

Study visit: Visit a public interior

In this essay I will examine a public interior of some splendour or intricacy such as a room in a stately home or a town hall for example.

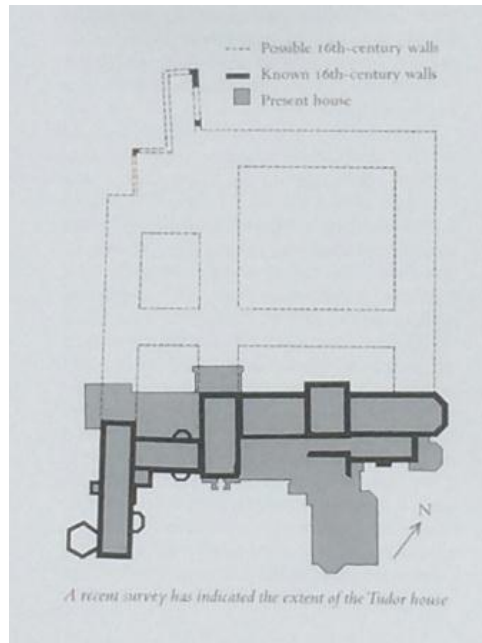
For this task I will focus on the *The Vyne Chapel*, which is situated within *The Vyne* stately home in Basingstoke, Hampshire. *The Vyne* is a magnificent former Tudor palace with illustrious connections to Henry VIII, Catherine of Aragon, Anne Boleyn, Elizabeth I, Jane Austen, Cardinal Wolsey and many more. I visited the property in July 2015 to discover more and to prepare for this part of the course. I spoke to the House Manager, Dominique Shembry in order to obtain the most up-to-date information regarding the conservation of this important structure.

My account is illustrated with photos to complement and enhance the written elements.



Figure 1 *The Vyne*, National Trust. (Howard, 2015).

A brief history of *The Vyne*



The Vyne was originally part of a much larger Tudor palace which was built in the early sixteenth century by William 1st Lord Sandys. Lord Sandys established his home on the site of some medieval buildings, which were eventually incorporated into the overall structure. He was an influential member of the Tudor court and first came to prominence during the reign of King Henry VII. When he died Lord Sandys became Lord Chamberlain to his son, King Henry VIII. As manager of the King's household, Lord Sandys accumulated vast wealth, connections and resources. *The Vyne* was built to entertain his royal guests and their substantial entourage whilst also cementing his position at court. During his lifetime he hosted the King and two of his queens– Queen Catherine of Aragon and Queen Anne Boleyn three times.

The Tudor remains of the former palace serve to venerate the King and his wives and as such incorporate many emblems which the royals would have recognised. The chapel in particular is important as some of the elements within it proclaim his loyalty and devotion to the King and his first wife, in spite of their subsequent divorce.

On the death of Lord Sandys in 1540, the house was described as “one of the principale houses in Hamptonshire” (Howard, 2015).

Figure 2 A recent land survey from the National Trust, reveals the extent of the former Tudor Palace. (Howard, 2015).

In 1653 the estate was sold to Chaloner Chute, Speaker of the House of Commons. He reduced and modernised the house to make it more comfortable for his family. Many of the original Tudor buildings, such as the base courts and courtyards were demolished in favour of a more streamlined design. One of the rare Tudor rooms to have survived is the Oak Gallery on the first floor, which like the Chapel contains many carved details on the walls which hark back to the heady days of Tudor life. Again, like the Chapel, the royal emblems have been incorporated into the interior decoration. For instance, Queen Catherine of Aragon's insignia of the pomegranates and the castles of Castile and Aragon appear no less than 49 times! *The Vyne* was in effect a Tudor powerhouse for a wealthy and influential courtier. (Howard, 2015).

A brief description of *The Vyne Chapel* (in the form of three spider diagrams)

