By a rare stroke of luck, there is a full list of the birth dates and names of children born to Henry Parker and his two wives, complete with the names of the children's godparents.

Henry Parker's first son and heir, Henry, was born in August 1533. More children were born in quick succession: Alice in October 1534, Thomas in November 1535, Charles in January 1536³⁸ and Mary in June 1538.³⁹ These were the children born by Grace Newport. The next child after Mary was named Amy ("Amye") and was born in January 1540. Two of her godparents were "the lord Morley grauntfayther to the sayd Amye and Mystress Amye Calthrope grandmother to the sayd Amye Parker."⁴⁰ The identity of the grandmother provides evidence that Amy Parker was not Grace Newport's child. Following Grace's death at an unknown date, but certainly before the birth of Amy in January 1540, Henry Parker married Elizabeth Calthorpe as his second wife.

³⁶ LP, 10:1087 (3).

³⁷ See for example Sally Varlow, "Sir Francis Knollys's Latin dictionary: New Evidence for Katherine Carey," *Historical Research* 80, no. 29 (August 2007).

³⁸ Lady Mary Tudor's *Privy Purse* expenses record a payment to "the nurce and the mydwife of Harry Parker's wife, my Lady's grace being godmother to her childe." Frederic Madden, *Privy Purse Expenses of the Princess Mary, Daughter of King Henry the Eighth* (London: William Clowes, 1831), 11. Lady Mary as godmother to baby Charles Parker is confirmed in Joseph Jackson Howard, ed., *Miscellanea Genealogica Et Heraldica* (London: Mitchell and Hughes, 1886), 1:301.

³⁹ Jackson Howard, *Miscellanea Genealogica*, 1:301.

⁴⁰ Jackson Howard, *Miscellanea Genealogica*, 1:301.

Elizabeth Calthorpe was the only surviving daughter and heiress of Sir Philip Calthorpe of Erwarton and Amy (sometimes called Amata) Boleyn.⁴¹ It is usually stated that Grace died “before 1549, since we know that by that date her husband had remarried.”⁴² This is deduced from the fact that Elizabeth Calthorpe’s father made his last will on 3 April 1549 wherein he mentioned “Sir Henry Parker, knight, my son-in-law, and Dame Elizabeth Parker, his wife and my daughter.”⁴³ Philip Calthorpe also mentioned “the children of my said daughter” although he did not provide any details about them.⁴⁴ It can now be established for the first time and without doubt that Grace Newport died much earlier than has been hitherto assumed by previous historians; the birth of Amy Parker in January 1540 is a key piece of evidence proving that Henry Parker had remarried and Grace was dead by then. The cause of Grace’s death is not known, but since she was only about twenty-four, it is tempting to speculate that she died in childbirth, possibly on or around 14 June 1538, when Grace’s last recorded child was born.⁴⁵

The exact date when Henry Parker married Elizabeth Calthorpe as his second wife is not recorded. In the last will of Elizabeth’s paternal aunt Alice Boleyn Clere, dating to 28 October 1538, Elizabeth is mentioned as “Elizabeth Calthorpe,” so she was still unmarried at the time.⁴⁶ Amy Parker, Elizabeth’s first child with Henry Parker, was born in January 1540, so she must have been conceived in April 1539. It is reasonable to conclude that Henry Parker married Elizabeth Calthorpe at some point between 28 October 1538, when she was mentioned in her aunt’s will, and April 1539, when she conceived her first child with Henry. An embroidered purse preserved in the Victoria & Albert Museum is associated with Henry

⁴¹ Amy Boleyn was the daughter of William Boleyn and Margaret Butler and thus sister to Thomas Boleyn and aunt to Queen Anne Boleyn. She is often incorrectly referred to as “Jane” in pedigrees because she is confused with her husband’s stepmother, Jane Blennerhassett Calthorpe. Amy died c. 1543 and did not predecease her parents, as is often stated. See the following recent publications for apparent confusion of Amy with Jane: Elizabeth Norton, *The Boleyn Women: The Tudor Femmes Fatales Who Changed English History* (Stroud: Amberley Publishing, 2013), 44 and John Guy and Julia Fox, *Hunting the Falcon: Henry VIII, Anne Boleyn, and the Marriage That Shook Europe* (London: Bloomsbury, 2023), 280.

⁴² The Queen's Gallery Buckingham Palace, *Holbein*, 83.

⁴³ TNA PROB 11/35/71: Will of Sir Philip Calthorpe.

⁴⁴ TNA PROB 11/35/71.

