

THE TOWER OF LONDON

The Tower of London is the most famous of all the historical buildings in London. It stands today almost unchanged since it was built in the 11th century. In the past the Tower of London served both as a palace and as a state prison, but it is a museum today.





Castle building was an essential part of the Norman Conquest; when Duke William of Normandy invaded England in 1066 his first action after landing was to build a castle. His idea was first to conquer, then subdue and finally colonize the whole England.

After his coronation in Westminster Abbey on Christmas Day 1066, William ordered the construction of a castle in London for his triumphal entry



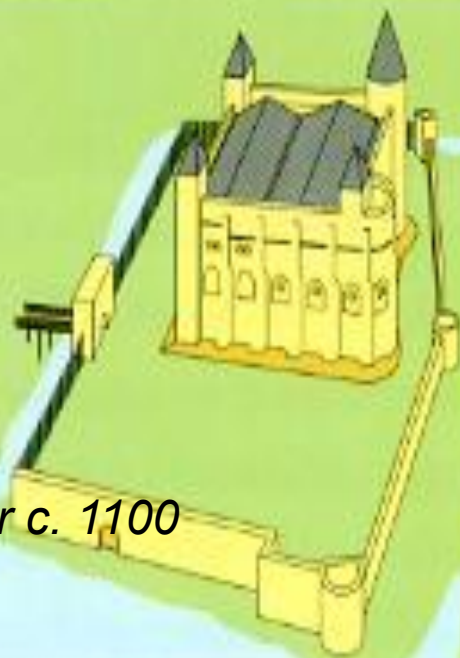
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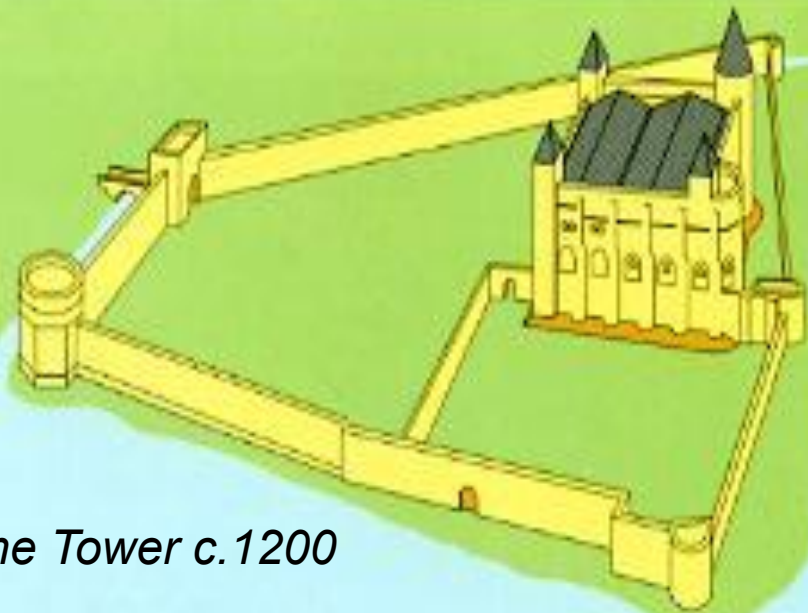
Initially the Tower had consisted of a modest enclosure built into the south-east corner of the Roman City walls, but by the late 1070s, with the initial completion of the White Tower, it had become the most fearsome of all. Nothing had been seen like it in England before.