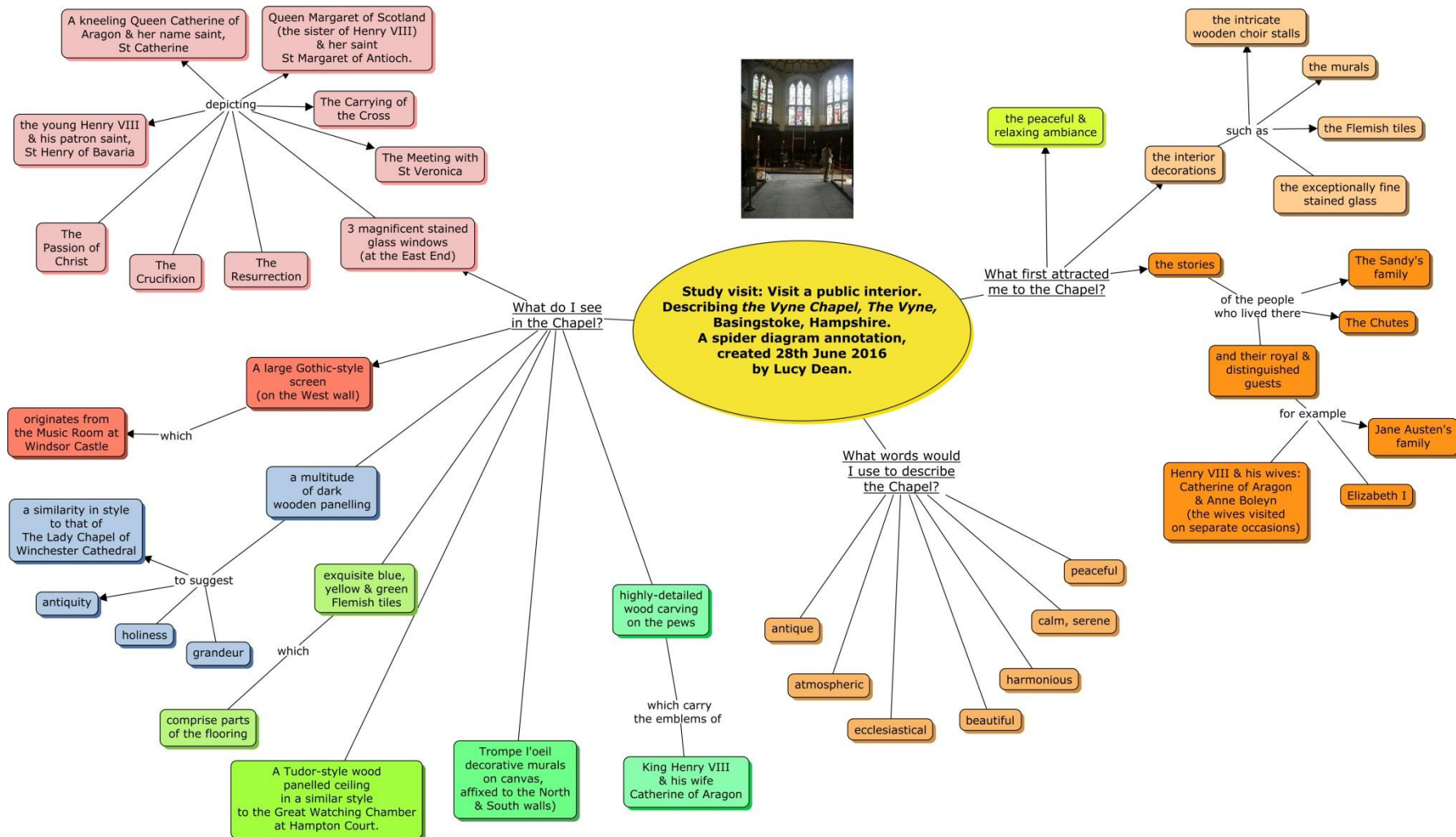


Figure 3 Spider diagram 1 of 3

Describing and relating *The Vyne Chapel* (spider diagram 2 of 3)

