

# Tudors

## HENRY VIII BY MICHAEL COLEMAN

**BARNEY:** In 1485 Henry Tudor marched his army to a place called Bosworth for a big fight with the army of King Richard III of England.

**ANNOUNCER:** And the winner, by one army to nil, is: Hen-ry Tu-dor!

**BARNEY:** Henry became Henry the Seventh, the first Tudor King of England. When he died, nearly 24 years later, his son took over. As his name was Henry too, he became - no, not Henry Two; Henry the Eighth.

Life in the royal court was very different to life outside with the common people. The food was better, and Henry didn't have to work. Just about everything was done for him...

**OFFICIAL:** Ah. You must be the boy joining the royal court on work experience.

**BOY:** Yes, sir! I really want to know what the King does on his throne!

**OFFICIAL:** Then you're in luck, lad. The King needs a new Groom of the Stool.

**BOY:** Wow! Will I get to see the King in action? I really want to get to the bottom of how things work.

**OFFICIAL:** You'll do that all right. Every day. Twice sometimes.

**BOY:** Great! So - what does the Groom of the Stool do, exactly?

**OFFICIAL:** Simple. After the king has been to the toilet, the Groom wipes his bottom for him. What do you think of that?

**BOY:** I think the job stinks!

**BARNEY:** Henry had many talents. He was a fine sportsman. He was musical too - some say he composed the famous tune, 'Greensleeves'. He had everything a king could want - except for a son of his own to become king after him. But - what Henry wanted, Henry usually got...





- VOICE: *(Reality TV style)* Are you happy, Henry?
- HENRY VIII: No, I'm not. I want a new wife.
- VOICE: You already have a wife. Catherine of Aragon. And a lovely daughter, Mary.
- HENRY VIII: That's what Cardinal Wolsey keeps saying. But I need a son, to carry on the name of Tudor! Catherine obviously can't manage it, so I need a wife who can. I want a divorce!
- VOICE: You're a member of the Catholic church, Henry. Divorce is forbidden.
- HENRY VIII: Then I'll set up a Church of England! And the leader of that church will let me have a divorce.
- VOICE: How do you know?
- HENRY VIII: Because the leader will be me!
- BARNEY: And so the Church of England was established, with the King as its Supreme Governor. Not everybody agreed with what Henry had done, though. His friend and Lord Chancellor, Thomas More, disagreed loudly - until the King shut him up in a very effective way: he had his head cut off.
- Henry's divorce went through and he married his second wife, Anne Boleyn, who gave him...a second daughter, Elizabeth. It looked like this wife wasn't going to give him a son either. Henry decided that his marriage to Anne Boleyn had to go for the chop - and so did she!
- Annoying the King wasn't the only dodgy thing to do in Tudor times. You could be punished for all sorts of things...
- COPPER: Gotcha! Caught in the act!
- URCHIN: What? I weren't doing nuffink!
- COPPER: That's the whole point. It's Sunday. You should be in church. Not going to church is a crime!
- URCHIN: I'm not well! I didn't want to infect everybody. I thought I'd sit here and play cards instead.
- COPPER: Playing cards on a Holy day? That's a crime an' all!



- URCHIN: Oh, this is stupid. I'm gonna become a tramp. I'll just tramp around all day doing what I want to do.
- COPPER: Ooh, I like the sound of that.
- URCHIN: You do?
- COPPER: I do. 'Cos the first time I catch you a-tramping, you'll get a hole burned in your ear. The second time you'll get a hole burned in the other ear. And the third time, it's... 'Ere, where you going?
- URCHIN: I'm late for church!
- BARNEY: In 1536, King Henry married for a third time - and it was third time lucky...sort of. About eighteen months later his new wife, Jane Seymour, gave birth to Henry's longed-for son: Prince Edward. But, just two weeks afterwards, Jane died.
- Henry was so sad, he didn't start looking for another wife for nearly two years. When he did, he sent his court portrait painter - a man named Hans Holbein - out to paint pictures for him to look at. Nowadays the pictures would speak for themselves, of course...
- ANNE: My name is Anne and this is my website profile. I live in a place called Cleves. I am twenty-four years old - and I am single! If you are rich and royal I could be the one you're looking for!
- BARNEY: Holbein's portrait must have made Anne of Cleves look pretty enough because on the strength of it Henry agreed to marry her. But when he finally met the real person, he roared:
- HENRY: I've married the Flanders Mare!
- BARNEY: Henry's fourth marriage lasted just six months before he was galloping to the divorce court again!
- BARNEY: Whether Anne ate like a horse as well isn't known. Henry certainly did - but then food in the royal court was plentiful. However, for the poor, that definitely wasn't the case...
- COMPERE: (*Game show style*) And here he is, our celebrity cook - Oliver Jammy!
- OLIVER: Thanks a lot. Right, today I'm gonna show yer how to make a nutritious dinner out of the ingredients available to yer poor people in Tudor times. So what, we got then?



- COMPERE: Bread, turnips, beans and cabbage.
- OLIVER: That all?
- COMPERE: That's all that most people had in their cupboard - if they had a cupboard.
- OLIVER: All right, then. Yer cut yer bread, grate yer turnip, slice yer beans, chop yer cabbage, lay out yer bread, add yer turnip and beans and cabbage and there yer go - a pukka turnip, bean and cabbage sarnie!
- BARNEY: Henry's fifth wife was Kathryn Howard. She was 19 and he was forty-nine and before too long, Kathryn was quietly meeting boyfriends more her own age. But Henry knew just how to put a stop to that.
- Kathryn Howard was executed less than two years after her wedding. Henry's, er...hang on...four, five...I'm running out of fingers...yes, sixth wife was Katherine Parr. Their marriage ended four years later - but she wasn't divorced or executed. She survived!
- When King Henry died in 1547 he'd reigned for nearly thirty-eight years. His son, Prince Edward, became king at the age of nine. But he wasn't a healthy lad - and the doctors in Tudor times had some very funny ideas...
- EDWARD: I don't feel very well!
- DOCTOR: Too much blood in your body, young man. We'll have to let some out. Now, this might sting a bit...
- EDWARD: No! Isn't there another way of getting some blood out?
- DOCTOR: Not as quickly, no.
- EDWARD: I don't care how long it takes!
- DOCTOR: Very well. Hand me that bucket of leeches, nurse. Thank you. These little chaps suck your blood out slowly. Mind you, they're not so little when they've finished, ha-ha! Now I'll just put one here...and here...and here...
- EDWARD: I don't feel very well!
- BARNEY: Poor Edward never did fully recover. He died of tuberculosis in 1553, aged just fifteen.
- EDWARD: I told you I didn't feel very well...
- BARNEY: The Elizabethan age was nearly ready to begin.