⁴⁵ Jackson Howard, *Miscellanea Genealogica*, 1:301.

⁴⁶ TNA, PROB 11/27/398: Will of Alice Boleyn Clere.

and Elizabeth and is believed to have been made c. 1540, possibly to celebrate their marriage.⁴⁷ Henry and Elizabeth were married for about twenty years.⁴⁸

Besides Grace Newport, Elizabeth Calthorpe and Jane Parker Boleyn are often suggested as possible sitters for the "Lady Parker" sketch.⁴⁹ Like Grace, Elizabeth Calthorpe Parker rarely appeared in court records before Holbein's death in 1543. She would have been referred to as "Lady Parker" from the time of her marriage in c. 1539; Holbein died in 1543, so she would have had about four years to appear at court and sit for the artist's sketch. The reliable evidence shows that Elizabeth rarely visited court, hence the reason she is not glimpsed in the household of Henry's queens.⁵⁰

Elizabeth was very well-connected at court through her family. Elizabeth's grandfather Sir Philip Calthorpe (d. 1535) and his second wife, Jane Blennerhassett, served in Princess Mary's household from October 1521 to July 1525, receiving a joint salary of £40.⁵¹ Elizabeth's mother, Amy (or Amata) Boleyn Calthorpe, was the sister of Sir Thomas Boleyn; Elizabeth was thus first cousin of Queen Anne Boleyn. Elizabeth's marriage to Henry Parker linked her further with the Boleyns since Jane Parker, Henry's sister, was married to George Boleyn.

⁴⁷ Victoria & Albert Museum, Purse, c. 1540, T.246-1927. <https://collections.vam.ac.uk/item/O74959/purse-unknown/>

⁴⁸ Henry Parker had two more children with Elizabeth Calthorpe: Margaret, born in October 1543, and William, born in December 1547. Some sources state that a son named Philip was their only child, but this is evidently not the case: Philip Parker (1578–1604) was Henry Parker and Grace Newport's grandson, born to their eldest son. Henry Parker died in 1552, predeceasing his father and thus never inheriting the title of Baron Morley; his eldest son by Grace Newport, Henry, became the eleventh Baron Morley in 1556. Elizabeth Calthorpe remarried twice; first to Sir William Woodhouse of Waxham and then to Dru Drury, who outlived her. She died in 1578 and was buried in St Martin at Palace Church in Norwich, where a magnificent tomb to her memory still stands today. The Latin inscription on the tomb praises her as a virtuous and sage lady, and as the only daughter of Sir Philip Calthorpe; names her three husbands; and mentions that Dru Drury, her last husband and widower, commissioned the tomb "in a spirit of observance and benevolence, mourning the loss of so dear a wife." Based on the following sources: Jackson Howard, *Miscellanea*, 1:301; engraving in the National Portrait Gallery in London (NPG D26133) providing evidence of Philip Parker's parentage. [<https://www.npg.org.uk/collections/search/portrait/mw129334/Sir-PhilipParker?LinkID=mp56758&role=sit&rNo=0>]. For details of Elizabeth's tomb consult Francis Blomefield, *An Essay Towards a Topographical History of the County of Norfolk* (London: William Miller, 1809) 4:373.

⁴⁹ Julia Fox, *Jane Boleyn: The Infamous Lady Rochford* (London: Weidenfeld & Nicolson, 2007), 329.

⁵⁰ A number of references to "Lady Calthorpe/Calthorp" occur in court records between 1534 and 1544. This is either Elizabeth's mother, Amy Boleyn Calthorpe, or her step-grandmother, Jane Blennerhassett Calthorpe. Unmarried, Elizabeth would have been referred to as "mistress" rather than "lady"; post c. 1539–1540 she would have been referred to as "Lady Parker."

⁵¹ TNA SP 1/23 f.86 and TNA SP 1/19 f.149. See also David Loades, *Mary Tudor: A Life* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1989), 30, 40.

What about Jane Parker? She was born in the early 1500s to Henry Parker, tenth Baron Morley, and Alice St John. Jane had two surviving siblings: Henry and Margaret (who married John Shelton), but it is likely that she also had a brother, Francis, and sisters, Kathryn and Elizabeth, who were old enough to sign their names in Baron Morley's book but who died before reaching marriageable ages.⁵² According to George Cavendish's *Metrical Visions*, Jane was "brought uppe in the court all my yong age."⁵³ Jane's parents served in the household of their kinswoman Margaret Beaufort, Countess of Richmond and Derby, Henry VIII's venerable grandmother. Jane was mentioned several times in Margaret Beaufort's household accounts in the early 1500s, confirming Cavendish's words about her upbringing. The first mention of Jane in Margaret Beaufort's accounts occurred in 1503, when "Jane Parker's nurse" was paid "for keeping of the child."⁵⁴ Jane was recorded as Katherine of Aragon's maid of honour as "Mistress Parker"⁵⁵ during the meeting between Henry VIII and Francis I at the Field of the Cloth of Gold in 1520 and took part in the *Chateau Vert* masque in 1522.