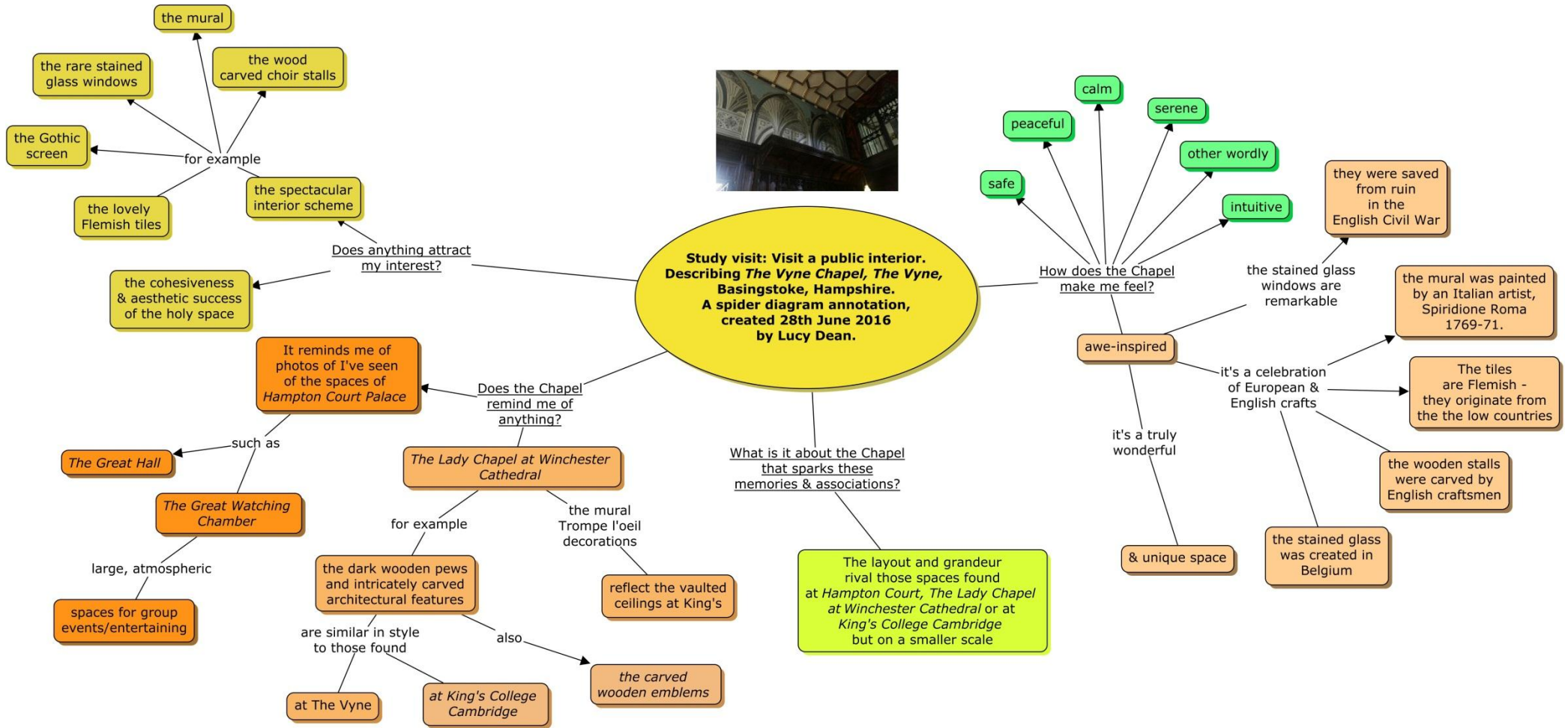


Figure 4 Spider diagram 2 of 3

Describing and relating *The Vyne Chapel* (spider diagram 3 of 3)

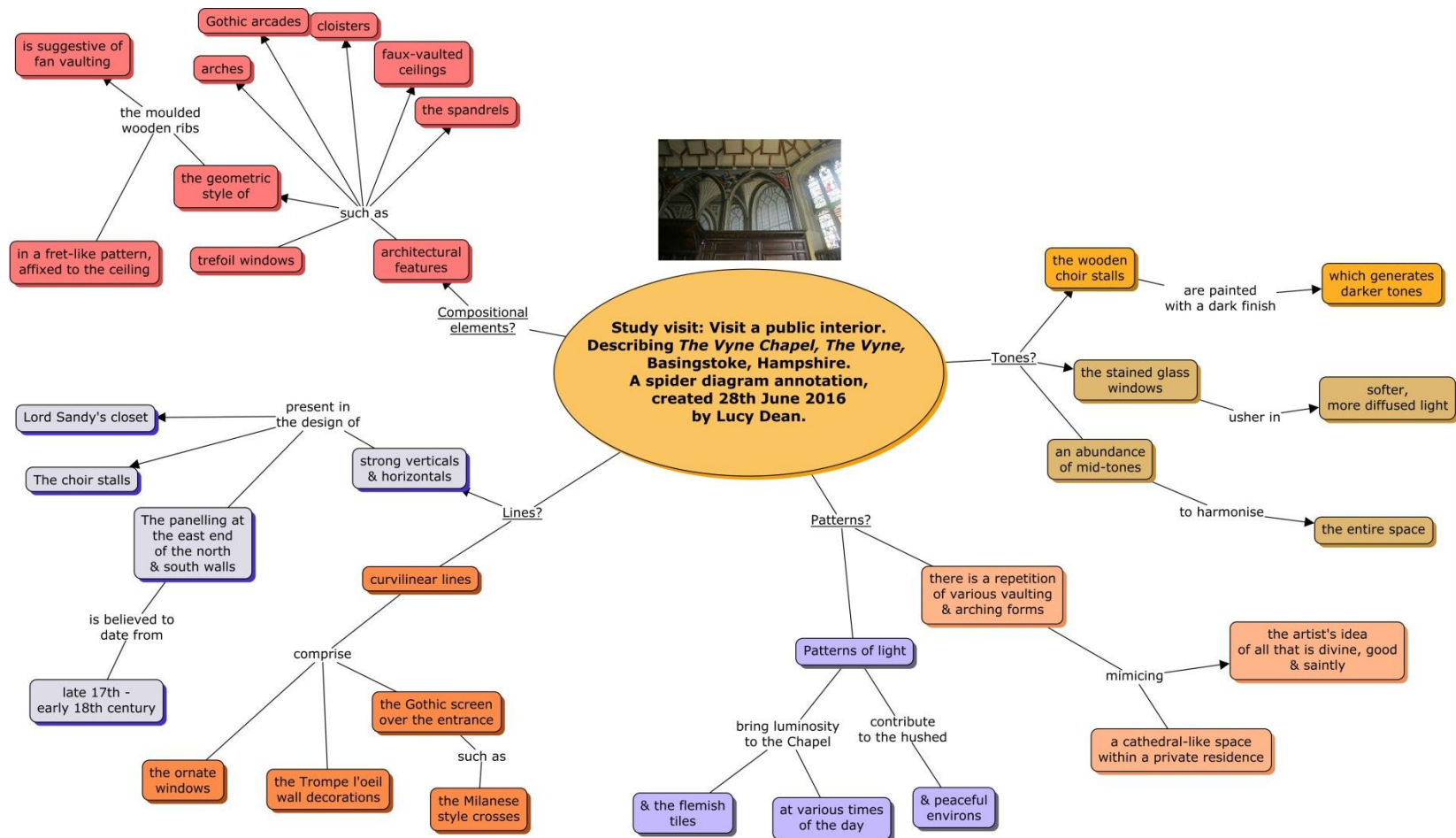


Figure 5 Spider diagram 3 of 3

Analysing the interior of *The Vyne Chapel, The Vyne, Basingstoke, Hampshire*

What are the key shapes?

Geometric shapes

Geometric shapes such as squares, rectangles, diamonds, octagons and arches comprise the ceiling decoration. The decorative ceiling is perhaps a later addition (installed by Edward Chute), to replace the fragile original Tudor design (Howard, 2015).

The pomegranate

Pomegranate-shaped forms comprise part of the design of the choir stalls to represent the queen on the throne at the time. The pomegranate was the symbol of Queen Catherine of Aragon. The **pomegranate** is a Christian symbol of The Resurrection and of chastity. The abundance of seeds within a hard case also symbolise unity under one authority. For instance, the authority of the church or of a monarch such as King Henry VIII.