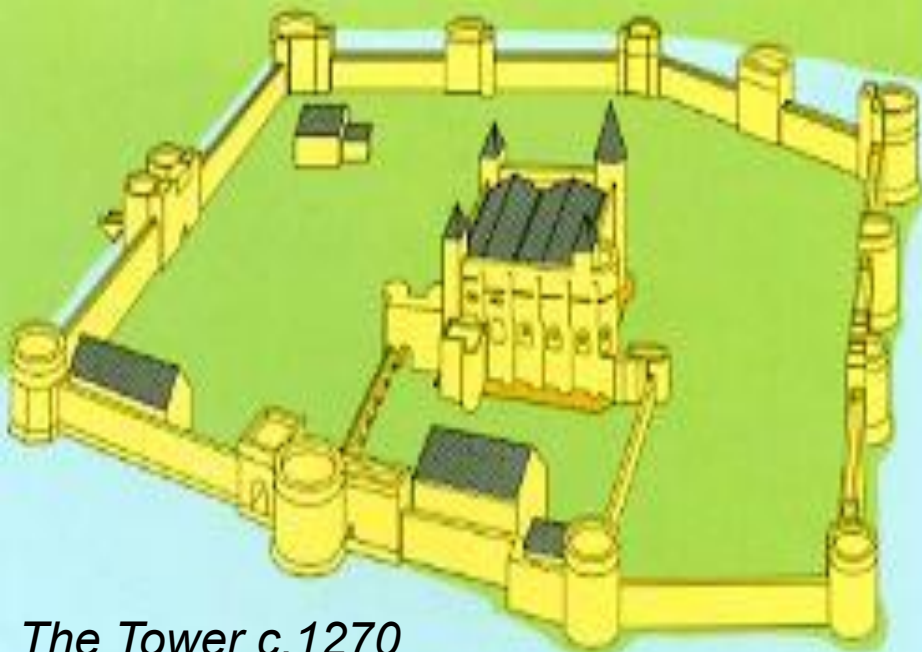
It was built by Norman masons and English (Anglo-Saxon) labor drafted in from the countryside. It was intended to protect the river route from Danish attack, but also and more importantly to dominate the City physically and visually.



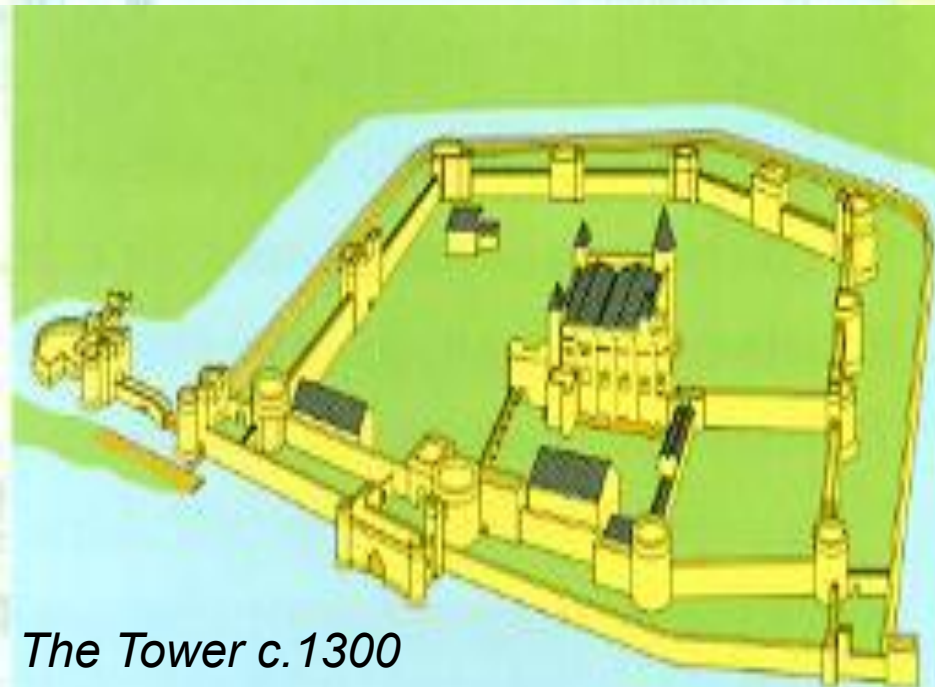
The Tower c. 1100



The Tower c. 1200



The Tower c. 1270



The Tower c. 1300



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The White Tower is the most ancient part of the Tower and the oldest building of London. But if you try to find a tower in the Tower, and moreover, a white one, you will certainly fail to do it. This dark with age building with four small towers in the corners is the White Tower. Its walls, once white washed, are almost 4 meters thick. Now the White Tower is a museum.



