

Claire Ridgway 21:54

Are you talking at Senate House tomorrow?

Claire Ridgway 21:54

Thanks, we'll give away that one then.

Lorna Wanstall 21:54

You mean Tim, you got in there with a large polo mallet and whacked a few gremlins on the head..

LOL

Toni Mount 21:55

Yes at the IHR the Institute for Historical Research

ADMIN Tim 21:55

Just a couple of minutes to go until we officially start tonight.

Claire Ridgway 21:56

I've sent a reminder email out and a tweet and FB so hopefully we'll get a few more soon.

ADMIN Tim 21:56

Lorna - no bugs. We actually upgraded the Sever to a whole new generation. PLUS adding in an opcode PLUS serving the images from a CDN. These were low level fundamental changes.

Claire Ridgway 21:56

Good luck with your talk tomorrow, although I'm sure you don't need it.

Claire Ridgway 21:57

Techie talk....

ADMIN Tim 21:57

It just means the bugs run faster now 🤪

Toni Mount 21:57

Thanks it's an author talk about Seb & Colours for RIII Society

Lorna Wanstall 21:57

good

Claire Ridgway 21:57

Thank you so much, Toni, for joining us and for your wonderful talk. I'm sure we'll get more as time goes on.

Claire Ridgway 21:58

Toni asked "What is the one thing Tudor housewives would need to learn that a medieval woman would have no idea about?" I said that perhaps it was how to avoid Henry VIII!

Claire Ridgway 21:58

Hi Laurie!

Lorna Wanstall 21:58

What was everyday life for the peasantry..

Toni Mount 21:58

Thanks Claire lovely to be here

Laurie 21:58

Hi Claire and everyone!

Claire Ridgway 21:58

Hi Dawn!

Toni Mount 21:59

for the peasants life was hard, nasty, brutish - and short

Lorna Wanstall 21:59

Well trying to avoid H8 would be fairly easy later on in his life, you could smell him coming, so could find somewhere to hide...

Toni Mount 21:59

the one thing that Tudor housewives had to learn that a medieval woman would have no idea about?

- Starch

Dawn Hatswell 22:00

Good evening Clare

Claire Ridgway 22:00

Going with Lorna's question, what would a typical day be like for a rural housewife. Just briefly, what would her standard chores be on an average day? How many hours of chores?

Claire Ridgway 22:00

Oh yes, starch for ruffs etc.

Toni Mount 22:00

Starch was brought to England from Holland in 1564 and started a craze for starched collars

Claire Ridgway 22:00

Hi Roland and Colleen!

Colleen MacDonald 22:01

hello!

Toni Mount 22:01

every housewife would be expected to provide everything for the family as well as cooking it she had to grow it, feed it and slaughter it

Toni Mount 22:02

Thomas Tusser suggested she started the washing at 3am!

Claire Ridgway 22:02

Did she have particular days for brewing and washing etc.?

Lorna Wanstall 22:02

So would they be likely up with the lark

ADMIN Tim 22:03

How much did housewives team up with each other to share tasks and make life easier?

Colleen MacDonald 22:03

would there be things that they would routinely buy? eg. would they buy cloth or would each household be expected to make their own...i.e. how much stuff was done from scratch and what could be bought? (if you had any money?)

Toni Mount 22:03

Brewing once a fortnight (once a week in hot weather) washing once a week due to heating all that water - don't know when Monday became washday

Claire Ridgway 22:03

I'm so glad I'm not a Tudor housewife!!

Lorna Wanstall 22:03

were common folk churched, and could they expect to have a lying in period with a baby

Toni Mount 22:04

Colleen - the more you could do yourself the cheaper it was - or put another way, the poorer you were the more you had to do

Toni Mount 22:05

Lorna - yes they were 'churched' but no days off poor women would start working asap after the birth

Dawn Hatswell 22:05

My Gran was churched, and after I had my first she asked if I had been?!? No Gran! Not me! Haha

Toni Mount 22:05

My mother-in-law asked me as well

Lorna Wanstall 22:06

I thought so, guess they could be sowing the fields or brewing up beer then within hours of childbirth

Dawn Hatswell 22:06

That was in the 80s too. Bet very few know what it is now

Claire Ridgway 22:06

Life didn't stop with the birth of a baby for normal folk, did it?

Toni Mount 22:07

Yes Dawn, mine were born in the 80s

Toni Mount 22:08

Roland - from before dawn to after dusk - remember the chores had to be done whatever the season so in winter they would be up before the sun

Dawn Hatswell 22:09

Its sent as a good thing to getting going as soon as again after giving birth, thankfully we don't have to brew beer, fetch in water etc,

Claire Ridgway 22:09

I suppose it's just like life in some countries today where women still give birth in the fields and just get on after the birth, strapping the baby to themselves.