Curvilinear lines

The curvilinear lines in the murals mimic those of fan vaulting. This further emphasises the impression of being in a grand cathedral and in the presence of God. The upward curving lines also create an impression of height as the church walls ascend into heaven.

What are the key textures?

False drapery

False draped curtains introduce a note of softness to contrast with the hard surfaces of the flooring and the rigidity of the choir stalls. This is a later addition and was introduced by John Chute. In Henry the VIII's time there may have been a Tudor mural here. (Howard, 2015).

The carved choir stalls

The carved wooden stalls are solid; to stand the test of time. They are suitably grand in order to impress royal visitors to the Vyne. They were produced in readiness for the King's visits as both his and his queen's emblems are incorporated into the overall decorative scheme. Henry's symbols are the **Fleur-de-Lis** and the **Tudor rose**.

The smooth marble floor

The smooth marble floor complements the interlaced geometric design of the ceiling. The flooring was altered during the residence of Wiggett Chute. He reorganised the tiles into their present arrangement.

The Gothic screen above the entrance to the Chapel was bought by Wiggett from the Music Room at Windsor Castle. This contributes to the dark Gothic appearance of the Chapel (Howard, 2015).

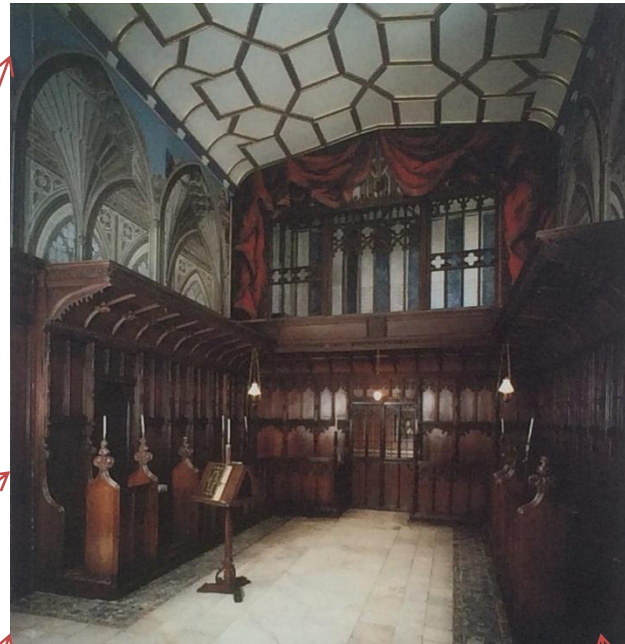


Figure 6 *The Vyne Chapel, The Vyne, Basingstoke, Hampshire.* (Howard, 2015).

What are the key colours?

The key colours are lead white, ivory black, burnt umber, scarlet, indigo, terra rosa, cadmium yellow, ultramarine, yellow ochre & gold. This palette offers endless possibilities and colour choices and is most used by artists. The colour palette is certainly fit for a King and his illustrious guests.

Analysing the processes and techniques utilised within the interior of *The Vyne Chapel*

What was the function of the chapel?

The Vyne Chapel was intended to be a place of private worship for the Sandys' and Chute families and their guests for hundreds of years. It is a highly unusual chapel as according to the National Trust: "It is of a magnificence not recorded outside the royal palaces of Tudor England" (Howard, 2015). William Sandys the first owner of *The Vyne* was an important Tudor courtier and was Henry VIII's Lord Chamberlain. As an important figure at the Tudor court he required a suitably impressive home and retreat. The next nearest church, *The Chapel of the Holy Ghost*, was situated some miles off in central Basingstoke. The chapel therefore formed part of the original Tudor palace and originally it seems the ante-chapel formed part of the overall concept. The next owner Chaloner Chute, reduced the size of *The Vyne* considerably in order to make it a more unified family home and at some stage the chapel and ante-chapel were partitioned and thus became separate rooms.

It is rare as it was specifically created for the purpose of private worship by the family and their distinguished visitors. It is remarkable as in spite of successive monarchs and their changing ambitions (religious, political, etc.), *The Vyne* has remained largely intact and important details such as the specially commissioned stained glass remain to this day. This chapel is of historic and national importance as the glass is of a quality unrivalled anywhere else apart from at *King's College Cambridge*. *King's College Cambridge* was completed during Henry VIII's reign in 1547. (Howard, 2015).