The White Tower was protected to the east and south by the old Roman City walls (a full height fragment can be seen just by Tower Hill underground station), while the north and west sides were protected by ditches as much as 750m (25ft) wide and 3.40m (11ft) deep and an earthwork with a wooden wall on top.

The Cradle Tower built by Edward III



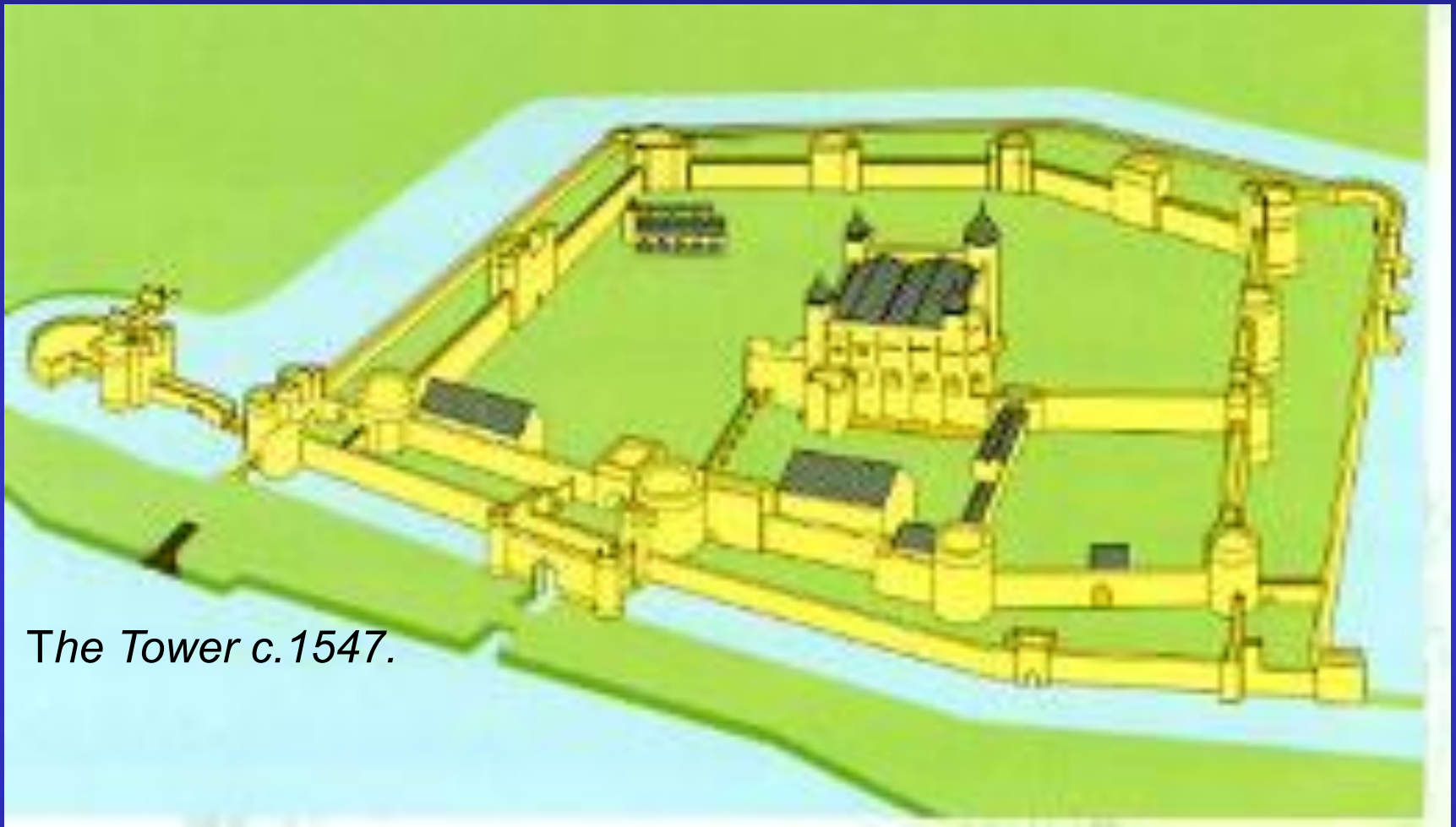
During the reign of Henry VI (1422-61 and 1470-71) England entered the period of civil disorder and political instability known as the Wars of the Roses. Throughout this period the Tower of London was a key asset to those who held the throne or wished to.