Jane married George Boleyn between 4 October 1524 and the end of 1525⁵⁶ and was thus styled Lady Boleyn during Holbein's first visit to England. In December 1529, Thomas Boleyn, Jane's father-in-law, received the double earldom of Wiltshire and Ormond while George, his only son and heir, became Viscount Rochford. Jane was henceforth referred to as Lady Rochford until her death in 1542. Julia Fox's valid point effectively rules out Jane as Holbein's sitter: "Jane was never Lady Parker. When Holbein first arrived [in England in 1527], she had already been married to George Boleyn for over two years; she was Lady Rochford by the time the artist returned [in 1532]."⁵⁷

⁵² James P. Carley, "Plutarch's Life of Agesilaus: A Recently Located New Year's Gift to Thomas Cromwell by Henry Parker, Lord Morley," in Felicity Riddy, ed. *Prestige, Authority, and Power in Late Medieval Manuscripts and Texts* (York: York Medieval Press, 2000), 167 and 168, n. 52.

⁵³ Samuel Weller Singer, ed., *The Life of Cardinal Wolsey by George Cavendish, His Gentleman Usher, and Metrical Visions, from the Original Autograph Manuscript with Notes and Other Illustrations* (London: C. Whittingham, 1825), 71.

⁵⁴ Susan Powell, ed., *The Household Accounts of Lady Margaret Beaufort (1443-1509) from the Archives of St John's College, Cambridge* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2022), 422, 582.

⁵⁵ Bodleian Library, MS. Ashmole 1116, ff. 95r-99v.

⁵⁶ Fox, *Jane Boleyn*, 39.

⁵⁷ Fox, *Jane Boleyn*, 329.

Susanna Horenbout: Holbein's "Lady Parker"?

So far, we have established that Henry Parker's wives, Grace Newport and Elizabeth Calthorpe, rarely appeared in court records between 1532 and 1543, whereas Jane Parker Boleyn would have been known either as Lady Boleyn or Rochford rather than as Lady Parker. There is compelling evidence to propose that the "Lady Parker" from Holbein's sketch is Susanna Horenbout, miniaturist at the Tudor court and honorary gentlewoman to at least three of Henry VIII's six queens. She was, it will be argued in this paper, the most prominent "Lady Parker" at court and thus the most likely candidate to be identified as Holbein's sitter.

Susanna was member of the Horenbout⁵⁸ family of Flemish artists who gained international acclaim during the late fifteenth and first half of the sixteenth centuries.⁵⁹ She was the daughter of miniaturist and illuminator Gerard Horenbout and sister of Lucas, who followed in his father's footsteps as an artist. Surviving accounts are fragmentary, so the exact record of when Gerard and his family arrived in England and how long he worked for Henry VIII is difficult to determine with certainty. Art historians have concluded that Gerard Horenbout worked as a master painter in Ghent in 1487 and possibly ran a workshop there.⁶⁰ Gerard worked as "painter and illuminator" at the court of Margaret of Austria, Dowager Duchess of Savoy and first female Regent of the Netherlands, and was regularly mentioned in her court records from 1515 to 1521.⁶¹ Margaret of Austria was an avid art collector and dabbled in painting herself, and she took great pleasure in displaying her vast portrait collection to the elite visitors who flocked to her cultured court.⁶² She employed many painters, including her favourite, Bernard van Orley, whose portraits were faithful depictions of Margaret and were copied multiple times throughout her lifetime to be

⁵⁸ The present author adopts the Horenbout spelling although the surname's spelling varies as Horenbolte or Hornebolte.

⁵⁹ Susan E. James, "The Horenbout Family Workshop at the Tudor Court, 1522–1541: Collaboration, Patronage and Production," *Cogent Arts & Humanities* 8, no. 1 (2021).

⁶⁰ For a full discussion on the known documentary evidence of Gerard Horenbout's work in Ghent, see the following publications: Susan Foister, "Horenbout (Hornebolt), Gerard (d. 1540/1)," *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004); and Lorne Campbell and Susan Foister, "Gerard, Lucas and Susanna Horenbout," *The Burlington Magazine* 128, no. 1003 (1986): 720.