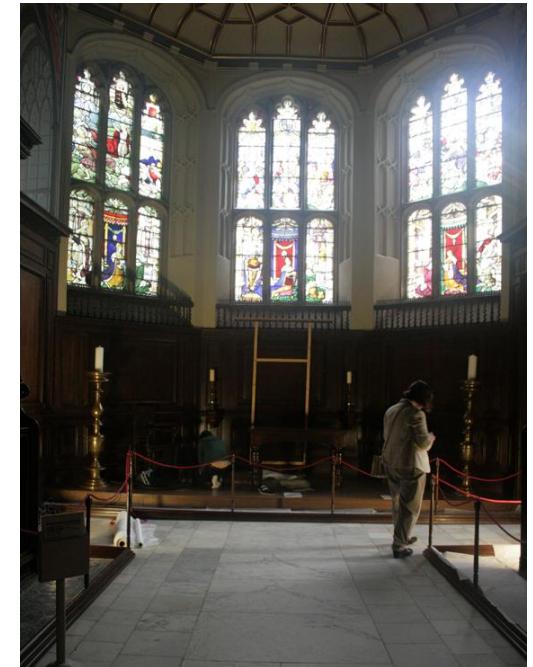
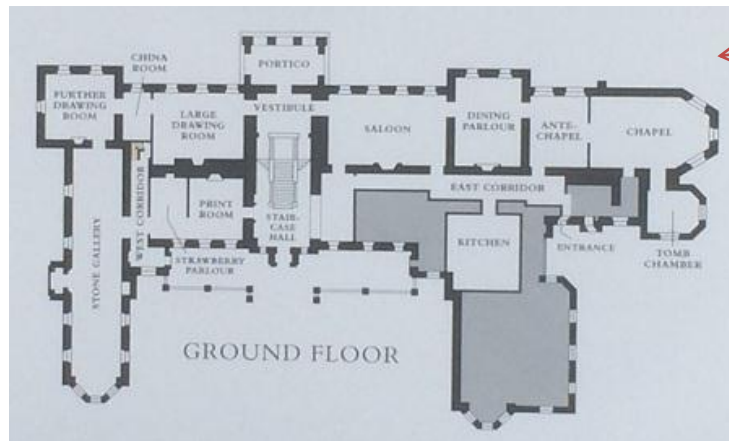


Figure 7 The East Windows of *The Vyne Chapel*. 2015, photograph by Lucy Dean.

How do I think *The Vyne Chapel* came about?

According to Maurice Howard (2015), *The Vyne Chapel* developed out of the original Tudor palace. In the Tudor period it was likely to have been slightly larger as the ante-chapel and the chapel are believed to have been one large fully-integrated space. The ante-chapel is likely to have housed the congregation whilst the choir stalls were intended to be used for the choir. As was traditional in the Tudor era, the Lord and Lady of the house worshipped separately on the first floor, in closets looking down on the chapel. Successive owners of the house separated the ante-chapel and chapel to incorporate the former and its contents back into the rest of the house. This was clearly a successful venture as the flow from one room to another works well and navigation around the house is straightforward. Also, the decorative schemes introduced in later periods such as the addition of wooden panelling helps to provide cohesion and harmonises the chapel interior.



The chapel and ante-chapel are seen here on the upper right hand side. This is an up-to-date floor plan of the entire ground floor area.

Figure 8 This is an up-to-date ground floor view of *The Vyne* revealing the layout of the chapel and ante-chapel. (Howard, 2015).

Can I see any evidence of how the artist's hand moved? Was it produced quickly and energetically or slowly?

Over the years the various owners of the house have all made alterations to the layout or interior decoration to ensure that the Chapel has moved with the times and has had the necessary repairs carried out.

During the eighteenth-century the Italian artist Spiridione Roma (1737-87) produced a drawing of how the interior mural decorations might look in the chapel for the current owner of the house John Chute. The scheme we see today is very different from the one depicted on paper and on display today in the ante-chapel. In 1769 John Chute employed Spiridione Roma to provide trompe l'oeil paintings on canvas. The scheme remained unfinished as after two years the artist was fired for "being very idle" (Howard, 2015). He did manage however to paint the drapery which frames the Gothic screen above the entrance to the Chapel, thus adding an air of opulence and theatricality. The murals affixed to the North and South walls appear to have been painted slowly and carefully as the attention to detail is remarkable. The figures are the Four Evangelists: St Luke, St Matthew, St Mark and St John. The scheme containing St Luke and St Matthew are the most complete.

The murals were introduced by John Chute and his friends from the Strawberry Hill group as they favoured the introduction of pseudo-Catholic imagery. Horace Walpole after a visit to *The Vyne*, made some suggestions to John Chute to enhance the mysticism of the holy interior and to re-introduce a Catholic flavour. (Howard, 2015).

It is unclear how long it took to construct the chapel as I have been unable to locate any information with specific dates, but it would appear that it was built around the same time as the house so it is likely to have been built during the early 16th century. Henry VIII first visited *The Vyne* in 1510 so it is very likely that the chapel was built around this time. It also seems likely that the current chapel was built on or near the site of its medieval predecessor. (Howard, 2015).

Do I think other people may have helped the owner/artist to construct it?

The owner of the estate William Sandys certainly hired builders and stonemasons to build his house and chapel. The house had to be fit for a king, as Sandys was an important member of Henry's court and duly entertained him on several occasions at his home. Also, Sandys commissioned many different people from all over the UK and Europe to create the different elements within his chapel.

Interpreting *The Vyne Chapel* stained glass windows

It seems to me that the stained glass windows reinforce the view that the Tudors believed that they were descended from God due to the combination of religious imagery, the inclusion of the appropriate saints, the armorial panels and so forth.

The stained and painted glass windows were commissioned by Lord Sandys and were manufactured in Calais by Flemish glaziers during the 1520s. At this point, Calais was the last territory in France which belonged to England. It was a major port from which goods were transported all over Europe and was a European base for Lord Sandys. The affluent merchant classes utilised the great ports in Northern Europe to trade their expensive goods and to help spread the ideas of the Protestant Reformation. At this time, the principal countries were England, Flanders, Germany and Italy. (Howard, 2015).