It is important for us today to remember that the functions of the Tower from the 1070s until the late 19th century were established by its Norman founders.

Its primary function was always to provide a base for royal power in the City of London and a stronghold to which the royal family could retreat in times of civil disorder.



The Tower c.1547.

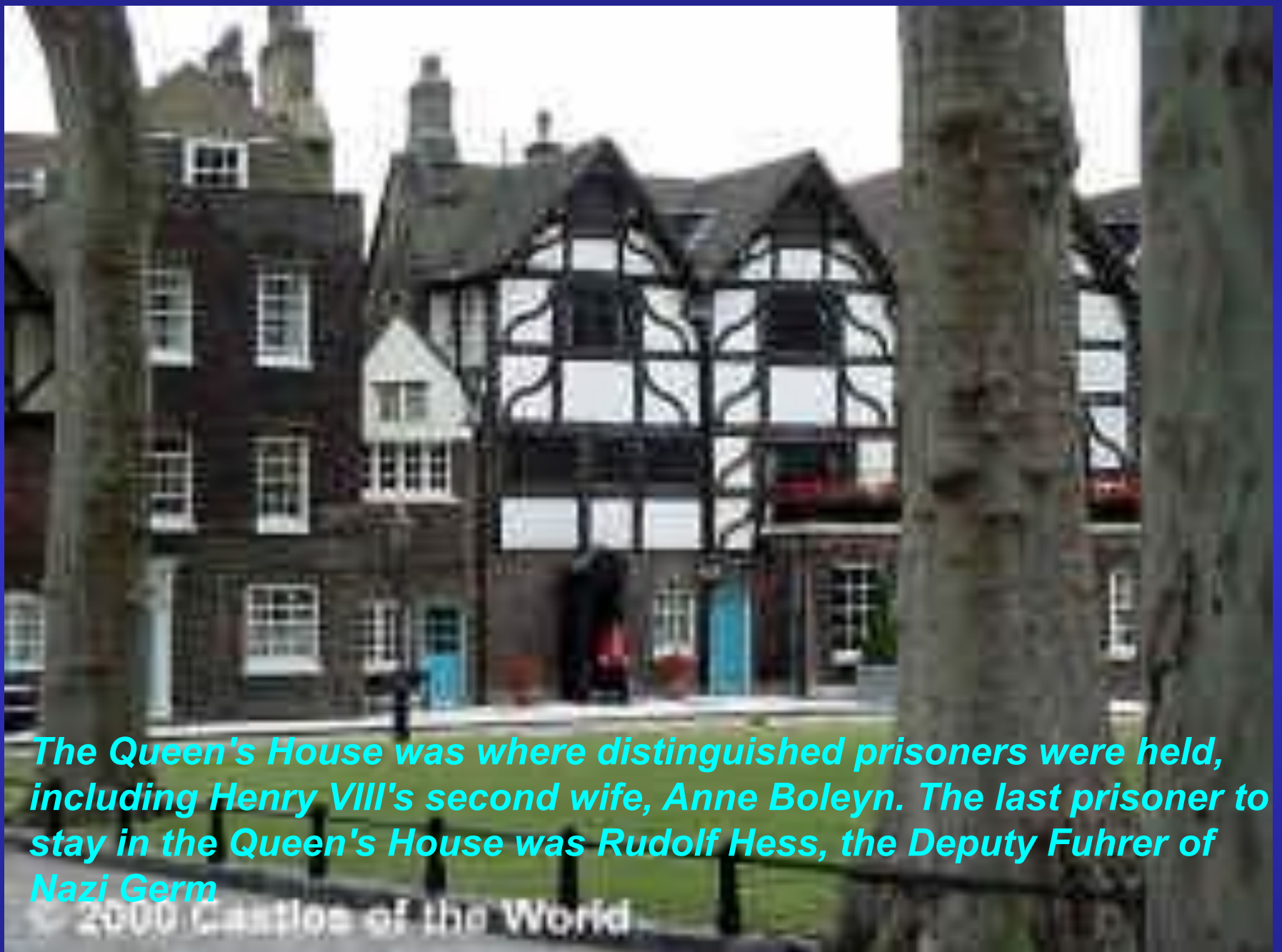
The Tower in Tudor Times:

