

The Wittenberg Times

1526-1550



All the news that's fit to print with some editorializing by Martin Luther
Editor: Hank Bitten

1536 January 7 Catherine of Aragon dies: 1485-1536 (Exactly 479 years ago today)

Catherine of Aragon, former wife of King Henry VIII, died today at two o'clock in the afternoon at Kimbolton Castle. She became ill on Christmas and the embalmer has listed the cause of death as a black tumor on her heart. Her doctors pleaded with King Henry VIII for Catherine to see her 20 year old daughter, Mary, but this was denied. Her only visitors were the imperial ambassador, Eustace Chapuys and Maria deSalinas, two friends.

We received a copy of a hand-written letter, supposedly written by Catherine to her former husband just hours before her death. *"My most dear Lord, King, and Husband, The hour of my death now approaching, I cannot choose but, out of the love I bear you, to advise you of your soul's health, which you ought to prefer before all considerations of the world or flesh whatsoever. For which yet you have cast me into many calamities, and yourself into many troubles. But I forgive you all, and pray God to do so likewise. For the rest, I commend unto you Mary, our daughter, beseeching you to be a good father to her. I must entreat you also to look after my maids, and give them in marriage, which is not much, they being but three, and to all my other servants, a year's pay besides their due, lest otherwise they should be unprovided for until they find new employment. Lastly, I want only one true thing, to make this vow: that, in this life, mine eyes desire you alone, May God protect you."*

We were not able to get any comments from King Henry VIII but the Boleyn family is reported to be relieved with her passing now that Anne is expectant.

Catherine will receive Christian burial on January 29 at Peterborough Abbey (cathedral). (on this date at three o'clock in the afternoon, Queen Anne Boleyn will have a miscarriage of a three month old male fetus).

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1536 May 19 *Queen Anne Boleyn Executed*

The past months have been difficult for the outspoken Anne regarding her disagreement with Thomas Cromwell, the king's chief minister, over the disbursement of the wealth from the monasteries to the poor. The official record posted a secret meeting with Sir Henry Norris on April 28 and this led to the charge of treason against her. Under intense questioning by Sir Thomas Cromwell and the king's legal advisors, Norris pleaded innocent to having an adulteress relationship with Queen Anne. However, a Flemish musician, Mark Smeaton, was arrested and confessed to a recent sexual encounter with Anne.

During the trial the past two weeks, the king has had several public appearances with Jane Seymour. In one of these displays of public affection, Jane was seated on the King's lap. A copy of Queen Anne's letter to Henry was released to us after her execution.

*"But if you have already determined of me, and that not only my death, but an infamous slander must bring you the enjoying of your desired happiness; then I desire of God, that he will pardon your great sin therein, and likewise mine enemies, the instruments thereof, and that he will not call you to a strict account of your unprincely and cruel usage of me, at his general judgment-seat, where both you and myself must shortly appear, and in whose judgment I doubt not (whatsoever the world may think of me) mine innocence shall be openly known, and sufficiently cleared. My last and only request shall be, that myself may only bear the burden of your Grace's displeasure, and that it may not touch the innocent souls of those poor gentlemen, who (as I understand) are likewise in strait imprisonment for my sake. If ever I found favour in your sight, if ever the name of Anne Boleyn hath been pleasing in your ears, then let me obtain this request, and I will so leave to trouble your Grace any further, with mine earnest prayers to the Trinity to have your Grace in his good keeping, and to direct you in all your actions. From my doleful prison in the Tower, this sixth of May;
Your most loyal and ever faithful wife, Anne Boleyn"*

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1536 May 30 *King Henry VIII Weds Jane Seymour*

Henry and Jane Seymour were engaged the day following the execution of Queen Anne Boleyn two weeks ago on May 19. They first met when the King attended an affair at the Seymour family home in Wiltshire in September 1535. They were married in Whitehall Palace without any coronation planned for the new queen because of a plague in Westminster. Queen Jane is age 28 and King Henry is age 45.

It is with sadness that we will report the death of Henry Fitzroy, Duke of Richmond in July at age 17. Henry was the illegitimate son of King Henry and his mistress, Elizabeth Blount. Queen Jane will give birth to a son, Edward, on October 12 at Hampton Court Palace. Edward will become the king of England at the age of nine in 1547. Mary, the daughter of King Henry by his first wife, Catherine, was the godmother.

Queen Jane will become ill following her delivery and die on October 24, 1537.

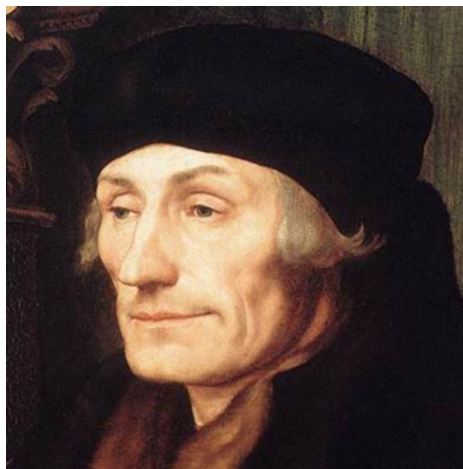
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1536 July 12 *Erasmus Dies 1465-1536*



Desiderius Erasmus died today in Basel, Switzerland. He was the son of a priest and orphaned as a child. Erasmus studied theology in an Augustinian monastery and was ordained a priest in 1495. He received his doctorate in theology and published a revised edition of the New Testament.

