Tudor tunes:







music at the courts of Henry VIII, Elizabeth I and James VI and I

LIVEWORKSHEETS

Music was of paramount importance in the Tudor period, particularly at the royal court: performers were tasked with privately entertaining monarchs and tutoring their children, and were rewarded with extravagant tips and even personal praise from the king or queen.



LIVEWORKSHEETS

Music was an important facet of elite 16th-century culture. It played a part in every aspect of court life: processions, coronations, funerals, baptisms, fanfares announcing the monarch's approach, music in the privy chamber, and music for the pageants and masques that entertained the court.



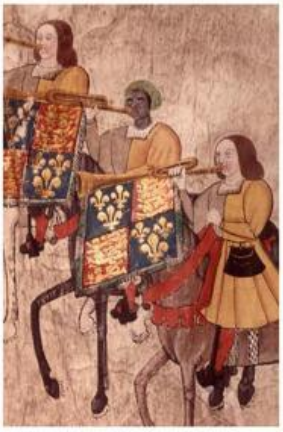




It was also an integral part of religious worship.

LIVEWORKSHEETS

Music was provided both by professional musicians and by courtiers. Playing, singing and dancing were all essential elements of royal and noble education.
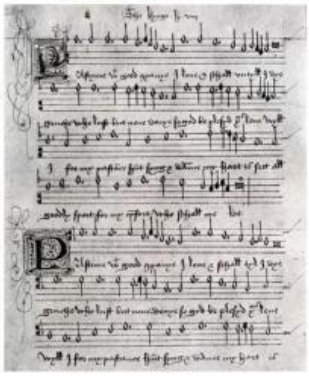





Professional court musicians, meanwhile, had their own hierarchy – those who played 'loud' instruments – for example, trumpets and cornets – were less valued than those who played 'soft' instruments, such as stringed instruments and keyboards. These 'soft' players were the private entertainers of the monarch, and would form part of his privy chamber.

LIVEWORKSHEETS

Henry VIII and music

Of his musical family, Henry VIII was probably the most gifted. He played numerous instruments: the lute, the organ and other keyboards; recorders, the flute and the harp, and he had a good singing voice.







Henry wrote a number of compositions, the most famous probably 'Pastime with Good Company', although, disappointingly, probably not 'Greensleeves' which is later in date.

LIVEWORKSHEETS

Henry didn't just play several instruments, he also owned an enormous collection of them. His throng included cornets, bagpipes (called drones), viols, lutes, flutes, shawms (a double-reed woodwind instrument) and more than 150 recorders.







LIVEWORKSHEETS

Elizabeth I

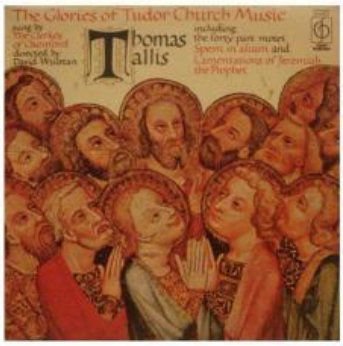
The virginals seem to have been the instrument of choice for Elizabeth I, who spent regular hours practising. One of Elizabeth's instruments, dated from a tiny inscription to 1594, is now housed in the Victoria & Albert Museum in London.

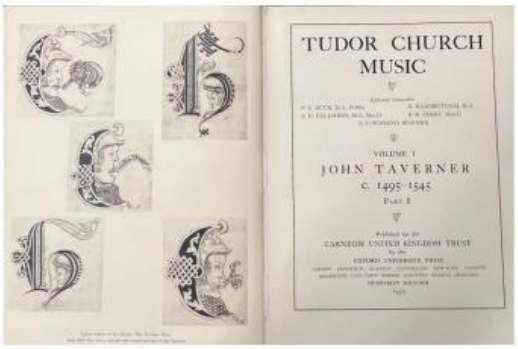


LIVEWORKSHEETS

Worship

Music was a vital component of worship before the Reformation. To have an accomplished chapel of singers was an important mark of status, and the finding of suitable men and boys was something that occupied the minds of the highest.







There is correspondence relating to the friendly rivalry between Cardinal Wolsey and Henry VIII regarding the singers in their chapels: both men sought to recruit talented choristers, and even arranged a competition to see whose choir was the better

LIVEWORKSHEETS

The Scottish court

Music was just as important at the Scottish court as at the English. While there were bagpipes at the English court, there is no mention of them at James V's court, but there were trumpeters, whistlers and drummers. These 'loud' musicians were used in war and for ceremonial purposes, such as greeting James V's two queens, Madeleine and Marie, on their arrival in Scotland in 1537 and 1538 respectively.







The Scottish monarchs also enjoyed hearing and playing 'soft' music: James V and Marie of Guise each had a 'consort' of Italian viols. James V's own principal instrument seems to have been the lute.

LIVEWORKSHEETS