A Royal Prison

The first Tudor monarch, Henry VII (1485-1509) was responsible for building the last permanent royal residential buildings at the Tower. He extended his own lodgings around the Lanthorn Tower adding a new private chamber, a library, a long gallery, and also laid out a garden.



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The Queen's House was where distinguished prisoners were held, including Henry VIII's second wife, Anne Boleyn. The last prisoner to stay in the Queen's House was Rudolf Hess, the Deputy Fuhrer of Nazi Germ

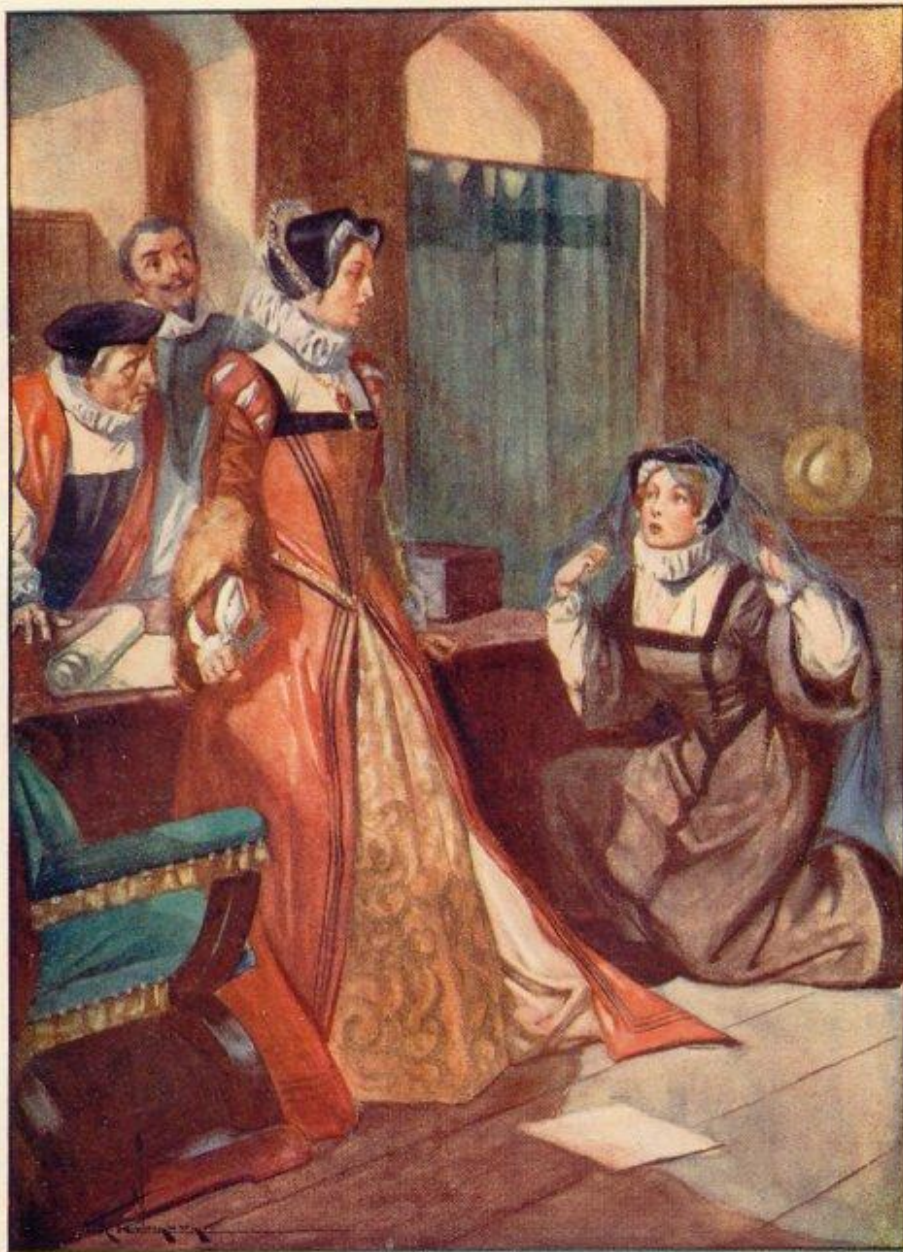
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The Tower is guarded by a military guard.

