

Lady Margaret Butler

Lady Margaret Butler (c. 1454 ^[2] – 1539) was an Irish noblewoman, the daughter and co-heiress of Thomas Butler, 7th Earl of Ormond. She married Sir William Boleyn and through her eldest son Sir Thomas Boleyn, was the paternal grandmother of Anne Boleyn, second wife of King Henry VIII of England, and great-grandmother of Anne and Henry's daughter, Elizabeth I of England.

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Family and marriage

She was born at Kilkenny Castle in County Kilkenny, Ireland, the daughter and co-heiress of Thomas Butler, 7th Earl of Ormond and Anne Hankford. Her paternal grandparents were James Butler, 4th Earl of Ormond and Joan de Beauchamp. Her maternal grandparents were Sir Richard Hankford (c. 1397 – 1431) and Anne de Montagu.

She had one younger sister, Anne who married Sir James de St. Leger, by whom she had issue. Anne and Margaret claimed to be co-heiresses of their father and the Earldom of Ormond, but their cousin, Piers Butler, who had physical control of the Irish estates and the backing of the Irish Council, claimed to be the heir through the direct male line. In 1520, the King granted her a pardon for the alienation of Fritwell Manor, Oxfordshire.^[3] The issue wasn't resolved until 1528, by which time Margaret's position was good, with the influence of her granddaughter, then betrothed to Henry VIII, and Margaret's son, Thomas Boleyn's, status as King's adviser.^[4]

In 1465 Margaret married Sir William Boleyn, and in total they had ten children. Her son, the ambitious courtier Sir Thomas Boleyn, became the first Earl of Wiltshire and by his marriage to Elizabeth Howard, the Duke of Norfolk's daughter, was the father of Anne Boleyn, Queen consort of England. Thus, Margaret was great-grandmother to Queen Elizabeth I of England.

Margaret Butler	
Born	c. 1454 <div>Kilkenny Castle,<div>County Kilkenny,</div>Ireland</div>
Died	1539 <div>England</div>
Noble family	Butler
Spouse(s)	Sir William Boleyn
Issue	Anne Boleyn <div>Thomas Boleyn, 1st Earl of Wiltshire</div> John Boleyn <div>Anthony Boleyn</div> Jane Boleyn <div>Alice Boleyn</div> Margaret Boleyn <div>William Boleyn</div> James Boleyn <div>Edward Boleyn</div>
Father	Thomas Butler, 7th Earl of Ormond
Mother	Anne Hankford

Margaret's role in the rise and fall of the Boleyn clan is unknown, although there has been much speculation and theorizing.

She was the last of the Boleyns to live in Hever Castle as it was given to Anne of Cleves in 1540 sometime after her death. Margaret's lands were claimed by her only surviving grandchild, Mary Boleyn, and her husband William Stafford.^[5]

Issue

Name	Birth	Death	Notes
<u>Anne</u>	18 November 1475	6 January 1555	married <u>John Shelton</u> ; had issue
<u>Thomas, 1st Earl of Wiltshire and Ormonde</u>	c. 1477	12 March 1539	married <u>Lady Elizabeth Howard</u> ; had issue, including Queen <u>Anne Boleyn</u>
John	1481	1484	
Anthony	1483	30 September 1493	
Jane	c. 1485	unknown	married Sir Philip Calthorpe
Alice	c. 1487	1538	married Robert Clere
Margaret	c. 1489	unknown	married <u>John Sackville, Esq.</u>
William	c. 1491	18 December 1571	
<u>James</u>	c. 1493	5 December 1561	married <u>Elizabeth Wood</u>
Edward	c. 1496	unknown	married Anne Tempest



Arms of Butler, Earl of Ormond: *Gules, three covered cups or*^[1]

Fictional portrayals

Margaret Butler as **Grandmother Boleyn** appears in the 2002 Philippa Gregory novel *The Other Boleyn Girl*. She is portrayed as a critical and insubordinate woman who is shrewd and uncaring toward her grandchildren and great-grandchildren. She does seem to inquire about life in the English court. Margaret lived in the Boleyn estate in Hever Castle, and plays a supporting role in the novel.

See also

- Butler dynasty

References

1. Debrett's Peerage, 1968, p. 864
 2. <http://www3.dcs.hull.ac.uk/cgi-bin/gedlkup/n=royal?royal08935>
 3. p. 38, *The Boleyns*, [David Loades](#)
 4. p. 31, *The Boleyns*, [David Loades](#)
 5. p. 57, *The Boleyns*, [David Loades](#)
- [Butler Family \(http://www.tudorplace.com.ar/BUTLER.htm#Margaret%20BUTLER1\)](http://www.tudorplace.com.ar/BUTLER.htm#Margaret%20BUTLER1) Accessed December 18, 2007
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