⁶¹ Register 1797, 159r–161v: *Chambre des Comptes (Comptes d'hotel de Marguerite d'Autriche, Archives générales du royaume du Belgique, Brussels (henceforth referred to as "Register 1797, 159r–161v"))*. Extracts in Alexandre Joseph Pinchart, *Archives des arts, sciences et lettres : documents inédits, publiés et annotés* (Ghent: L. Hebbelynck, 1860), 1:47.

⁶² Dagmar Eichberger and Lisa Beaven, "Family Members and Political Allies: The Portrait Collection of Margaret of Austria," *The Art Bulletin* 77, no. 2 (June 1995): 225–248.

distributed among the regent's adherents and allies.⁶³ Gerard's best-known work that can be attributed to him beyond doubt is a manuscript known as the *Sforza Hours* commissioned by Bona Sforza, Duchess of Milan, and gifted in an unfinished state to Margaret of Austria. It was begun by Giovanni Petro Birago and finished by Gerard between 1517 and 1521.⁶⁴

Susanna was already making miniatures in May 1521 when she was about eighteen, as evidenced by Albrecht Dürer's testimony that will be cited in full below. She was honing her skills in her father's workshop and certainly observed how Gerard worked on the *Sforza Hours*.⁶⁵ Gerard's itemised bill for work shows that he did not work on the *Sforza Hours* by himself, but that it was a family effort. Gerard's payments included travelling expenses for one of his sons, who went twice to Bruges, for three days on each occasion, to correct mistaken entries in the rubrics of the *Sforza Hours*.⁶⁶

It remains unknown when exactly the Horenbouts came to England and whether they came together or separately. Gerard Horenbout's last recorded appearance in Margaret of Austria's household accounts occurred in January 1521 when the regent bought the portrait of Christian II of Denmark from him.⁶⁷ He and his son Lucas were recorded as painters in the service of Henry VIII between October 1528 and April 1531 and receiving a monthly wage of 33s. 4d. paid by Brian Tuke, the Treasurer of the Chamber.⁶⁸ On 22 June 1534, Lucas was granted the office of the King's Painter and received a "licence to keep in his service four journeymen, or covenant servants born out of the King's dominions."⁶⁹ When he died in May 1544, Lucas was still "servante and painter unto the King's majestie."⁷⁰ The Royal Collection dates the earliest known miniature from the Horenbout workshop executed in England to c. 1525. In one of the love letters written to Anne Boleyn between c. 1526 and c. 1528, the King mentioned a gift: "my picture set in a

⁶³ Sabine Haag, Dagmar Eichberger, and Annemarie Jordan Gschwend, ed., *Women, the Art of Power: Three Women from the House of Habsburg*, (Innsbruck: Schloss Ambras, 2018), 25–35.

⁶⁴ British Library, MS Add. 34294. See also Mark L. Evans, *The Sforza Hours* (London: The British Library, 1992), 28.

⁶⁵ Kathleen E. Kennedy suggests that "if Susanna was already an accomplished artist in 1521, she must have taken part in the illumination of the *Sforza Hours*." Kathleen E. Kennedy, "Susanna Horenbout, Courtier and Artist," *Art Herstory*, 1 December 2019, <https://artherstory.net/susanna-horenbout-courtier-and-artist/>

⁶⁶ Register 1797, 159r–161v.

⁶⁷ Register 1797, 159r–161v.

⁶⁸ LP, 5:303–326.

⁶⁹ LP, 7:14.

⁷⁰ John Gough Nichols, "Notices of the Contemporaries and Successors of Holbein," in *Archaeologia or Miscellaneous Tracts Relating to Antiquity* (London: J. Nichols and Sons, 1863), 39:46.

bracelet with the whole device which you already know.”⁷¹ The only workshop producing miniatures at this time in England was the Horenbout workshop, and it is likely that the “picture set in a bracelet” was referring to a miniature. The abovementioned evidence allows us to tentatively date the start of the Horenbouts’ production at the Tudor court to between c. 1521 and c. 1525.⁷²

The earliest mention of Susanna Horenbout in England is from her mother’s commemorative lozenge-shaped funeral brass dating to November 1529, designed by Gerard. It has been recently suggested that a female painter who presented Charles V, Holy Roman Emperor, with his portrait in Calais in July 1520 was Susanna, although it is worth noting that direct evidence specifically mentioning her by name is lacking.⁷³