Queen Elizabeth 1 (1558-1603) spent much of her reign warding off the threat from Catholic Europe, and important recusants (people who refused to attend Church of England services) and others who might have opposed her rule were locked tip in the Tower. Never had it been so full of prisoners, or such illustrious ones: bishops, archbishops, knights, barons, earls and dukes all spent months and some of them years languishing in the towers of the tower of London.

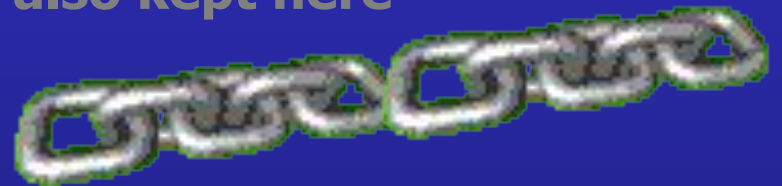


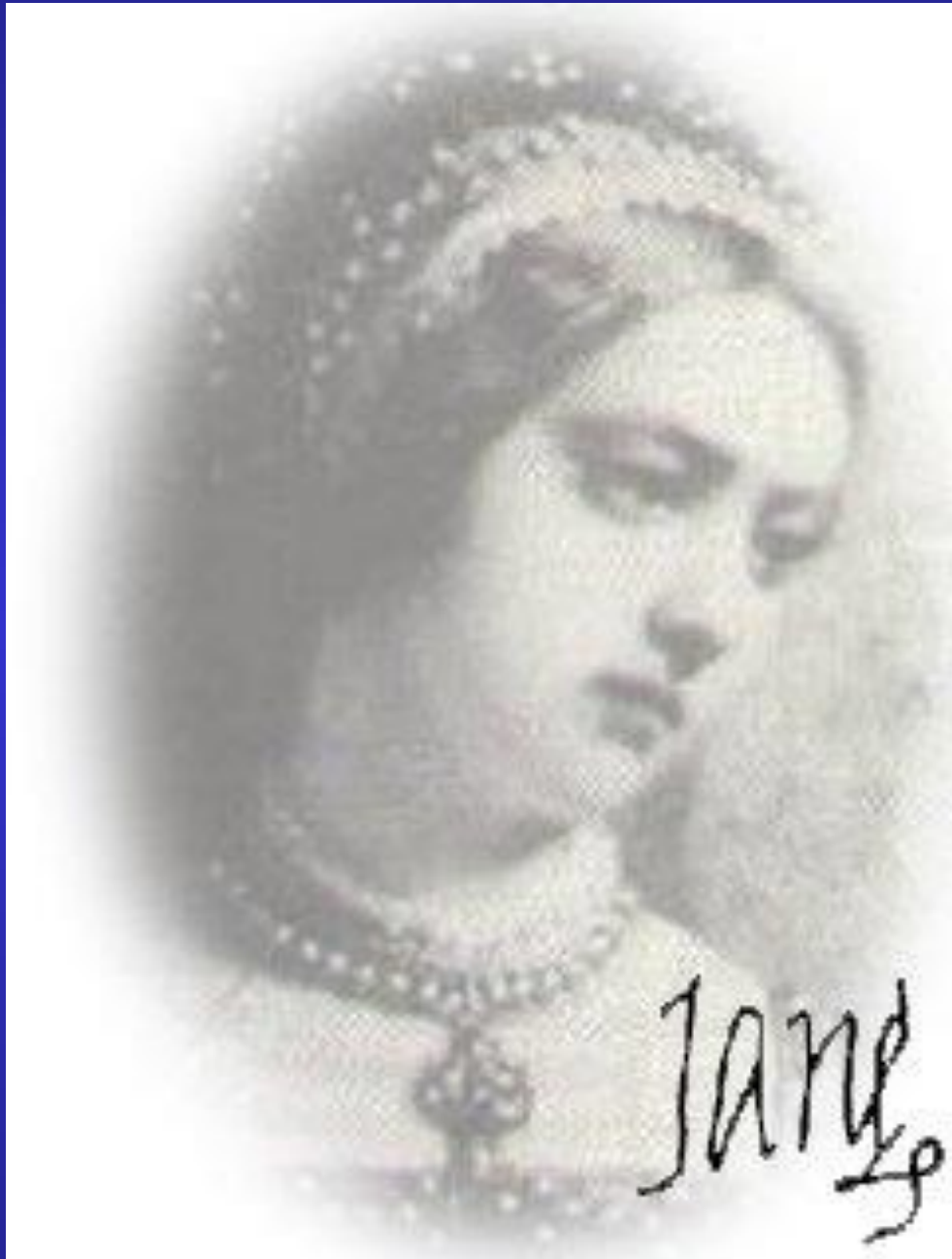
"I am come," she said, "to submit myself to your Highness's mercy."