Laurie 22:09

So what did that leave the men to do then??

Toni Mount 22:09

Many medieval women would also run their own business to generate an income for the family, less so later in Tudor times as more men were available to be employed

Claire Ridgway 22:09

It was what you said about growing, harvesting and processing flax that got to me, so much work!

Lorna Wanstall 22:10

Money was as rare as hen's teeth for the common folk, so did they use a barter system to get things they wanted.. I.e a dozen eggs for a bushel of apples

Toni Mount 22:11

Laurie - they were the 'bread winners' if they weren't at war! They would be ploughing, or sowing/harvesting, if they had a skill woodwork/blacksmith or working as a merchant at the market

Toni Mount 22:11

Lorna - yes barter was a big part of shopping

Toni Mount 22:12

Claire yes, just think before you could wear the new dress you had to grow it first!

Claire Ridgway 22:12

sad

Lorna Wanstall 22:12

How old would be the boys before they were considered to go off and find work like their fathers

Roland Hui 22:12

If a Tudor housewife became widowed - did she automatically inherit her husband's wealth (if any)?

What laws were in place?

Colleen MacDonald 22:13

did they have market days? and were those places where you shopped or was bartering taking place there? I know you read about market towns, but if the poor people couldn't afford them how did they survive?

Toni Mount 22:13

plough boys would go to the fields very young to pick up stones and scare the birds - 7 years old would be plenty old enough

Colleen MacDonald 22:13

sorry, how did the markets survive, not the people.

Dawn Hatswell 22:13

I think the knowledge the women had back then in the growing of foods, herbs and leaving weeds to grow which were useful in all areas of life was admirable especially with being a gardener myself,

Toni Mount 22:15

Colleen market towns had to be a minimum of 8 miles apart so you could walk there and back 16 miles in a day - where we live the nearest market towns each way are Dartford 8 miles one way and Rochester the other each with different market days but each with their own Royal Charter to be a market

Toni Mount 22:16

Dawn yes if it grew it was useful - if it tasted nice you would eat it, if it didn't you probably used it as a medicine -

Colleen MacDonald 22:16

so at the markets were they strictly buying or did they barter there as well?

Lorna Wanstall 22:17

Market Day must have been exhausting for them, 16miles??

Toni Mount 22:18

Colleen yes barter as well in the markets - shops could be open on any day midweek and Saturday mornings, but these were not so much for barter. Tradesmen would have a shop at the front of their house and their workshop at the rear

Lorna Wanstall 22:19

Not so far for me to walk to Rochester from here.. although I'd sooner catch the bus LOL

Toni Mount 22:19

yes lorna, but that's the maximum you would need to walk from one market town to another - and they were fitter than us - they needed more calories

Lorna Wanstall 22:19

true.. Was their diet in some ways healthier than the big wigs

Laurie 22:20

And as you wrote in your articles, life got even worse for some of them, during the dissolution, since some of the relied on handouts from the monasteries, etc.?

Toni Mount 22:21

Because in Tudor times (relatively) there was less war, women being employed declined due to male unemployment - however employers preferred women as even then WOMEN WERE PAID LESS

Claire Ridgway 22:21

It's interesting what you said about women coming into the workforce because of men being killed in wars and from diseases like the Black Death, but then being forced back out later when there were too many men unemployed. Very unfair. You could go from running your own business to being back in the home just like that...

Dawn Hatswell 22:22

It all sounds exhausting to us with machines, transport etc, but it was normal for them, as they seemed to be able to have social times too. We are extremely lazy in comparison aren't we lol

Toni Mount 22:22

Claire if you were in business that was one thing but as an employee you could be out just like that

Claire Ridgway 22:22

Very very unfair... grrr!

Toni Mount 22:23

1511 Weavers Guild of Norwich banned women from being employed in preference to male guild members

Claire Ridgway 22:23

@Dawn, although I bet people in a few hundred years time will think we're mad for what we do today!

Toni Mount 22:23

1560 Alice Montegue was forced to hand over her business to her husband - just because she was no longer accepted as a businesswoman

Colleen MacDonald 22:24

Dawn, they may have been more fit than us, but I seem to remember hearing that they lived their entire lives within 20 miles of where they were born, so we do go further afield, just don't have to walk to get there!

Toni Mount 22:25

Dawn, but other than making babies there was little else to do - no chatrooms or TV, no books or magazines, just hard work and church on Sunday

Roland Hui 22:25

What was the average lifespan of middle class Tudor women?

