

The Kings and Queens of England

by Esmerelda Weatherwax (March 2010)



Other kings from left to right and top to bottom starting with the earliest.



The Queens Head Stratford E15, The Queens Head Theobalds Road (closed 2009) The Victoria Hackney, The Victoria Plaistow, The Victoria Romford, The New Queen Victoria Wolverton. This last picture is the work of [Hackney is interesting](#). The artist seems to have used as his base the same portrait used in the Romford sign with the addition of a black lady and islands in the background. I have a feeling she is Mary Seacole the Crimea nurse from Jamaica. I could be wrong and I have not had sufficient time to do any research as this is from my most recent outing last week.

The wives of Henry VIII are of perennial interest.

[John Gay](#) in black and white.

The Anne of Cleves pub in Melton Mowbray Leicestershire looks wonderful. The whole of this site,



The Queen of the Icenis Norwich Riverside.

The Red Lion Thetford.

Both Boudicca as you may have guessed, and both pubs are in the old heartland of the Iceni tribe. There is a pub in Maidstone called the British Queen also featuring her. I went past it last year but my friend's husband was driving us, and it is unreasonable to expect other people's husbands to be as enthusiastic as my own.

The former Queen's Head in Sawston Cambridgeshire. Lady Jane Grey and Mary I. I believe that this sign is unique in depicting Lady Jane Grey, the nine days Queen. I decided to visit Sawston last year on my way to Norfolk. The rest of the family had gone ahead so I had an hour or two to explore. I'm heartily glad that I did as I found the pub closed and boarded up with a sign saying that planning permission was sought to "add an extension and internal alterations" to make this 15th century listed building into a "5 bedroom residence". I don't know what had happened to the signs but I noticed the building for sale again last month with planning permission to become a 4 bedroom home. The building will remain, and be used and loved but I doubt the signs will be incorporated into that home. Lady Jane Grey and Bloody Mary were either side of the same board. The picture on the wall was in a different less delicate style.

This next picture is again not my own work. I used a B&W photograph of the Queens Head in Sandridge above. I was curious what it looked like now so I went back to the [100 Great Black Britons](#) due to her African/Portuguese ancestry.

The Alexandra Warley. I mentioned Alexandra of Denmark above. She is very young in this picture so it must be depicting her when she was still Princess of Wales.

The Queens Head, Burnham-on-Crouch. Our Queen Elizabeth II in her coronation robes.

I have not yet come across any sign showing the Queen Mother or Queen Mary, wife of George V.

Queen Elizabeth I, aka Good Queen Bess or Gloriana.

I expected to see more of her. I have a feeling that outside London there are more and that the popularity of Queen Victoria is an urban, maybe only a London thing.

Some of the Kings and Queens above, like Boudicca and King Harold are drawn from the artist's imagination. Other follow verified portraits. In 2006 the National Gallery bought what they believe to be the only verifiable portrait of Lady Jane Grey. Tudor historian David Starkey said of it: "It's an appallingly bad

picture and there's absolutely no reason to suppose it's got anything to do with Lady Jane Grey".



I took the photographs of portraits of Queen Elizabeth from my copy of David Starkey's Elizabeth Apprenticeship. When my husband came home with pictures of the Queens Head at Fyfield he thought they were of Elizabeth and her mother Anne Boleyn. The first I believe to be modeled on the portrait to the right where she is wearing red. This is from the Queen's Collection and attributed by some to William Scrots. It was believed to have been painted during the last year of King Henry's life when she was aged about 14.

The sign that used to hang on the former Queen Elizabeth in Hackney is based on the Coronation portrait, although the artist preferred her older curly wig image. The pub closed in 2007 but the sign remained for some years. However when I made a trip to photograph it last week it had been removed, quite recently from the freshness of the marks left where it had been. So I have had to use the work of