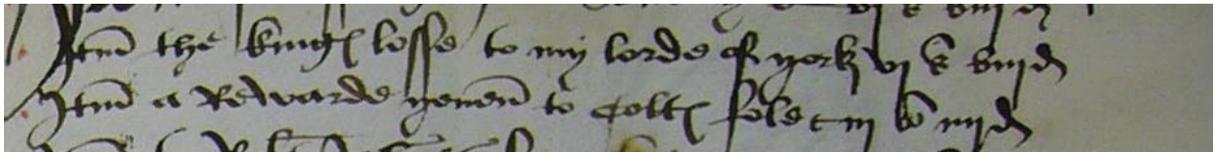


4. Kings and their Leisure Time

Kings spent a lot of time running the country. Henry VII, for example, kept a close eye on how much money he had, but he also had to talk to his advisors, to foreign diplomats, appoint people to jobs in every county to make sure government worked at the local level – and occasionally to lead his people in war against France, Scotland or against English rebels. But he did also have some time off. What do you think he might have done with it?

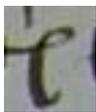
Henry kept detailed accounts (known as the Chamber Books) of what he spent his money on. These survive today and have recently been put online. They give us an idea of his leisure activities and who he spent them with.

Task: Transcribe the following two lines from an entry in 1498 noting two types of leisure activity



Q.1. Who is the person Henry is losing money to in the first line? Hint – who was the duke of York in 1498?

Abbreviations



- 'es', e.g. king[es]



- The curve over the 'm' tells us that a letter is missing, e.g. 't[e]m.

Funny letters

's' and 'f' look very similar. Look at the word 'losse' (loss, in modern English) above.

Unusual words



Fole = fool, an entertainer, comedian, with a special costume. Think modern clown.

Outdoor activities

Kings and their courtiers spent lots of time outdoors in a whole range of activities.

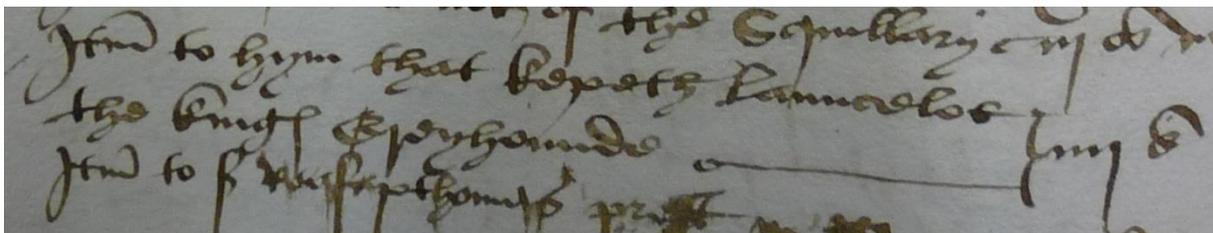
Q.2. Henry liked to play a game with balls and a racquet – can you find examples [on this page](#) of the Chamber Books of what this is?

Q.3. England's national sport in 1500 was not football or cricket but archery – all boys between 7 and 17 were required to have a bow and arrows and practice weekly. Can you find evidence of Henry VII practising archery?

Among Henry's favourite activities was hunting and hare coursing. Henry had hunting lodges and parks especially for hunting.



Q.4. The king used greyhounds for hare coursing and his favourite greyhound had his own keeper. Can you tell from this extract what his name was and how much his keeper was paid?



Indoor activities

Lots of games and activities took place indoors too.

Q.5. Henry liked to play cards, dice and chess. Try searching for these words. Do you think the king was any good at these games? If not, why not?