The stained glass windows reveal that Lord Sandys was an important patron of foreign craftsmen at a time when people were beginning to question the validity of the church. It is interesting to note that Sandys commissioned the glass just before the Holy Roman Emperor's visit to England. The significance is difficult to miss as the Emperor Charles was the nephew of Queen Catherine of Aragon, both of whom, like Lord Sandys were Catholics.

This was an interesting period in European and English history as wealthy merchants all over Northern Europe were trading luxury goods and exchanging ideas. The start of the Protestant Reformation began in 1517 by Martin Luther, who triggered a reaction against the excesses and indulgences of the Catholic Church, which was causing huge levels of discontent throughout the West. Luther utilised the printing press to distribute his thoughts to as wide an audience as possible. He also translated the bible into German to ensure that the German people could utilise the bible for their own interpretation. In England, the Reformation began in 1533 when King Henry VIII excommunicated himself from the Pope, divorced Queen Catherine of Aragon and married a pregnant Anne Boleyn.

The outstanding quality of the stained glass windows rivals those which were commissioned by Henry VIII for *King's College Cambridge* which date from 1515-17 and 1526-47. For brilliance of colour and sharpness of detail they are unmatched in England. (Howard, 2015).

I believe the artwork is influenced by the Protestant Reformation as the windows are strongly influenced by Catholicism. The composition cleverly incorporates the armorial crests of each individual, their families, scenes from The Easter Story and portraits of royalty. The windows communicate the message that each member of the Tudor dynasty is descended from God and thus possesses a divine and unquestionable authority.

David Joris was one of ten glaziers who travelled to and from *The Vyne* in order to take measurements for the glass. He was employed by Sandys and based in France. Due to the inherent sophistication of the windows, the glass designer is believed to have been Bernard Van

Orley. Van Orley was court painter to the Regents of the Netherlands and was involved in the making of the tapestries for the Sistine Chapel. He was inspired by the works of Raphael and his Italian counterparts. The Vyne windows are a celebration of Flemish and Italian styles due to their open design and the inclusion of various architectural features. The sense of ornamentation and fantastical imagery is a reference to the designer's Flemish roots (Howard, 2015).

According to my research, *The Vyne* windows originate from *The Chapel of the Holy Ghost* in Basingstoke. It would appear that Sandys commissioned the windows as part of a larger and more ambitious scheme for the other chapel. I am certain that they had a joint purpose as they are clearly designed to be ceremonial, political and religious. The laity and clergy would have understood the imagery and its importance. The windows themselves could be considered as an early form of propaganda as it is clear that Sandys venerated his King and Queens. Also, the Holy Roman Emperor might have seen these windows when he visited Sandys. Furthermore, this chapel was open to all and occupied an extensive site in Basingstoke. They were later moved to *The Vyne*, perhaps to escape the political and religious upheavals of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. During the Protestant Reformation almost all works of religious art harking back to earlier ages were destroyed, in particular any works with a perceived Catholic association (Howard, 2015).

The Vyne stained glass windows date from around the same time as those at King's College Cambridge; however *The Vyne* windows are unique in their colour, luminosity and detail. I've viewed the windows at King's and in my opinion they are incomparable. *The Vyne* windows are particularly rare as they include the heraldic emblems/insignia of their patron as well as of their Kings and Queens. The stories they comprise are also highly unusual and special.

The stained glass windows face East according to tradition and to beckon Jerusalem.

Interpreting *The Vyne Chapel* stained glass windows – Queen Catherine of Aragon's window seen in closer detail...

- A scene from The Resurrection appears towards the top of the first stained glass window.
- Queen Catherine of Aragon is pictured kneeling, with her name saint St Catherine and a dog.
- The dog pictured in the bottom right indicates loyalty and devotion to her husband and king.
- Her heraldic emblems are depicted at the very top beneath the crowns (the castles of Castile and Aragon), (Howard, 2015).

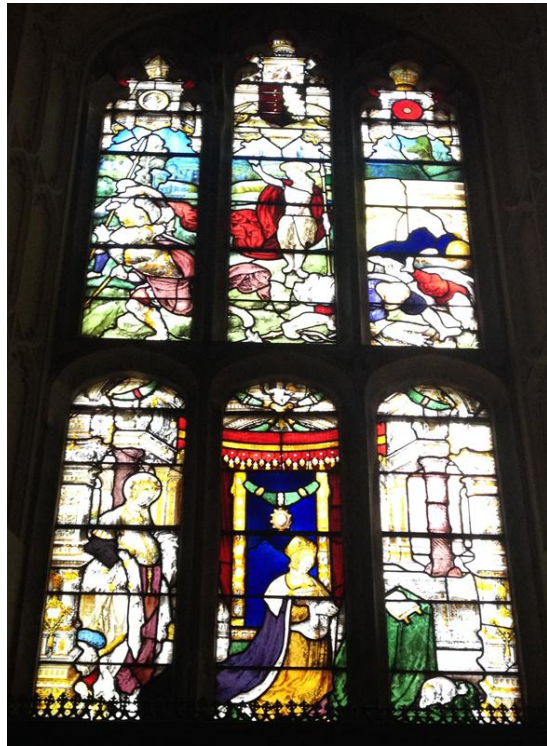


Figure 10 The stained and painted glass window depicting Queen Catherine of Aragon, The Vyne Chapel, The Vyne, Hampshire. 2015, photograph by Lucy Dean.



Figure 9 Scenes from The Resurrection and the heraldry of Queen Catherine's family. 2015, photograph by Lucy Dean.