Claire Ridgway 22:26

Here in rural Spain many of the older generation don't think anything of walking from our mountain village to the town at the bottom of the mountain (about 8km).

Toni Mount 22:26

Colleen but some medieval people did travel surprising distances - Marjorie Kemp from Kings

Lynn travelled to Cologne in Germany

Toni Mount 22:27

and the Pastons were backwards and forwards to London from Norfolk

Lorna Wanstall 22:27

Were they free to chose their own husband/wife or was it just the same as the gentry you husband/wife being chose for you

Dawn Hatswell 22:28

@Claire, yes every era looks back and thinks Really!! They did that!!

Toni Mount 22:28

Roland - if a woman survived childbearing age, she could live into her 70s as now. We look at average ages now for people of those times but this is very misleading as averages were made lower due to high infant mortality

Toni Mount 22:29

@Lorna - poorer people actually had more choice than the rich

Lorna Wanstall 22:29

I saw someone the average life span for a woman was 35, and a man was 45

Dawn Hatswell 22:29

@ Colleen oh yes very fit!! No gym subscription needed for them smile

Toni Mount 22:30

@Lorna this is because so many children died before they were 5

Lorna Wanstall 22:30

true

Colleen MacDonald 22:31

and what percentage died in childbirth?

Toni Mount 22:33

other than coroner's records of accidents we don't know how many 'ordinary women' would die - we know when a queen or a Lady died but who was there to write down when the women down the street passed on?

Laurie 22:33

And do we have an idea of the increased % of royal women who survived childbirth (with their additional resources, etc.), compared to poorer women?

Dawn Hatswell 22:34

What did they use in the laundering of clothing a part from the obvious water

Toni Mount 22:34

@Laurie - sorry I don't - if we don't know how many poor women died we don't know what % of rich survived

Lorna Wanstall 22:35

Dawn I have a feeling they used urine, to whiten their whits so to speak

Laurie 22:35

Yes that makes sense, thanks.. just thought it would be an interesting statistic..

Lorna Wanstall 22:35

my damn keyboard keeps sticking

Toni Mount 22:35

poor women with midwives were very knowledgeable about childbirth - rich women may access physicians and surgeons but they would not get involved in babies

Dawn Hatswell 22:36

I have heard of urine being used for the hair, and in tanning Lorna

Lorna Wanstall 22:36

Urine I believe was also used to clean teeth too

Claire Ridgway 22:36

Lye

Toni Mount 22:37

@Dawn yes urine and lye but also laying linen on the grass to bleach in the sun was the most common

Toni Mount 22:37

@lorna - would rather not clean my teeth with it - a hazel wand was more common

Lorna Wanstall 22:38

and brick dust I heard was also used

Lorna Wanstall 22:38

certainly wouldn't have done the enamel on your teeth anygood

Claire Ridgway 22:38

You mentioned the elderly being sent to an abbey to end their days if a family could afford it, but otherwise I assume that the housewife would have been caring for elder members of the family as well as doing her chores.

Toni Mount 22:38

and I've never come across the use of a medieval (or Tudor) washing line - hawthorn hedges were most popular instead

Toni Mount 22:39

@Claie yes of course if you were poor caring for the extended family would be usual for the 'wife'

Toni Mount 22:40

@Lorna in as much as brick dust is baked clay I suppose it's possible

ADMIN Tim 22:40

15 minutes to go. Toni - you're doing amazingly well! Keep the questions coming in!

Claire Ridgway 22:41

It must have been so hard to be caring for young children, an infirm family member and doing all those chores.

Toni Mount 22:41

Glenn's typing - I'm dictating

Dawn Hatswell 22:41

So even the ashes were used..they are good for the garden too. Wasn't sage used to clean teeth also, good antiseptic and good for gum health too, so I have been told

Lorna Wanstall 22:41

I guess that when the girl children got older they too would share the responsibilities in the household, this would at least take some of the pressure off until they were amarried themselvf

ADMIN Tim 22:41

I use clay and vinegar to wash my hair ... so it's completely possible

Laurie 22:41

Toni, I'm curious how the few lower/middle class folks who ended up rising to the top of the ranks (i.e. Wolsey, Cromwell, etc.) were regarded by their families and friends back at home; would they be proud of them, or somewhat put off by the fact that they "abandoned" them for the better life at court?

Toni Mount 22:42

@Dawn yes Sage is amazing used for many things - it gets its name from being good for the memory, hence a wise elder person was also known by the same term

Roland Hui 22:43

Do we have examples of Tudor housewives who rose to become successful businesswomen?

Toni Mount 22:43

@Laurie - I expect their mothers loved them, the rest were just jealous of their success

Laurie 22:43

That sounds typical, thanks!

