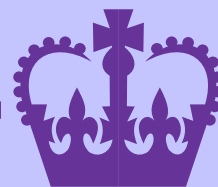


CHENIES MANOR

NEAR AMERSHAM

Royal
Connections



Did Queen Elizabeth I lose her jewellery here in 1570?

Chenies Manor is a Tudor manor house, built around 1460. Originally it was a simple hunting lodge where nobility would enjoy rustic pursuits. In 1526, John Russell, a royal courtier and statesman started to transform the hunting lodge into a house fit for royal court after he married a wealthy heiress who brought the Chenies Estate into the marriage as her dowry.

Henry VIII is said to have visited on several occasions and was so impressed with the renovations, especially the chimneys, he commissioned the same builders to work on Hampton Court Palace.

In 1541, Henry visited with his fifth wife, Catherine Howard, who was carrying on an affair with a member of the court retinue, Thomas Culpepper. It may have been at Chenies that Archbishop Cranmer's secret informers gathered evidence that ultimately led to Catherine's execution for treason a few months later. It is claimed that Henry's halting footsteps can still be heard echoing down the corridor to the room that Catherine occupied during her stay. (The king at the time was suffering from an ulcerated leg).

Like her father, Queen Elizabeth I visited several times, her bedroom later being converted to a billiards room. On one occasion in 1570, according to an



Chenies Manor



Henry VIII c1540
(photographer Scott Head)



Elizabeth I : Painted by
Steven van der Meulen c1565-70

entry in a wardrobe book, she lost some jewellery, tiny gold fastenings called aglets.

"Item – lost from the face of a gown, in our wearing the same at Cheynes, July anno 12 (1570), one pair of small aglets, enamelled blue, parcel of 183 pair."

There is a huge oak tree in the grounds of the Manor, known as Queen Elizabeth's Oak, which would have been an impressive specimen even in the 16th century. It is thought she may have lost the jewellery under this tree.



Ancient oak, Chenies

Further information

References: Strickland, Lives of the Queens of England, Vol V1, pp 279-280

www.britainexpress.com (article by David Ross)