The Tower never had to face an assault. Its fortresses became a state prison for the greatest political leaders of the country.

Most prisoners were criminals only in the eyes of the government. Sir Thomas More, one of the greatest scientists of the Renaissance, lost his head here. Lady Jane Grey who was the Queen of England for several days was also kept here



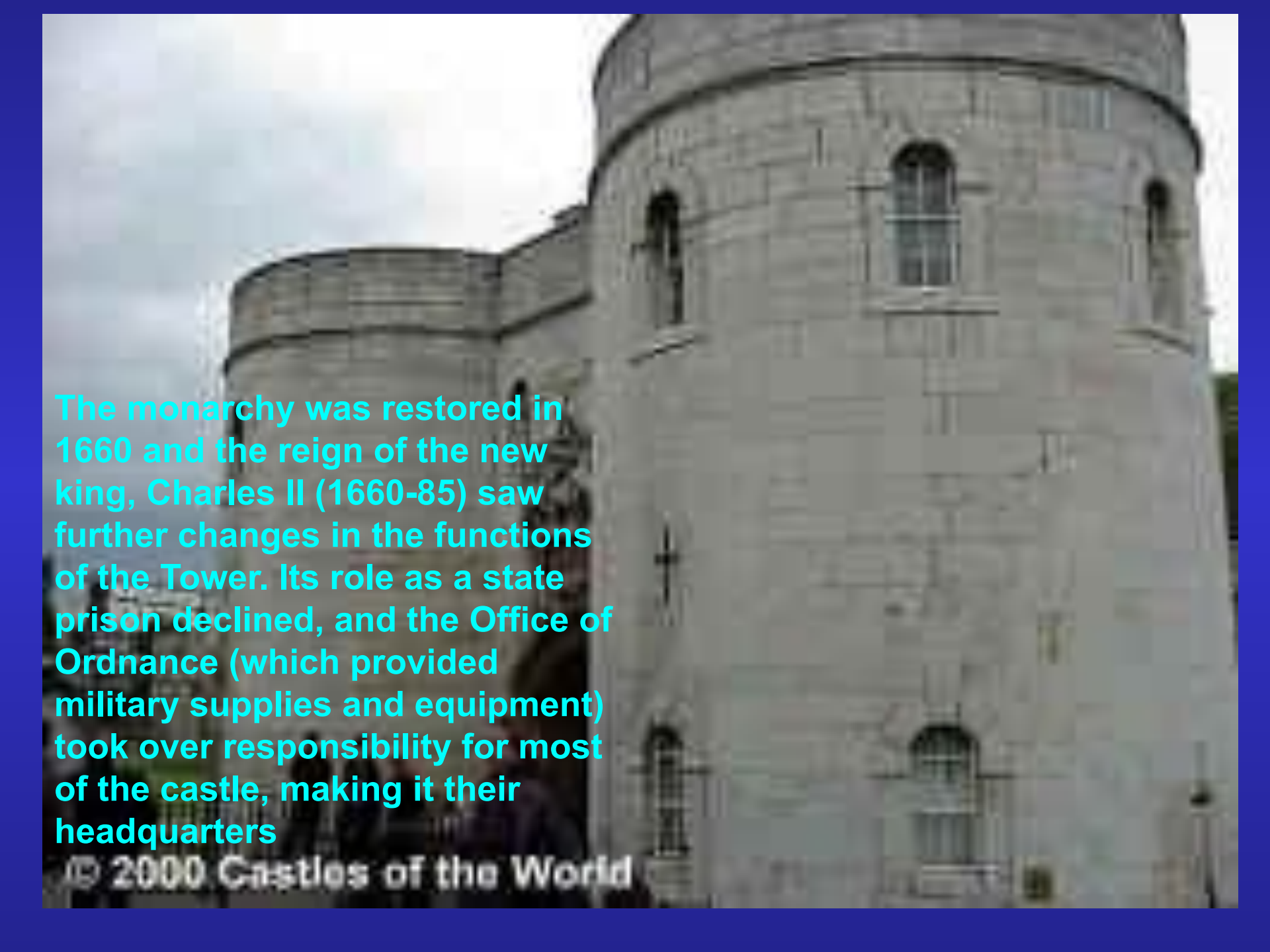


From Queen To Prisoner Lady Jane Grey

**On July 19th, Jane's
Queenship came to an
end with Queen Mary
taking back her throne.
Jane was already in the
Tower awaiting her
coronation, but was
then moved to the
Gentlemen Goaler's
Lodgings, where she
was kept prisoner until
her day of execution.**



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The monarchy was restored in 1660 and the reign of the new king, Charles II (1660-85) saw further changes in the functions of the Tower. Its role as a state prison declined, and the Office of Ordnance (which provided military supplies and equipment) took over responsibility for most of the castle, making it their headquarters

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From Fortress to Ancient Monument

Between 1800 and 1900 the Tower of London took on the appearance which to a large extent it retains today

However, before these changes took place the Tower had once again - but for the last time performed its traditional role in asserting the authority of the state over the people of London. The Chartist movement of the 1840s (which sought major political reform) prompted a final refortification of the Tower between 1848 and 1852, and further work was carried out in 1862.