Interpreting *The Vyne Chapel stained glass windows – King Henry VIII’s window seen in closer detail....*

- King Henry VIII’s window occupies a central position on the East side of the chapel.
- As mentioned earlier, he is pictured with his name saint St Henry of Bavaria.
- Scenes from The Crucifixion appear at the top of his window, below his and his wife’s crests.
- His Royal Standard appears to bisect the cross of Christ, which reinforces the Tudor belief that they were all descended directly from God.
- Henry’s heraldic crest is situated next to the castle of Castile or Aragon which is one of the crests of Queen Catherine of Aragon. By association and as stated here, she too believes that as a Tudor she is also descended from the great Lord himself, (Howard, 2015).



Figure 11 One of three East windows, this one depicts King Henry VIII and his accompanying imagery. The Crucifixion appears at the top. 2015, photograph by Lucy Dean.



Figure 12 Two of the East windows photographed in-situ. Henry VIII can clearly be seen on the left whilst his sister Margaret of Scotland is seen on the right. 2015, photograph by Lucy Dean.

Interpreting *The Vyne Chapel* stained glass windows – Queen Margaret’s window seen in closer detail...

- Queen Margaret of Scotland is envisaged with her name saint St Margaret of Antioch, kneeling on the dragon of Satan.
- The story chronicles the canonisation of Margaret of Antioch after she defeated Satan during a confrontation.
- Margaret was asked to renounce her faith in order to marry a Roman governor. As a result of her refusal, she was tortured and swallowed by Satan. She escaped alive with the cross she carried, which luckily for her had irritated the dragon’s insides.
- At the top of this window a scene from *The Carrying of the Cross* is immortalised for us beneath Margaret’s very own heraldic insignia.
- Like Queen Catherine, she too is accompanied by a dog (seen bottom left), to reinforce the impression that she is loyal and pious towards her brother, King and God, (Howard, 2015).
- Thus, Margaret’s window symbolises the triumph of good over evil and her devotion to her brother King Henry VIII and God.



Figure 13 One of three East windows, this one depicts Margaret of Scotland and her accompanying imagery. *The Carrying of the Cross* appears at the top. 2015, photograph by Lucy Dean.

Interpreting The Vyne Chapel – the Flemish floor tiles

The Flemish made floor tiles clearly denote Lord Sandys's devotion to his King and country. Like the stained glass windows Lord Sandys commissioned Flemish artisans to produce the floor tiles for his chapel. They were manufactured in Flanders during the 1520s, imported from Antwerp and designed and manufactured in the Italian style which was hugely popular at the time. In the early sixteenth century the mercantile elite traded tiles and many of them were imported from Antwerp. Some of these tiles eventually adorned places such as Hampton Court Palace and Christ Church Oxford (Historic Royal Palaces, 2009).



Figure 14 Detail of the Flemish fool known as "Sotge", 2015, photograph by Lucy Dean.

The Italian style would have appealed to the aristocracy and to royalty as the style is antique and timeless. The religious upheaval of the period is neatly glossed over in favour of a set of glorious tiles. The only real Catholic reference is the sacred heart of the Virgin, but her insignia is scattered amongst many other interesting forms. The designs are derived from a multitude of sources such as Italian coins, manuscripts, prints and Flemish designs such as "Sotge" the fool (Howard, 2015).

The tiles were rearranged in the 19th century by the then owner of the house Wiggett Chute as they were previously scattered about in a highly haphazard manner in front of the altar.

Clearly these pieces were commissioned by Lord Sandys himself, as the Tudor rose represents Henry Tudor and the sacred heart represents the Virgin Mary. Bordering the central tiles is a charming arrangement of various flowers and vines. There are also trailing pomegranate plants alluding to Queen Catherine of Aragon.

Stylistically *The Vyne* tiles are similar to the tiles produced by potter Petrus Frans van Venedigen for *Herckenrode Abbey* near Hasselt, now in the Royal Museums, Brussels. The tiles are in the majolica style (similar to those produced in the Mediterranean), with a lead white glaze onto which lemon yellow, cobalt blue, and bright green were applied. Greens, yellows and browns are the most stable pigments and the most commonly found in nature. Blue glazes are much harder to control and results vary (Tile Heaven, 2014). The motifs are Flemish adaptations of Italian sources. The figures represent classical and contemporaneous portraits. Some visages are in profile and some are viewed straight on. As in the bible images of birds and fruit abound giving an impression of a paradise found and a cornucopia. The image of "Sotge" the fool is a Flemish version of the fool in King Lear. He serves to provide wisdom at the Flemish Chambers of Rhetoric (Howard, 2015).

I believe the tiles were created as pieces of art in their own right but also with a practical purpose.

I think the tiles were designed to adorn the floor of the chapel, but their positioning has since been changed so that they make more of an impression. They currently border the choir stalls and the chancel.

They differ from the stained glass windows as they are obviously a completely different medium, however like the windows, they contain hidden meanings. Both the tiles and the windows demonstrate the piety and devotion of William Sandys in regards to his King and his family.

I believe the tiles are situated so that the visitor can enjoy them fully and see them in all their splendour.

The colours are important as the Virgin traditionally wears a blue cloak and veil, the colour symbolises heaven as the Virgin's role is the Queen of Heaven. The cobalt blue also compliments the yellow ochre pigments and helps provide definition. The lead white glaze could represent the purity of the Virgin and Queen Catherine of Aragon.