Erasmus was also an educator who distinguished between knowledge and absolute truth. He valued a Christian education because he taught that the knowledge of Christ changed a person. In 1509 he published *Praise of Folly* in which he criticized the abuses and corruption of church leaders and called for a simpler form of Christianity based on faith in Jesus Christ. Many people associated Erasmus with the Lutheran religious teachings but he remained faithful to the Roman Catholic Church. For several years this was the #1 best selling book in Europe.

In his book, *Hyperaspistes*, he wrote, "*I detest dissension because it goes both against the teachings of Christ and against a secret inclination of nature. I doubt that either side in the dispute can be suppressed without grave loss.*" A direct criticism that Martin Luther had gone too far.

His publication of *Discourse on the Free Will* (1524) was a vicious attack on Martin Luther. Erasmus was opposed by both Martin Luther and the Roman Catholic leaders. On the news of his death, the Council of Trent voted to place all of Erasmus' books on the *Index of Prohibited Books*.

Erasmus had been preparing a move from Freiburg to Brabant upon the invitation of Queen Mary of Hungary. While visiting friends in Basel he became violently ill with dysentery, an infectious diarrhea. He is buried on the cemetery at the Basel Minster, formerly a Roman Catholic Cathedral.



Basel Minster Church

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1536 September 28 – October 10 *The Pilgrimage of Grace*

The King received an official report this morning that 40,000 men of faith have bound together in Yorkshire in protest of the dismantling of monasteries, a tax on baptisms, weddings, and funerals. A second uprising appears to be forming in Lincolnshire. This uprising is being led by Captain Robert Dymoke and supported by Elizabeth Blount, a former mistress of King Henry VIII.

The insurrectionists only desire restitution of the church and have no desire to overthrow King Henry VIII. In a statement from one of the leaders of this populist movement, Robert Aske, their disagreement with Lord Thomas Cromwell was revealed.

“In all parts of the realm men's hearts much grudged with the suppression of abbeyes, and the first fruits, by reason the same would be the destruction of the whole religion in England. And their especial great grudge is against the lord Cromwell.”

On October 10, the rebellion ended and the people returned to their homes. Robert Aske, Lord Darcy, Sir Henry Percy and four abbots, Fathers Barlings, Fountains, Jeryaulx, and Sawley were executed at Tyburn.

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1536 Michelangelo Paints *The Last Judgment*

Pope Paul III announced officially today that his predecessor, Pope Clement VII, commissioned Michelangelo to paint the largest fresco in the world. Michelangelo completed his scenes of Biblical art on the ceiling of the Sistine Chapel 20 years ago. Michelangelo is currently involved in painting the interior of the tomb of Pope Julius II.

This painting will be dedicated on the wall behind the altar in St. Peter's in Rome. Pope Paul III said that it will follow the Biblical story of the Second Coming of Christ as written in Matthew 25.

Many are critical of this new venture because it is destroying some of the paintings of *Pharaoh's Daughter Finding Moses*, the *Adoration of the Shepherds* painted in 1512 by Pietro Perugino.



The Last Judgment

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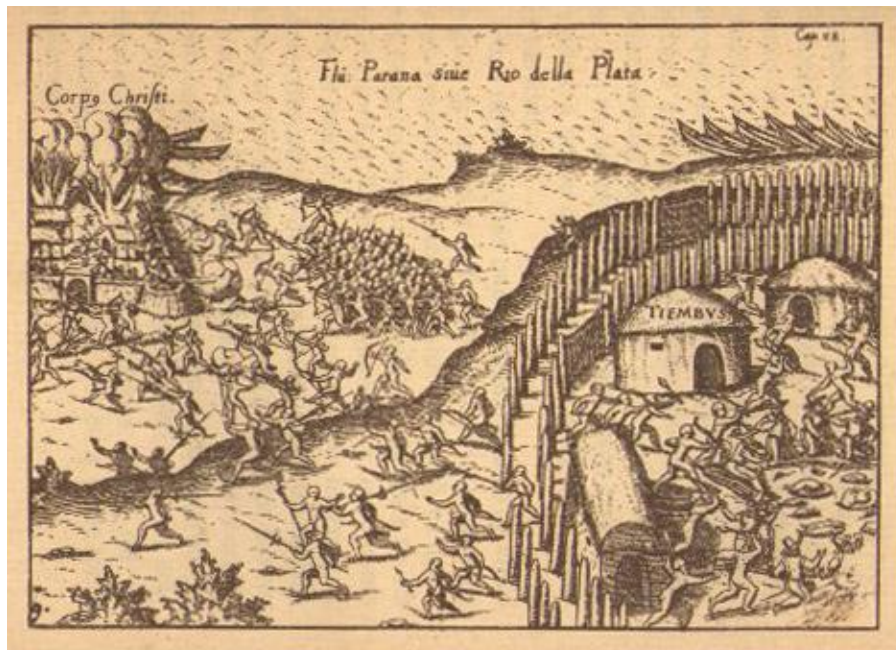


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1536 Spain Establishes Colony in Buenos Aires

Pedro de Mendoza has reached the Rio de la Plata from his settlement in Asuncion in Paraguay. He describes this as a beautiful harbor, and established a settlement. He has named this colony, *Nuestra Senora Santa Maria*, (Our Lady of Saint Mary and the Good Air). The local indigenous tribes, numbering about 100,000, are hostile and some settlers have returned to Asunción, Paraguay. The natives in this part of South America are from the Inca nation.

The earliest reports of the harbor were made 20 years earlier by Juan Diaz de Solis, who was killed by the hostile natives. Ulrich Schmidl, a German mercenary who sailed with Mendoza, reported of harsh winter conditions and cannibalism by the crew.



Sketch of Settlement at Buenos Aires



Mendoza's arrival