

= Lord Guildford Dudley =

Lord Guildford Dudley (also spelt Guilford) (c . 1535 ? 12 February 1554) was the husband of Lady Jane Grey who , declared as his heir by King Edward VI , occupied the English throne from 10 July until 19 July 1553 . Guildford Dudley enjoyed a humanist education and was married to Jane in a magnificent celebration about six weeks before the King 's death . After Guildford 's father , the Duke of Northumberland , had engineered Jane 's accession , Jane and Guildford spent her brief rule residing in the Tower of London . They were still in the Tower when their regime collapsed and remained there , in different quarters , as prisoners . They were condemned to death for high treason in November 1553 . Queen Mary I was inclined to spare their lives , but Thomas Wyatt 's rebellion against her plans to marry Philip of Spain led to the young couple 's execution , a measure that was widely seen as unduly harsh .

= = Family and marriage = =

Lord Guildford Dudley was the second youngest surviving son of John Dudley , 1st Duke of Northumberland , and his wife , Jane Guildford . The Dudley lineage goes back to a family called Sutton . In the early 14th century they became the lords of Dudley Castle , from whom Guildford descended through his paternal grandfather . This was Edmund Dudley , a councillor to Henry VII , who was executed after his royal master 's death . Through his father 's mother , Elizabeth Grey , Viscountess Lisle , Guildford descended from the Hundred Years War heroes , Richard Beauchamp , Earl of Warwick , and John Talbot , 1st Earl of Shrewsbury .

The Dudley children ? there were thirteen born in all ? grew up in a Protestant household and enjoyed a humanist education . Under the young King Edward VI , Guildford 's father became Lord President of the Privy Council and de facto ruled England from 1550 ? 1553 . The chronicler Richard Grafton , who knew him , described Guildford as " a comely , virtuous and goodly gentleman " . In 1552 Northumberland unsuccessfully tried to marry Guildford to Margaret Clifford , a cousin of Jane Grey . Instead , in the spring of 1553 , Guildford was engaged to the sixteen @-@ year @-@ old Jane Grey herself . Jane Grey figured higher in the line of succession than Margaret Clifford . On 25 May 1553 , three weddings were celebrated at Durham Place , the Duke of Northumberland 's town mansion . Guildford married Jane , his sister Katherine was matched with Henry Hastings , the Earl of Huntingdon 's heir , and another Catherine , Jane 's sister , married Lord Herbert , the heir of the Earl of Pembroke . It was a magnificent festival , with jousts , games , and masques . For the latter , two different companies had been booked , one male , one female . The Venetian and French ambassadors were guests , and there were " large numbers of the common people ... and of the most principal of the realm " . Guildford and some others suffered an attack of food poisoning , because of " a mistake made by a cook , who plucked one leaf for another . "

= = De facto consort = =

Mortally ill , King Edward , in his " Device of the Succession " , settled the Crown on his cousin once removed , Jane Grey , bypassing his half @-@ sisters , Mary and Elizabeth . After Edward 's death on 6 July 1553 the Duke of Northumberland undertook the enforcement of the King 's will . The envoys of the Holy Roman Empire and France were sure of the plan 's success . Jane was reluctant to accept the Crown : She gave in after remonstrances by an assembly of nobles , including her parents and in @-@ laws ; Guildford chimed in with a lovelier approach , with " prayers and caresses " . On 10 July Jane and Guildford made their ceremonial entry into the Tower of London . Residing in there , Guildford wanted to be made king ; according to her own later account , Jane had a long discussion about this with Guildford , who " assented that if he were to be made king , he would be so by me , by Act of Parliament " . But then , Jane would agree only to make him Duke of Clarence ; Guildford replied that he did not want to be a duke , but king . When the Duchess of Northumberland heard of the argument she became furious and forbade Guildford to sleep any longer with his wife . She also commanded him to leave the Tower and go home , but Jane insisted

that he remain at court , at her side .

According to later remarks by the Imperial ambassadors the daily Council meetings were presided by Guildford , who allegedly also dined in state alone and had himself addressed in regal style . Antoine de Noailles , the French ambassador , described Guildford as " the new King " . The Imperial court in Brussels also believed in the existence of King Guildford .

