



The
Six Wives
of King Henry VIII

Catherine of Aragon

1485-1536

Catherine came to England from Spain to marry Henry's elder brother, Arthur. A year later Arthur died and Catherine became engaged to Henry.

Henry and Catherine got married in May 1509 which was when Henry became King. They had six children but only one, Mary, survived.

As Henry got older he became more determined to have a son who would become king after he died. After 23 years of marriage Henry divorced Catherine so that he could marry someone else to give him a son.

After the divorce, in January 1553, Catherine of Aragon was sent to the countryside where she lived until she died in 1536.

Anne Boleyn

1507-1536

Anne Boleyn came to the court of King Henry VIII in 1526. She was clever and educated and King Henry fell in love with her.

Henry married Anne Boleyn in 1533 straight after his divorce from Catherine of Aragon. Later in that same year they had a baby daughter. The child was called Elizabeth. Because the baby was not a boy, Henry was angry and disappointed.

Two years later Anne fell pregnant again, but the baby died.

Anne was arrested for being unfaithful to Henry. He said that Anne was a witch. She was imprisoned in the Tower of London for three months. Then on 19 May 1536 he had her head chopped off.

They were married for 3 years.

Jane Seymour

1509-1537

Jane Seymour had been a Lady-in-Waiting to both Catherine of Aragon and Anne Boleyn.

She was a quiet and meek lady.

On 30 May 1536, only 11 days after Anne had her head chopped off, Henry married Jane.

The following year, Jane gave birth to a son called Edward. This was the heir to the throne that Henry wanted. He was very pleased.

Sadly, Anne was very ill after the birth of her son. She attended her son's christening but died a week later on 12 October 1537.

Jane was placed in Henry's tomb at St. George's and was the only one of his wives to be buried with him.

Anne of Cleves

1515-1557

Anne of Cleves was the fourth wife of Henry VIII. She was German, the daughter of the Duke of Cleves.

Henry fell in love with a portrait of Anne and, although he had never met her, agreed that she should come over from Germany so that he could marry her.

Unfortunately, the painting was not a real likeness. Henry thought Anne was so ugly when he first saw her that he said she looked like a "Flander's mare" (horse).

Henry had to go through with the marriage as he had already promised her father. They were married in January 1540, but Henry divorced Anne later that same year.

They divorced and Anne was left with a very good pension so she lived happily in England, enjoyed visiting Henry and even became fond of English beer.

Catherine Howard

1520-1542

Henry married Catherine Howard in July 1540 after he had divorced Anne of Cleves.

Their marriage lasted just over a year. Catherine was very pretty and full of fun. Henry loved her and called her his "rose without a thorn".

In 1541 she was accused of having boyfriends before she was married.

Then she was accused of having boyfriends after she was married.

She was charged with treason and was beheaded on 13 February 1542. She was only 20 years old when she died.

Catherine Parr

1512-1548

Catherine Parr was the sixth wife of King Henry VIII. She had already lost two husbands by the time she married Henry.

Catherine had no children of her own but she was kind to her three step-children (Mary, Elizabeth and Edward).

During their marriage, Henry became sick and Catherine nursed him. Henry became sicker and died in 1547. Henry and Catherine were still married when he died.

Later that year, Catherine of Parr got married again but she died the following year.