Colleen MacDonald 22:43

but would those who rose in society bring their families with them as much as they could? Find positions for them, etc

Toni Mount 22:44

@Roland well Alice Montegue was until she was demoted (see above) , but more examples of medieval women in business - it is a change through tudor times,

Toni Mount 22:45

@Colleen Wolsey didn't bother but Thomas More certainly did

Dawn Hatswell 22:47

Do you know if there was the hand craft of knitting at this time,

Toni Mount 22:47

@Roland Ellen Langwith and Alice Claver were medieval silkwomen - Joanna Hill ran her own bellfoundry in whitechapel- there was a female blacksmith at the Tower in 1415 Kathryn Smith

Toni Mount 22:49

@Dawn knitting as we now know it was in the early stages but did take off in tudor times - knitted hose for example card weaving was very common and lucet for making ties/laces

Roland Hui 22:49

How interesting (those women who ran businesses)!

Toni Mount 22:49

@Roland - I've written a book about it lol .....

Lorna Wanstall 22:49

how about lace making,

Dawn Hatswell 22:50

Female blacksmith! That's rare even for now..I know there is a lady farrier in our area, the daughter of the one we used when we had a pony..

Toni Mount 22:50

@Roland Rose of Burford had permission from the king to export her goods through Dover RII 1380s

Lorna Wanstall 22:50

my nan could make lace, drove me mad but it was beautiful

Laurie 22:51

Toni, how willing were the men to go to battle? Would they be excited at the opportunity, or be reluctant to leave their families and risk not coming home?

Toni Mount 22:51

@Dawn she took over after her husband died and her son went to fight at Agincourt - she had to keep the tools sharp for the masons at Westminster

Lorna Wanstall 22:52

Laurie, I don't think they had any choice, they had to go to war if the king called them.. and I believe kids as young as 12 were expected to go as well

Dawn Hatswell 22:52

A very complex skill that Lorna, do you have any of the lace she made

Toni Mount 22:52

@Lorna -cwrong sort of lce - lace fabric only came in from Brugge in E I's reign

Claire Ridgway 22:52

I love researching queens and noblewomen, but these women who had their own businesses are fascinating. I love social history.

Lorna Wanstall 22:53

dawn.. Sadly I don't..

Toni Mount 22:53

@Laurie - they would do as they were told - if their master told them to then there was no choice - and little reward, I doubt that they were very happy about it

Laurie 22:54

Wow, yes i can imagine.. and how hard it was for a mother to see her 12 year old son go off to war..

Dawn Hatswell 22:54

That's a real shame that Lorna sad

ADMIN Tim 22:54

Thank you, everyone, for coming along to the chat this evening. And thank you to Toni Mount for the excellent video and for answering so many questions. Thanks also to Glenn for typing so quickly.

TONIGHT'S WINNER is .... LORNA .... who wins a copy of The Medieval Housewife by Toni Mount.

Laurie 22:55

Congrats Lorna!

Colleen MacDonald 22:55

thanks Toni

Lorna Wanstall 22:55

Yes, I think my mum had some of her lace, but when she moved into the nursing home it probably got thrown away

Claire Ridgway 22:55

Congratulations, Lorna, Toni's books are wonderful.

Toni Mount 22:55

Sorry if we missed any questions

Lorna Wanstall 22:55

Thank you so much Tim..

Claire Ridgway 22:56

Thank you so much, Toni, for joining us this evening and for doing the talk. I'm also loving your articles in Tudor Life magazine. Thank you!

Laurie 22:56

Thank you Toni! Very interesting topic!

ADMIN Tim 22:57

By the way ... the July Magazine is already out!

Lorna Wanstall 22:57

Thank you Toni Xx

Toni Mount 22:57

you can always contact me with any questions on Fb or about my books and research via [www.tonimount.com](http://www.tonimount.com) - or why not take an online course???

Dawn Hatswell 22:57

Ooh Lorna!! You lucky lass you...thank you Toni, really love hearing about the backbone of any country, the ordinary folk,

Laurie 22:58

Thanks Claire for organizing!

Toni Mount 22:58

Thanks everyone - off to London in the morning to talk about it all in person

Claire Ridgway 22:59

Thank you everyone for joining in, it's been fun and educational.

Claire Ridgway 22:59

I hope your talk goes really well Toni.

Lorna Wanstall 22:59

yeah time for me to hit the hay too. busy day tommorow what with one thing and another..

Dawn Hatswell 22:59

Goodnight everyone



Lorna Wanstall 23:00

Take care and keep safe everyone Xx

Claire Ridgway 23:00

Night everyone!

Laurie 23:00

Goodbye!

Claire Ridgway 23:00

Bye!