= = Imprisonment = =

On 10 July , the same day as Jane 's proclamation , a letter from Mary Tudor arrived in London , saying that she was now queen and demanding the obedience of the Council . Mary was assembling her supporters in East Anglia ; it was decided to take the field against her after some discussion over who should go , in which Jane made sure that her father should not . The Duke of Northumberland marched to Cambridge with his troops and passed a week that saw no action , until he heard on 20 July that the Council in London had declared for Mary . Northumberland now proclaimed Mary Tudor himself at the market @-@ place and was arrested the next morning . On 19 July , a few hours before Queen Mary I 's proclamation in London , the baptism of one of the Gentlemen Pensioners ' children took place . Jane had agreed to be the godmother and wished the child 's name to be Guildford . The Bishop of Winchester , Stephen Gardiner , who had been imprisoned in the Tower for five years , took great offence at this fact as he heard of it .

A majority of the Privy Council moved out of the Tower before switching their allegiance . Becoming aware of his colleagues ' change of mind , Jane 's father , the Duke of Suffolk , abandoned his command over the fortress and proclaimed Mary I on nearby Tower Hill . After he had left , his wife was told she could also go home , while Jane , Guildford , and the Duchess of Northumberland were not allowed to . Jane was later moved from the royal apartments to the Gentleman Gaoler 's lodgings and Guildford was imprisoned in the Bell Tower . There he was soon joined by his brother , Robert . His remaining brothers were imprisoned in other towers , as was his father , who was for the moment the only prominent person to go to the scaffold ; Mary was prepared to spare Jane 's and Guildford 's lives .

Jane and Guildford were indicted on 12 August , and Jane submitted a letter of explanation to the Queen , " asking forgiveness ... for the sin she was accused of , informing her majesty about the truth of events . " In this account she spoke of herself as " a wife who loves her husband " . On 13 November 1553 Jane and Guildford were tried at Guildhall , together with Archbishop Cranmer and Guildford 's brothers Ambrose and Henry . They were all convicted of high treason after pleading guilty . Guildford was convicted of compassing to depose Queen Mary I by sending troops to the Duke of Northumberland and by proclaiming and honouring Jane as queen .

In December , Jane was allowed to walk freely in the Queen 's Garden . " Lord Robert and Lord Guildford " had to be content with taking the air on the leads of the Bell Tower . Jane and Guildford may have had some contact with each other , and at some point Guildford wrote a message to his father @-@ in @-@ law in Jane 's prayer book :

Your loving and obedient son wishes unto your grace long life in this world with as much joy and comfort as ever I wish to myself , and in the world to come joy everlasting . Your humble son to his death , G. Dudley

= = Execution = =

Queen Mary I 's plan to marry Philip II of Spain was greeted with widespread opposition , not just among the populace but also among Members of Parliament and privy councillors . Thomas Wyatt 's Rebellion in early 1554 , in which the Duke of Suffolk took part , was a result of this dislike . It was not the intention of the conspirators to bring Jane Grey on the throne again . Nevertheless , the government , at the height of the military crisis around 7 February , decided to execute Jane and her husband , possibly out of panic . It was also an opportunity for removing possible inspirations for future unrest and unwelcome reminders of the past . It troubled Mary to let her cousin die , but she accepted the Privy Council 's advice . Bishop Gardiner pressed for the young couple 's execution in

a court sermon , and the Imperial ambassador Simon Renard was happy to report that " Jane of Suffolk and her husband are to lose their heads . "

The day before their executions Guildford asked Jane for a last meeting , which she refused , explaining it " would only ... increase their misery and pain , it was better to put it off ... as they would meet shortly elsewhere , and live bound by indissoluble ties . " Around ten o 'clock in the morning of 12 February Guildford was led towards Tower Hill , where " many ... gentlemen " waited to shake hands with him . Guildford made a short speech to the assembled crowd , as was customary . " Having no ghostly father with him " , he knelt , prayed , and asked the people to pray for him , " holding up his eyes and hands to God many times " . He was killed with one stroke of the axe , after which his body was conveyed on a cart to the Tower chapel of St Peter ad Vincula . Watching the scene from her window , Jane exclaimed : " Oh , Guildford , Guildford ! " He was buried in the chapel with Jane who was dead within an hour after him .

The executions did not contribute to the government 's popularity . Five months after the couple 's death , John Knox , the future Scottish reformer , wrote of them as " innocents ... such as by just laws and faithful witnesses can never be proved to have offended by themselves " . Of Guildford , the chronicler Grafton wrote ten years later : " even those that never before the time of his execution saw him , did with lamentable tears bewail his death " .

= = Ancestry = =