Figure 15 Photomontage of The Vyne Flemish tiles, c.1520s. 2015, photographed by Lucy Dean.

The trompe l'oeil murals

The tale of the Four Evangelists is a popular theme in Western art and is common to the church; however it is unusual to be located within a private residence. Usually they occupy the spaces within cathedrals or churches in the vicinity of a dome, where they occupy the lunettes or pendentives. After the Renaissance they were more commonly displayed in their human form usually with their animals and a form of writing such as a scroll or manuscript as is the case at *The Vyne* (Hall, 1974).

The trompe l'oeil wall murals mimic the carved architectural details employed in the great cathedrals, such as the high vaulted ceilings at King's College Cambridge, which was completed during the reign of King Henry VIII. The murals in the chapel although unfinished, rival the tapestries seen elsewhere in the house. In the Renaissance, murals were as popular as tapestries and were utilised by the wealthy to show off their affluence. They also served to perform a symbolic function as they were painted to reflect the history of the structures in which they appeared. In my view, the murals in *The Vyne Chapel* emphasise the holiness/spirituality of the interior and contribute towards its distinctive atmosphere. There is a noticeable hush when one enters both the ante-chapel and the chapel which must be due to the belief that chapels are places of calm, safety, security, peace and worship.

The stained glass

The stained and painted glass windows are a clever piece of Tudor propaganda as they communicate a number of messages. Firstly that each of the figures is descended from God. (Each window includes a Tudor royal with their respective name saint and a scene from The Easter Story). Secondly, the sheer variety of imagery contained within each pane of glass is strongly indicative of the fact that the Tudors believed that they each possessed their very own divine authority. Their heraldic crests seem to ascend directly from Christ's cross in every window.

Finally, the superior quality and workmanship of the glass indicates that although married to Queen Catherine, King Henry still believed his throne was insecure as he had yet to have a male heir. William Sandys indicates his loyalty in spite of the King's insecurities by including his own heraldic emblems within the overall design. His heraldic crests also demonstrate his continued support of Henry despite his divorce from Catherine of Aragon. (His emblem is the winged goat which symbolises a hard working person who could attain victory through diplomacy), (Howard, 2015).

The Flemish tiles

The abundance of flora and fauna in the tiles implies the fecundity of nature, whilst the Sacred Heart of the Virgin reinforces the overall devotional qualities of the chapel. The interspersed pomegranates, vines and Tudor roses emphasise the Sandys role as Lord Chamberlain to Henry VIII and are a reference to the house itself (*The Vyne*).

The Gothic screen

The later addition of the painted drapery used to frame the screen of the royal pew serves to provide an air of theatricality and creates an impression of great height. The intensity of the scarlet painted curtains adds to the richness of the interior scheme and seems fit for the many important visitors which *The Vyne* has welcomed over the centuries.

It seems to me that the success of *The Vyne Chapel* is due to its setting. If anything was changed in my view it would appear a lot less cohesive. The chapel has a very unique feel which is entirely due to the subtle changes that have taken place since it was first established. The reason *The Vyne Chapel* is so unique is that its owners have adapted it to suit the times, with respect to what existed before. Each and every element within the chapel has its place. The Flemish floor tiles were originally dotted around in a random way, whereas later owners re-laid them to encase the borders of the choir stalls and the altar. This shows them off to their best advantage and allows present day viewers to regard them closely and make our own assessments. The stained glass windows are beautifully situated in the East apse in order to face Jerusalem. The light gently illuminates them throughout the day and allows us to discover their secrets. The murals appear to their best advantage in soft diffused light. They are situated on the upper stories of the North and South walls as these are the only available areas for such ambitious paintings.

Evaluation

To conclude, I can certainly classify that *The Vyne Chapel* contains many magnificent works of art from several different periods of English and European history.

The stained glass windows represent the former Kings and Queens of England, whilst the Flemish floor tiles represent classical and contemporaneous figures from Western society. The wall murals, although unfinished, symbolise the Four Evangelists: St Luke, St John, St Matthew and St Mark. The figures in the stained glass are recognisable as they are accompanied by their heraldic emblems, which tell us a great deal about them and their ambitions. The floor tiles are highly stylised but are easy to interpret. We know that they are of a Flemish design as "Sotge"; the green fool is a Flemish invention. The trompe l'oeil wall murals are also stylised but it's possible to understand the narrative as each of the saints is accompanied by an attribute. For instance St Luke is pictured seated pointing to his scroll with his oxen nearby.

The chapel overall is a tribute to the devotion of William Sandys to his King and Queens. There is a rich abundance of Catholic imagery and symbolism throughout which is a testimony of his piety, his strength and determination. I think it would have been difficult for King Henry VIII to

find fault with the chapel on his visits as so much of his and his wife's insignia is scattered around on every available surface. The King also remained a staunch Catholic even after the start of the Protestant Reformation, so I'm certain that *The Vyne* Chapel would have appealed to him on many levels

Also, the chapel itself is remarkable for its beauty and its cohesive design, which reflects the Catholic ideals of the early 16th century. At this time Catholic devotion was expressed in the art and architecture of religious buildings. The belief was that the glory of god was expressed in the beauty of his house. Therefore the beauty and unrivalled excellence of *The Vyne* indicates that its owners, the Sandys family, were fervent Catholics and utterly devoted to their King and to God (Howard, 2015).

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