Susanna Horenbout was born c. 1503. In May 1521, she was living with her father in Antwerp, where she was introduced to German painter Albrecht Dürer, who praised Susanna in an entry in his diary:

Master Gerhardt, the miniature painter [*illuminist*], has a daughter about eighteen years old, called Susanna, who has illuminated a little page with a *Saviour*, for which I gave her 1 gulden. It is a great wonder that a woman should be able to do such work.⁷⁴

Dürer praising Susanna’s talent as a “wonder” reflects the early modern view that a female artist was a novelty.⁷⁵ He paid for her work, an illuminated *Salvator Mundi*, the

⁷¹ “. . . ma peinture myse en braselette atoute la device que deia sabes.” Extract from Letter 1, Henry VIII to Anne Boleyn. The seventeen love letters are preserved in the Vatican Library, their current shelfmark is Vat. lat. 3731. pt. A; a digital copy is available online: https://digi.vatlib.it/view/MSS_Vat.lat.3731.pt.A For the analysis of the originals in French and their comparison to English translations see Susi Bellinello, *The Love Letters of Henry VIII to Anne Boleyn. Sources of the Love that Changed England Forever* (Venice: Università Ca' Foscari Venezia, 1990).

⁷² <https://www.npg.org.uk/collections/search/portrait/mw09583/Queen-Mary-I>

⁷³ Emma Luisa Cahill Marrón, “Arte y Magnificencia en la Construcción de la Imagen de Poder Femenino a Comienzos de la Edad Moderna: La Reina Catalina de Aragón y la Cultura del Renacimiento,” (PhD dissertation, University of Murcia, 2022), 463.

⁷⁴ “Meister Gerhardt, Illuminist, hat ein Töchterlein um die 18 Jahre alt namens Susanna, die eine kolorierte Seite, einen Heiland, angefertigt hat, für die ich ihr einen Gulden bezahlt habe. Es ist ein großes Wunder, dass eine Frau so viel leisten kann.” Friedrich Leitschuh, ed., *Albrecht Dürer's Tagebuch der Reise in die Niederlande*, (Leipzig: F.A. Brockhaus, 1884), 85.

⁷⁵ Christina Strunck, “Female Court Artists: Women’s Career Strategies in the Courts of the Early Modern Period,” in Tanja L. Jones, ed., *Women Artists in the Early Modern Courts of Europe (c. 1450–1700)* (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 2021), 62.

same amount that he charged for paintings of his own.⁷⁶ Dürer's short mention of Susanna reveals that she was working in her father's workshop and was already skilled in the art of illumination, the decoration of manuscripts, particularly religious texts, with intricate designs, illustrations and ornamentation. These decorations were often created using vibrant colours, gold and silver leaf, and intricate designs, and they served to enhance the aesthetic appeal of the manuscripts while also conveying important religious messages. The illustrations could range from simple decorative motifs and borders to elaborate full-page illustrations depicting scenes from the Bible, lives of saints, or other subjects. These illuminations were not only decorative but also served a didactic purpose, helping to convey the meanings of the text through rich visual imagery. Current theory among art historians is that Susanna may have worked on illuminating *Epistle-Lectionary* and *Gospel-Lectionary* commissioned by Cardinal Wolsey between 1528 and 1529.⁷⁷

Lodovico Guicciardinini, contemporary Italian writer and merchant, remarked about Susanna:

She was an excellent painter, especially in making of very small works beyond all belief; and most excellent in illuminating so that the great King Henry VIII brought her to England with great gifts and provisions, where she lived many years in great favour at his court and died rich and honoured.⁷⁸

Guicciardinini distinguished between "very small works," miniatures, and illumination.⁷⁹ Despite such high praise from these two contemporaries, none of Susanna's miniatures are known to survive, perhaps because, as pointed out by Susan E. James, "most of the literature concerning the Horenbout workshop has concentrated on the family's output as miniaturists, assigning to Lucas, erroneously in many cases, virtually all existing 'Horenbout' portraits."⁸⁰ Lucas Horenbout is credited with four known miniatures of the members of the royal family: Henry VIII and his first wife, Katherine of Aragon; Henry

⁷⁶ Lorne Campbell and Susan Foister, "Gerard, Lucas and Susanna Horenbout," 725.

⁷⁷ Susan E. James, "The Horenbout Family Workshop," 19.

⁷⁸ "fu eccellente nella pittura, massime nel fare opere minutissime oltre a ogni crede, & eccellentissima nell'alluminare, in tanto che il gran' Re Enrico ottavo con gran' doni & gran' prouuisione, la tiro in Inghilterra, doue visse molti anni in gran' faoure, & gratia di tutta la Corte, & iui finalmente si mori ricca, & honorata." Campbell and Foister, "Gerard, Lucas and Susanna Horenbout," 725.