The Lion Tower.

To protect the approaches to the Tower new loop-holes and gun emplacements were built and an enormous brick and stone bastion (destroyed by a bomb during the Second World War) constructed on the north side of the fortress



Yeoman Warders, often called "Beefeaters", have been at the Tower of London since the 14th. century. Today they give guided tours of the Tower .



Only the ravens of the Tower remind of those dark years. The ravens are taken particular care of. The state donates several shillings to the museum to feed the birds. The legend says that Great Britain will keep its might and glory until the ravens leave the Tower. The Yeomen Warders of the Tower will gladly tell you about it. Their state uniform is traditional, and now they work as guides.



The Fusilier's Museum. Built as the Officer's Mess in the mid-19th century. It was built to accommodate 1,000 soldiers. Today the building is the headquarters of the royal Regiment of Fusiliers.



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The Tower of London is the most famous of all the historical buildings in London. It stands today almost unchanged since it was built in the 11th century. The Tower has been many things: a palace, a fortress, a prison, a palace of execution, a Zoo. In the past the Tower of London served both as a palace and as a state prison, but it is a museum today.



Today you can see
and even touch it
yourself a great
collection of Armour.

The Armour Room.



Nowadays The Tower of London is a home of the Crown Jewels and national treasures. They are used in the most sacred moments during coronations.