⁷⁹ Scot McKendrick and Thomas Kren, ed., *Illuminating the Renaissance, The Triumph of Flemish Manuscript Painting in Europe* (Los Angeles: The J. Paul Getty Museum, 2003), 37.

⁸⁰ James, "The Horenbout Family Workshop," specific page needed?

FitzRoy, Duke of Richmond, and Princess Mary.⁸¹ At least four more miniatures from the Horenbout workshop are dispersed across various portrait collections in England, including an unknown sitter formerly labelled as Katherine of Aragon or Anne Boleyn in the Duke of Buccleuch collection, Jane Seymour and Katherine Parr at Sudeley Castle and Katherine Parr at Compton Verney.

Unlike her father and brother, Susanna is not named as a court painter or miniaturist in surviving household accounts from Henry VIII's reign, making it difficult to establish how many works of art were unarguably hers.⁸² Attempts have been made in recent years to link her with the surviving miniatures from the Horenbout workshop, but the consensus among art historians is that her body of work remains unidentified.⁸³ However, even if Susanna's works cannot be precisely identified today, it does not change the fact that her talent was praised by the likes of Dürer and Guicciardini, highlighting the importance of Susanna as the first female painter who introduced the art of miniature to the Tudor court.

Susanna married John Parker, Yeoman of the King's Wardrobe of Robes and Keeper of the Palace of Westminster, at some point during the 1520s, although the exact date of their marriage is not recorded. Susanna was referred to as "Lady Parker" until her husband's death in September or October 1537. John Parker's earliest reference as Yeoman of the King's Wardrobe of Robes is from January 1526 when he was mentioned in the Eltham Ordinances.⁸⁴ Susanna and her husband are mentioned in the New Year's gift list of 1532; she is named as "Susan Parker" and listed among the "gentlewomen," making it likely that she served as an honorary gentlewoman to Anne Boleyn, whose five serving women are

⁸¹ Susan E. James, *The Feminine Dynamic in English Art, 1485–1603: Women As Consumers, Patrons and Painters* (New York: Routledge, 2016), 270.

⁸² Kathleen E. Kennedy notes succinctly: "Susanna Horenbout's oeuvre, or apparent lack of it, may cause more frustration to scholars today than it did to her or to her family in the sixteenth century." Kennedy, "Susanna Horenbout." Consult also McKendrick and Kren, *Illuminating the Renaissance*, 432.

⁸³ Susan E. James argued that Susanna's earliest surviving work at the Tudor court is the miniature of Henry VIII from the letters patent of Thomas Forster dating to 28 April 1524. This image is similar to the miniature of the King from the Royal Collection (RCIN 420640), and it led James to propose that this miniature too is the work of Susanna. James argued that Susanna's monogram is on the King's hat badge, which she construes as bearing Susanna's initials "sh." See James, *The Feminine Dynamic*, 270–276. For refutation of James's theory regarding miniatures attributed to Susanna, see Robert Tittler, "Review: 'The Feminine Dynamic' in Tudor Art: A reassessment," *The British Art Journal* 17, no. 1 (Spring 2016): 123–130; and Ashley Owens, "Patronage and Portable Portraits: Early English Miniatures: 1520–1544" (MA thesis, University of Nebraska-Lincoln, 2019), 16.

⁸⁴ *LP*, 4:14 and *LP*, 5:1.

listed below Susanna's name.⁸⁵ "Parker of the Robes and his wife" are mentioned in the 1533 New Year's gift roll.⁸⁶ Susanna's name appears again in the New Year's gift list of 1534,⁸⁷ but not in 1539 when she was briefly absent from England.⁸⁸

Susanna remarried to John Gylmyn or Gilman, Sergeant of the Woodyard, on 22 September 1539.⁸⁹ Sir John Cheke, who identified Holbein's sitters, likely knew Susanna as the wife of John Gilman but recognized that her likeness was taken when she was Lady Parker. In October 1539, courtier Sir Anthony Denny, who replaced her first husband as Keeper of the Palace of Westminster, wrote that Henry VIII sent "late Mistress Parker, now Mistress Gylmyn" to Germany to join the household of Anne of Cleves, who was to become the King's fourth wife.⁹⁰ Susanna was to act as both the new Queen's servant, presumably because she spoke Dutch, and as the King's informant. Denny remarked that Susanna was impoverished, so the King ordered Thomas Cromwell to see that she was appropriately prepared for the journey. Susanna is recorded in Anne of Cleves's entourage in Calais on 13 December 1539, teaching the new Queen how to play the card game called cent.⁹¹ In December 1539, she was appointed "first of her gentlewomen, because she was sent here by the King."⁹² This is a strong piece of evidence that Susanna was highly favoured by the King and was a prominent court figure in her own right. She was also listed as "Gilmyn" among "Gentlewomen of the Privy Chamber" in 1540.⁹³ As a "gentlewoman," Susanna's status was lower than that of a lady-in-waiting, but her duties would have been similar. Ladies-in-waiting were married women and members of the aristocracy, often duchesses, marchionesses, countesses and baronesses. The Eltham Ordinances of 1526 characterise the Queen's gentlewomen as "being lords' daughters or widows."⁹⁴

⁸⁵ TNA E 101/420/15: The 1532 New Year's gift roll.

⁸⁶ LP, 6:32.

⁸⁷ TNA E 101/421/13: The 1534 New Year's gift roll.

⁸⁸ Maria Hayward, "Gift Giving at the Court of Henry VIII: The 1539 New Year's Gift Roll in Context," *Antiquaries Journal* 85 (2005): 125–75.

⁸⁹ Arthur Meredyth Burke, ed., *Memorials of St. Margaret's Church, Westminster, Comprising the Parish Registers, 1539-1660, and Other Churchwardens' Accounts, 1460-1603* (London: Eyre & Spottiswood, 1914), 265. Consult also LP, 17:1258, 12?62.

⁹⁰ TNA SP 1/154 f. 5. Abbreviated in the LP, 14 (2):297.

⁹¹ Muriel St Clare Byrne, ed., *The Lisle Letters* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1981), 5:726.

⁹² LP, 14 (2):634.

⁹³ LP, 15:21. Editors of the *Letters and Papers* date this document to January 1540, but Gareth Russell convincingly argues that this list may in fact describe ladies who served Henry VIII's fifth wife, Katherine Howard. See Gareth Russell, *Young & Damned & Fair: The Life and Tragedy of Catherine Howard at the Court of Henry VIII* (London: William Collins, 2017), 145.

⁹⁴ LP, 4:15.

Henry VIII married Anne of Cleves on 6 January 1540, but the marriage was annulled six months later and the King married his fifth wife, Katherine Howard, in July 1540. In the early 1540s, Susanna gave birth to two children: Henry, whose godfather was Henry VIII, and Anne, who may have been named after Anne of Cleves.⁹⁵ Susanna resumed her career as gentlewoman to the King's sixth and final wife, Katherine Parr.⁹⁶ She is mentioned in Katherine Parr's household in November 1543 and in August 1544 received twelve yards of black satin from Henry VIII's elder daughter, Lady Mary.⁹⁷

Importance of the commission

If Susanna Horenbout is the "Lady Parker" from Hans Holbein's sketch, it is a significant commission because it represents the first portrait of a female painter active in sixteenth-century England. Other female artists in sixteenth-century Europe, most notably Levina Teerlinc, Catharina van Hemessen, Lavinia Fontana and Sofonisba Anguissola, produced self-portraits, highlighting the importance of preserving their own images for posterity.⁹⁸ Levina Teerlinc, a Flemish artist who was employed at the Tudor court as a "paintrix" in 1546 and who followed in Susanna's footsteps, also produced at least one self-portrait.⁹⁹ Catharina van Hemessen signed her own self-portrait, which she painted at the age of twenty with the following inscription in Latin: "I, Catherine van Hemessen, have painted myself/1548/."¹⁰⁰ No self-portrait of Susanna is known to have survived, but a commission from a fellow painter seems plausible. It would have served as an enhancement of her reputation and value as an artist herself, as being associated with a master like Holbein would lend prestige and credibility to her own work. The sketch was likely executed between Holbein's return to England in 1532 and 1539, when Susanna was married to John Parker and before she remarried to John Gilman. No corresponding painting based on the sketch of "the Lady Parker" is known to survive.¹⁰¹

⁹⁵ Henry VIII as godfather to John and Susanna's son is mentioned in John Gilman's last will: TNA PROB 11/40/314.

⁹⁶ LP, 19 (1):80 n. 26.

⁹⁷ Madden, *Privy Purse Expenses*, 161.

⁹⁸ Catherine King, "Looking a Sight: Sixteenth-Century Portraits of Woman Artists," *Zeitschrift für Kunstgeschichte* 58 (1995), 381–406.

⁹⁹ Susan Frye, *Pens and Needles: Women's Textualities in Early Modern England* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2010), 83. For the reference to Levina as a "paintrix" consult TNA SP 4/1 f.102.

¹⁰⁰ Elizabeth Sutton, *Women Artists and Patrons in the Netherlands, 1500–1700* (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 2019), 29.

¹⁰¹ In 1913, Arthur B. Chamberlain proposed that two of Holbein's miniatures from the Kunsthistorisches Museum in Vienna are Susanna and her husband John Parker. See Kunsthistorisches Museum Wien,

Conclusion

Considering Susanna Horenbout's court connections and prominence in the historical record during Hans Holbein's years when he lived and worked in England, it is argued in this paper that she is the most likely candidate to be identified as the "Lady Parker." The identification of the sitter as Grace Newport by the Royal Collection is based on the erroneous notion that Grace was prominent in court circles, but, as the evidence presented herein shows, Grace is a shadowy figure and does not appear often in the royal household. She gave birth to at least five children in quick succession between 1533 and 1538, and the absence of her name in court records during this period suggests that she withdrew from court to devote her time to bearing and rearing her children. The date of Grace's death can be narrowed down from "by 1549" to before January 1540, based on the never before discussed evidence presented within this paper.

The ladies Elizabeth Calthorpe, Henry Parker's second wife, and Jane Parker, his sister, suggested as sitters for the "Lady Parker" sketch, are not likely candidates. Elizabeth Calthorpe married Henry Parker, Grace Newport's widower, before January 1540. Jane Parker would have been known to Holbein as Lady Boleyn during his first visit in 1526 and as Lady Rochford during his second visit. It is unlikely that John Cheke, who identified the sitters from Holbein's sketches, would have remembered Jane Boleyn as "Lady Parker"; she was always referred to as "Lady Rochford."

This leaves only one "Lady Parker" who was prominent and highly favoured at court at the time of Hans Holbein's years as the royal painter: Susanna Parker Gilman, née Horenbout. Her first husband, John Parker, was Keeper of the Robes and thus a highly prestigious official of Henry VIII's household, and it is likely that John Cheke would have labelled Holbein's sketch depicting Susanna as "Lady Parker" rather than identifying her by her less prestigious second husband's name, "Gilman." It is also likely that although

Gemäldegalerie, 6272. Chamberlain's proposed identification has been met with scepticism among art historians for several reasons. The inscription indicates that the female Vienna sitter was twenty-eight in 1534, which would place her birth in 1506; Albrecht Dürer, who met Susanna, remarked in 1521 that she was about eighteen years old, which means she was born c. 1503. The dress of the Vienna sitter is German in style and modest, not that of a lady of the Tudor court. Susanna served as gentlewoman to Henry VIII's queens and would have dressed similarly to other court ladies. Art historian Maryan W. Ainsworth concluded that "the identification of the Vienna portrait pair as Susanna Horenbout and her husband cannot be supported by any corroborating evidence." The entry in the catalogue at the Kunsthistorisches Museum identifies the woman as "the wife of servant at the court of Henry VIII" and not as Susanna Horenbout. Based on the following works: Arthur Bensley Chamberlain, *Hans Holbein the Younger* (New York: Dodd, Mead and Company, 1913), 2:70; Maryan W. Ainsworth, *German Paintings in the Metropolitan Museum of Art, 1350-1600* (New York: The Metropolitan Museum of Art), 139.

Cheke knew Susanna as the wife of John Gilman, he recognized that her likeness was taken when she was Lady Parker, hence why he identified her as "Parker" rather than as "Gilman."

It is surprising that Susanna has never been linked with this particular sketch by Holbein despite her prominence at the Tudor court overlapping with Holbein's residence there. She was known as "Lady Parker" and features prominently in the royal household accounts throughout the 1530s and 1540s, the time when Holbein painted eminent members of Henry VIII's court, including women such as the King's wives and their ladies-in-waiting.

Susanna served as gentlewoman to Henry VIII's queens and was highly favoured by the King, who stood as godfather to her son, Henry. Susanna, who was also a painter and miniaturist learning the craft in her father's workshop, has never been proposed as the possible sitter and thus became forgotten by time. It is to be hoped that this paper will bring Susanna's potential connection to the identity of Hans Holbein's "Lady Parker" into clearer focus, shedding new light on the intriguing link between her and the enigmatic lady depicted in the sketch.¹⁰²

¹⁰² I would like to thank the two anonymous reviewers, whose invaluable comments and feedback have significantly strengthened this paper.

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